



Enquiries: Ms Anne Schlebusch

Ms Annelie Burger
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Dear Ms Burger

RE: HOME-SCHOOLING

I hereby acknowledge receipt of your electronic mail addressed to 3 others and myself dated 12 February 2019, regarding "the publishing of the Western Cape's "Homeschooling requirements and registration" on 8 February 2019".

I must confess to finding it difficult to understand the source of your vehement opposition to this form.

It is an update of the previous form WCED 087, much shorter and easier to complete, in my view.

The only material change to the old form is the inclusion of the following:

"At the end of every phase, the parent should appoint an independent, suitably qualified person(s) at the parent's own expense for the assessment of the learner's progress at the end of the phase that the learner is completing. A parent may approach a public school or a registered independent school for assistance in obtaining such services."

The points you go on to mention in your email relating, purportedly, to this form, but which I gather must refer more broadly also to the Home Education Policy, are not in any way contradicted by either the Form or the Policy, in my view.

We completely agree with you that the education and care of our children is of paramount importance, and that all aspects of a child should be developed.

To say that the Western Cape Government is not "FOR" home education, is simply incorrect. The South African Schools Act ("SASA") does provide for compulsory school attendance between the ages of 7 and 15. However, in Section 51 there is a clear exception to this, which provides for the registration of a learner for education at home. How, then, can you allege that we are not in favour of Home Education? The form to which you refer at the beginning of your email is to ALLOW for the registration of a learner for home education. So, nobody is "compelled to attend an institution".

The Policy on Home Education, gazetted by the National Minister on 16 November 2018, defines home education as follows:

“home education” means a purposeful programme of education for a learner, alternative to school attendance, which:
(a) is provided under the direction and supervision of the learner’s parent primarily in the environment of the learner’s home;
(b) may include tutorial or other educational support if necessary secured by the parent on specific areas of the curriculum followed by the learner; and
(c) meets the requirements for registration of a learner for home education contemplated in section 51 of the Act;

Section 2 of the Home Education Policy, 2018, states as follows:

2. The objects of the policy on home education

The objects of this policy are to:

- (1) protect, promote and ensure the rights of learners to basic education;
- (2) recognise parents’ prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children;¹
- (3) provide for registration, implementation and monitoring of home education in accordance with section 51 of the Act and to provide for matters incidental thereto;
- (4) repeal the Policy for the Registration of Learners for Home Education, 1999; and
- (5) provide uniform and manageable procedures for home education in provinces.

It is thus clearly recognised that some parents wish to educate their children at home and provides for this to occur.

Government is also not prescribing what a child is taught, other than the minimum standards and requirements.

Section 18.1 provides:

18.1 Curriculum choice

- (1) The parent may choose to offer any curriculum that will be of a standard not inferior to the standard of education provided at public schools.

And 18.3:

18.3 Teaching and learning

- (1) A parent should organise teaching, learning and assessment such that a learner is able to achieve the minimum outcomes and standards prescribed in the NCS.

Section 29 of the Constitution does provide that everyone has the right to a basic education. Section 7(2) of the Constitution provides that “the state must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights”.

It would thus be irresponsible of any government not to have some measures in place to ensure that a child who is being educated at home is being educated at an acceptable standard. The Constitution provides a positive obligation on government to ensure that this right is realised. We cannot simply sit back and say that parents can do as they please.

It is also a fact that sometimes parents home school their child for a period, and then they want them to be placed in a government school. If there is no basic standard that is linked to CAPS, they will not be able to adequately integrate into government schools.

I therefore believe that this Policy is a responsible exercise of government power and responsibility, whilst providing for parents also to home school their children. I do not believe that it is unreasonable for government to prescribe minimum standards, and assessments at intervals of the child’s education. In fact, I believe that we would be failing in our constitutional responsibilities if we did not provide for same.

I had a very productive meeting with home schooling associations last year, and I am sure that we can work together in the best interests of all the children in this province. Home schooling certainly has an important role to play in our country, and we have no intention of stopping it.

Should you have any further concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.
Yours sincerely,



DEBORAH SCHÄFER, MPP
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: WESTERN CAPE
DATE: 2019/03/05