



Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**  
EDUCATION

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**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

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**TO: CLUSTER CHIEF DIRECTORS**  
**DISTRICT DIRECTORS**  
**CES: SAPS AND ESSS**  
**SPECIAL SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

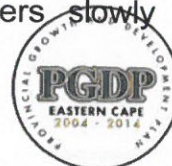
**FROM: CHIEF DIRECTOR: SAPS**

**SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIALIST TEAMS ON THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT MATERIALS TO COMBAT THE  
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TEACHING AND LEARNING AND  
NOTIFICATION OF PLANNED MICROSOFT TEAM MEETINGS**

**DATE: 25 MAY 2020**

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1. The Directorate: Inclusive Education would like to ensure that all learners who experience barriers to learning continue to receive educational support and specialized therapeutic and psychosocial services during and post COVID-19 pandemic. The Directorate is committed to ensure that specialist support services are provided during the COVID-19 epidemic.
2. The Department of Education has approximately fifty-two school-based and eighty district-based Psychologists, Physiotherapists, Speech Language Therapists, Audiologists, Occupational Therapists and Social Workers, as well as approximately forty Education Specialists at District level.
3. Head Office: Inclusive Education wishes to utilize the specialist knowledge within the specialist cohort of the Department of Education at school and district level to support all learners who experience barriers to learning, especially during the lockdown period and during the integration phase when learners slowly are integrated back to school.



*Ikamva eliqambele!*

## **SPECIALIST TEAMS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT MATERIALS TO COMBAT THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON**

4. Please take note that Head Office: Inclusive Education will establish various specialist task-teams to support the development of various educational and therapeutic support materials and identified advocacy and health promotion initiatives through the specialized knowledge and skills of specialists appointed by the Department of Education.
5. A transversal Specialist Team will consist of various specialists to support the development of identified discipline-specific projects and training programmes, specifically related to COVID-19 issues.

This programme will address the following:

- a. Disability advocacy to protect vulnerable learners who have intellectual disability through radio advocacy to address the questions about vulnerability of learners with intellectual and other disability in terms of staying at home, hygiene standards and safety/security.
- b. Protective Measures around COVID-19 for learners with barriers to learning (Development of specific resources identified viz. Sanitization of wheelchairs and buggies, sanitization of toys, hygiene and handwashing instructions in alternative/pictorial format for learners).
- c. Protective Measure around COVID-19 for Deaf learners. (Development of specific resources identified viz. hygiene, handwashing, staying at home, keeping in touch; for Deaf learners in video-format in South African Sign Language).
- d. Transversal educational support materials for educators, parents and learners during learner absence from schools to prevent further backlogs in learning and development;
- e. Transversal therapeutic support materials for educators, parents and learners during learner absence from schools to prevent further backlogs in learning and development;
- f. Each Cluster Chief Directorate, Cluster A and B is requested to identify one specialist of the following discipline specific groups and forward the names to Head Office: Inclusive Education.

- i. Psychologist
- ii. Speech and Language Therapists and or Audiologist



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- iii. Occupational Therapist
  - iv. Physiotherapist
  - v. Deputy Chief Education Specialist
  - vi. Social Worker
6. This means that each cluster will nominate 6 officials to serve on the interdisciplinary task team. A total number of 12 district officials will be serving on this structure.
7. The Transversal Inter-disciplinary team will meet every Wednesday morning, through Microsoft Teams, from 10:00 to 12:00 am, to finalize specific projects as indicated on the Psychosocial Support Plan of the Department of Education.
8. Specialists from districts and at school level will be serving on a rotation basis on this committee and new identified officials will be informed on the development of new initiatives and or projects.
9. Head Office: Inclusive Education further wishes to establish six discipline-specific task teams that will support the development of discipline specific support materials as per the Psychosocial Support Plan.
10. The Psychosocial Support Plan states the various strategies and actions steps that needs to be executed in order to provide sufficient support to all learners. Please find a copy of the draft Psychosocial Support Plan that outlines the planned intervention and initiative, and how specialists at district and school level will contribute to execute this plan.
11. The **six discipline-specific task-teams** will be as follows:
- a. Psychologist
  - b. Speech and Language and Audiologist
  - c. Occupational Therapists
  - d. Physiotherapist
  - e. Education Therapists
  - f. Social Workers
12. These specialists will work in their specific professional groups to create materials such as online videos, resource materials and pamphlets for parents at home to ensure that learners with learning barriers continue to receive specialized support services.



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13. Supervisors, such as Special School Principals and DCES, CES must take note that these task teams will meet every Tuesday and Thursday between 10.00am and 12.00am, through Microsoft Teams as a standard arrangement.
14. Each district must elect one specialist per discipline group to serve on the committees. Specialists from Special Schools must be considered.
15. One Deputy Chief Education Specialist per district must be elected by the District.
16. In the event that a meeting is cancelled or postponed, participants will be informed timeously and/or a co-leader may be appointed.
17. The Psychologists discipline-specific task group will focus on the following matters:
  - a. Telehealth Services to educators, parents and learners (through Department Communications Department)
  - b. Psychosocial Support Services and protocol
  - c. Healthy mental health coping strategies employed by parents and learners during lockdown period
  - d. Sound study skills applied by learners at home and supported by parents (Develop and disseminate of pamphlets on study skills through task team).
18. The Speech and Audiology Discipline Specific Group will focus on the following:
  - a. Promotion of language and listening development for learners with hearing loss
  - b. Management of hearing and assistive devices for children with hearing loss at home/school
  - c. Management of learners with hearing and listening difficulties at home/school
  - d. Enhancing the utilization of alternative augmentative communication materials at home/school
  - e. Promotion of phonological awareness for Grade R learners (A home based program for parents / educators)
  - f. The use of technology for Deaf learners to promote teaching and learning
  - g. Hearing Screening: The parents can be able to download hearWHO app from their smartphones and plug earphones for hearing screening of their children at home. The app can be download on: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/hearing-loss/hearwho>.

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- h. Optimal positioning of a severely disabled child for swallowing, breathing and communication (with Occupational Therapists and LSPID team). Therapeutic resource material to be developed in worksheet format with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms and Posters to be developed for Special Schools for Physically Disabled and Special Care Centres
  - i. The basics of being a good communication partner with Severe and Profoundly intellectually impaired learners. Resource material to be developed in worksheet format with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms and Posters to be developed for Special Schools, Special Care Centres and Parents (isiXhosa translation)
19. The Occupational Therapy discipline specific group will focus on the following :
- a. Fine-motor skills: Cutting, pasting and other fine motor skills needed in the classroom. (Therapeutic resource material to be developed per age group in worksheet format with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms).
  - b. Visual-perceptual skills and its impact on learning to read and write. (Therapeutic resource material to be developed per age group, in worksheet format with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms).
  - c. Handwriting guidelines for individual learners as referred by School-based Support Teams. (To provide **online support** to Educators who refer learners for handwriting difficulties, using published Department of Education Guidelines on Handwriting for Grade R to Grade 3 Learners).
  - d. The importance of play in development and learning. (Therapeutic resource material to be developed per age group in worksheet format, with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms; Collaboration with ECD Directorate).
  - e. The importance of using Universal Design for Classrooms to ensure e-learning and educational materials are designed for inclusion of all learners with disabilities and impairments affecting participation (vision, hearing, dyslexia physical disability etc.). Webinar Training to be developed and offered to Educators.



## **SPECIALIST TEAMS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT MATERIALS TO COMBAT THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON**

- f. How to maximize the participation and provide stimulation at home with Severe and Profoundly intellectual, impaired learners. (Resource material to be developed in worksheet format with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms and Posters to be developed for Special Schools, Special Care Centres and parents /caregivers).
20. The Physiotherapist discipline specific group will focus on the following matters:
- a. Gross motor activities for school aged children. (Therapeutic resource material to be developed, per age group, in worksheet with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms).
  - b. Respiratory health, keeping active and fitness for school-aged children. (Therapeutic resource material to be developed in worksheet with diagrams and video content for widespread dissemination on Departmental platforms).
  - c. Positioning and wheelchair seating of learners (with LSPID team) for Special Schools, Care Centres and children at home. (Therapeutic resource material to be developed in worksheet format with diagrams and video content for dissemination on Departmental platforms and printing of posters).
21. The Social Work Group will investigate social support services during the COVID 19 pandemic.
22. The Education Specialists discipline-specific tasks team to develop:
- a. Advocacy on 3 Stages of SIAS Process: Completion of Learners Profiles; Special Needs Assessment (SNA 1, 2 & 3); development of Individual Support Plans for further intervention and to access for Accommodations and Concessions for qualifying learners.
  - b. Advocate Inclusive Education Policies and Guidelines
  - c. To strengthen the Inclusive Education Support Structures (SBST, DBST, Provincial Placement Committees and other support structures to ensure effective functionality
  - d. Professional Development for educators and Inclusive Education Specialists to support curriculum access for all learners including LSEN learners on Differentiated Curriculum and Assessment for learners



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- e. Identify gaps in curricula and coordinate development of Provincial Guidelines and provide the relevant resource packs to support learners, educators and parents, especially during the COVID 19 Lockdown.
  - f. NB: ICT Skills for educators will be prioritized to ensure **access to the ONLINE Support Programmes for all (MS MAGWALA TO COMPLETE.**
23. The District Directors will be informed on the progress of these task-teams and the outcomes and expected support that is required, on a monthly basis.
24. Please take that the Transversal Inter-disciplinary Team will arrange orientations for all officials from Tuesdays to Fridays from 14:00 to 16:00 PM and these officials will receive invites through Microsoft Teams.
25. Should the district require further information, kindly contact (Lourens Putter on [lourens.putter@ecdoe.gov.za](mailto:lourens.putter@ecdoe.gov.za) / 060 567 9657).

Kind Regards,

  
N MBUDE  
CHIEF DIRECTOR: SAPS

28/05/2020  
DATE