

19 MAY 2021

## CONTACT SPORTS SUSPENDED WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT IN SCHOOLS

The Council of Education Ministers has taken a decision to suspend all contact sports in schools with immediate effect. The decision was taken in a virtual meeting held this morning.

Non-contact sport training in schools can continue provided that all social distancing, hygiene and safety measures are observed and that there is no physical contact between participants during training.

In 2021, after the reopening of schools and consultations with education stakeholders, the DBE gazetted directions allowing non-contact sport, sports related activities and school-based art and cultural activities to resume without spectators, subject to adherence of safety measure.

Further, on 12th February 2012, Minister of Basic Education Mrs Angie Motshekga gazetted directions on school sports and extra mural activities, non-contact sport, sports related activities and school-based art and cultural activities to resume subject to health and safety protocols. During the last week of Term 1, school sports activity related COVID-19 outbreaks in Gauteng Province were reported and have been gradually increasing in Term 2.

It is evident that despite following the protocols as guided by the Directions on extramural activities and Standard Operating Procedure on the prevention, containment and management of COVID-19 in schools, contact sports events still contribute to the spread of COVID-19.

Following the school sports activities related COVID-19 outbreaks in Gauteng and general rise of cases in communities across the country, the Outbreak Response Team (ORT) said that the risk was high when engaged in close-contact sports, especially with people who did not live together.

In this regard, all sporting activities have been suspended with immediate effect until the clusters outbreak is subsequently over with no further cases reported including the preparatory school sport. The Department will continue to monitor the situation. A government gazette will be issued with the notice in the coming days.

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