CIRCULAR 22 OF 2015

TO: HONOURABLE MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
    ACCOUNTING OFFICER
    DEPUTY DIRECTORS GENERAL
    CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
    CHIEF DIRECTORS
    DIRECTORS (HEAD OFFICE AND DISTRICTS)
    CIRCUIT MANAGERS
    ECD RESOURCING CO-ORDINATORS
    PRINCIPALS OF PUBLIC ORDINARY SCHOOLS
    SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
    LABOUR UNIONS

FROM: ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS AND APPOINTMENT OF GRADE R PRACTITIONERS.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Circular is to withdraw and nullify previous correspondence and/or circulars on this subject, and to regularise:

1. The status of Grade R practitioners, and;
2. Recognition of the NPDE qualification, and;
3. The recognition of the Diploma in Grade R teaching, and;
4. The recognition of the Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase, and;
5. The appointment of holders of the NPDE, Diploma in Grade R teaching, and Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase qualification into vacant funded posts in terms of the Employment of Educators Act.
ACRONYMS

The following acronyms shall bear the following meaning:

SAQA          South African Qualifications Authority
DBE           Department of Basic Education
DHET         Department of Higher Education and Training
NPDE         National Professional Diploma in Education
SASA        The South African Schools Act
SGB           School Governing Body
PTC            Primary Teacher Certificate
JSTC      Junior Secondary Teacher Certificate
REQV        Required Education Quality Value
ECD            Early Childhood Development
HOD          Head of Department
ABET       Adult Basic Education and Training

DEFINITIONS

Unless it is clear from the context, the following words/phrases shall have the following meaning:

Verify / verification  The process adopted by SAQA to establish whether the holder of a NPDE qualification qualified for entry into the NPDE program and whether such holder completed the program successfully at a recognised institution.

Educator          Any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post on any educator establishment under the Employment of Educators Act.

Professional qualification  A qualification equal to or higher than REQV 13 which entitles the holder of the qualification to apply for a vacant funded post, or after due process, to be appointed as an educator in terms of the Employment of Educators Act.

Legitimate holder of NPDE  Holder of a NPDE who qualified for entrance into the NPDE
qualification program, successfully completed the NPDE program, who received a NPDE certificate from the recognised institution, and whose qualification has been verified by SAQA.

Illegitimate holder of NPDE qualification

Holder of a NPDE qualification who did not qualify for entrance into the NPDE program, and/or who did not complete the NPDE program successfully, and/or who has not been issued with a NPDE certificate, and/or whose NPDE qualification has not been verified by SAQA.

Department of Education

Department responsible for education in the Eastern Cape Province and includes all public schools, further education and training institutions, departmental offices and basic adult education centres in the province.

BACKGROUND

The NPDE was specifically put in place for unqualified and under-qualified teachers who were teaching in schools. These teachers held teaching qualifications which were evaluated to be below REQV 13, or who held partly-completed former college qualifications or who were unqualified but who had at least five years proven/verified teaching experience in schools at the point when they enrolled for the NPDE.

There have been instances however, where some people who did not fall into the category mentioned above gained admission to and completed the NPDE.

Due to this irregularity, the Department of Education issued correspondence instructing the Districts to refrain from appointing any applicant who claimed to have a NPDE qualification.

There has also being some questions regarding other qualifications, the status of such qualifications, and which qualifications will enable the holder thereof to enter the mainstream education profession.

RULING

All previous Departmental correspondence and/or circulars dealing with the subject of the status of Grade R practitioners, recognition of the NPDE qualification and other qualifications, absorption of holders of a NPDE qualification into the mainstream, and the appointment of holders of the NPDE qualification into vacant funded posts in terms
appointment of the candidate by the HOD into the funded vacant post, subject
to section 6, 6A, 6B, 7 and 8 of The Employment of Educators Act.
7. An illegitimate NPDE qualification shall not enjoy any recognition and shall not
qualify the holder thereof to apply for any vacant funded post.
8. A legitimate NPDE qualification is a professional qualification equivalent to a
NQF Level 6 and REQV 13.
9. This qualification allows for teaching in Grade R to Grade 3.

DIPLOMA IN GRADE R TEACHING

1. The Diploma in Grade R teaching is a professional qualification for the formal
appointment of a Grade R practitioner in terms of the Employment of Educators
Act.
2. The Diploma in Grade R Teaching is equivalent to NQF Level 6 which is at REQV
13.
3. This qualification allows teaching in Grade R only.

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION IN FOUNDATION PHASE

1. The Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase is equivalent to NQF Level 7 and
REQV 14.
2. This qualification allows teaching in the foundation phase, in other words, from
Grade R to Grade 3.

GENERAL

1. No holder of any qualification, including a legitimate or illegitimate NPDE
qualification, shall be entitled to be “absorbed” into, or “placed” by the
Department of Education.
2. Employment by the Department of Education can only occur in terms of sections
6, 6A, 6B, 7 and 8 of The Employment of Educators Act and established policy, in
other words the availability of a vacant funded post, formal application,
shortlisting, interviews, recommendation to the HOD, and appointment by the
HOD in terms of the Employment of Educators Act.
3. All Grade R practitioners are currently employees of SGB’s.
4. The Department of Education shall pay all Grade R practitioners a stipend, which
is currently in the amount of R5615-00 per month, which amount may be
increased from time to time, depending inter alia on the availability of budget.
5. To improve administration and to simplify the process of payment of Grade R
practitioners, Grade R practitioners, although employed by the SGB’s, have been
registered on PERSAL. This does not create an employer/employee relationship, but is only a practical arrangement to simplify and effectively manage and record payment of such Grade R practitioners.

6. Because of the financial implication for the Department of Education, SGB’s are advised NOT to appoint any Grade R practitioners without the approval of the Head of Department.

MR. R. TYWAKADI
ACTING SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL

30/10/2015
DATE