



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL

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**TO: DEPUTY DIRECTORS-GENERAL
CHIEF DIRECTORS
HEAD OFFICE DIRECTORS AND DISTRICT DIRECTORS
CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
DEPUTY CHIEF / SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
PRINCIPALS OF ALL PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
(GRADE 12)
TEACHER UNIONS / ORGANISATIONS
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
STUDENT FORMATIONS**

**FROM: SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL- EDUCATION
MR T KOJANA**

SUBJECT: GRADE 12 2020 BILINGUAL TRIAL EXAMINATIONS.

DATE: 17 AUGUST 2020

INTRODUCTION

As part of promoting the use of previously marginalized indigenous African Languages in schools, the Eastern Cape Department of Education will pilot the offering of Bilingual question papers for selected subjects in Grade 12 for the Trial examinations targeting Quintile 1-3 schools. In the history of South Africa, NSC Grade 12 learners in Quintile 1-3 schools will be offered a choice to either write the Preparatory Examinations in 2020 in English or an official African language in 3 selected Subjects.

REGULATIONS UNDERPINNING LANGUAGE MATTERS

Listed below are some of the legislations that underpin and inform the implementation of Bilingual Education in schools: -

- *South African Constitution (Act No 108 of 1996)*
- *National Education Policy Act (Act No 27 of 1996)*
- *South African Schools Act (Act No 84 of 1996)*

- National Curriculum Statement
- National Development Plan (Chapter 15)

BUDGET AND POLICY SPEECH 2020/21

In line with the Language Legislative Framework, the MEC for Education Hon. F Gade in his Budget and Policy Speech for 2020/2021 under Priority 10 **“Language Policy and Planning”** announced the following:

“Language transformation is a priority and we acknowledge that, while language is not everything in education - without language, everything is nothing in education. Notwithstanding the challenges posed by Covid-19, the Department is committed to the project declared by myself and the Premier at the beginning of the year of providing the African Language class of Grade 12 with an opportunity of bilingual examinations in some learning areas.”

The Mother Tongue- based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) strategy, started in 2012 with 70 schools offering Mathematics and Science from Grade 4 in Cofimvaba. These learners are now in Grade 12 in 2020. From 2015, the MTBBE strategy is implemented across the province from Grade 4 in Quintile 1 to 3 schools. The improved performance results demonstrated by learners who participate in the bilingual examination program as they write mathematics and science bilingually forms a scientific reason that extending bilingual examination to Grade 12 will yield an opportunity that is often missed when learners are challenged with questions they do not understand in final examinations. Through discussions with the Minister of Basic Education and the CEM in February 2020; a decision was made that the Eastern Cape will be allowed bilingual papers in three selected subjects; namely Mathematics to be offered during the Trial examinations in 2020 to serve as a scientific pilot for the whole country to learn from. The subjects selected are Mathematics, Life Sciences and History. The Department requests that as a province we rally around this historical moment and we commit ourselves to run a credible examination with the support of all stakeholders in the education sector. This program has received all the support needed from schools and stakeholders.

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This phased implementation will serve as a pilot for the envisaged National NSC Grade 12 Bilingual Examinations in 2021. The lessons that will be learnt from this pilot project shall inform the future action steps pertaining to the roll out of the project beyond the borders of the Eastern Cape. This will also provide valuable lessons to DBE and Umalusi and further afford them space to be ready for the future implementation of bilingual examinations that will transform examinations for Grade 12 African Home Language learners who experience a “language disadvantage” when writing examinations. The system is able to self correct .

SELECTED SUBJECTS IN 2020

There are three (3) selected subjects that will be offered for the Bilingual Question Papers for the September Preparatory Examinations:

1. Mathematics - Paper 1 and Paper 2
2. Life Sciences - Paper 1 and Paper 2
3. History - Paper 1 and Paper 2

AFRICAN LANGUAGES OFFERED

Following are the Bilingual Question Papers to be available for the NSC Grade 12 Preparatory Examinations:

1. IsiXhosa and English
2. SeSotho and English

PILOT PROJECT TARGET GROUP

Following is the Pilot Project Target Group in 2020 Grade 12 Trial examinations

1. Grade 12 Learners in Quintile 1 schools
2. Grade 12 Learners in Quintile 2 schools
3. Grade 12 Learners in Quintile 3 schools

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LANGUAGE CHOICE IN WRITING PREPARATORY EXAMINATIONS

If a learner selects IsiXhosa/Sesotho as a preferred Language to write Preparatory Examinations with, the learner must write the full paper in the same language. Learners will not be allowed to straddle between languages such as writing one question in IsiXhosa and the next in English. After reading questions in both languages the learner MUST choose 1 language he/she will use during the exam.

MARKING OF ANSWER SCRIPTS

District Curriculum may draft a plan to guide schools on marking the scripts in bilingual examinations in the selected subjects. If a teacher in a school is unable to mark a particular subject in a particular language, the district together with neighboring schools may arrange for such marking and moderation of such answer scripts. The credibility of the examination process must be ensured by Districts.

NSC 2020 GRADE 12 FINAL EXAMINATIONS

- It must be explicitly explained that, this is a pilot project restricted only to the three selected subjects and 2020 NSC Grade 12 Preparatory Examinations. Bilingual question papers will not be extended beyond the pilot project during the Preparatory Examinations.
- All other learners who are registered for the 2020 Grade 12 National Senior Certificate (NSC) November 2020 examination will be writing the examination in the official Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in their school. No candidate will be allowed to write in any other Languages except in the Language of Learning and Teaching of their school.

Yours in Education


MR T KOJANA
SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL: EDUCATION

21/08/2020
DATE