

Home education policy gets green light

The Council of Education Minister's (CEM) has approved the Home Education policy for promulgation by Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga.



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This approval comes after a lengthy consultation process that spanned almost four years.

The policy provides reviewed guidelines for the Home Education programme which is an alternative to attending public or independent schools where a parent of a learner of compulsory school going age may provide education for their child at home.

“The policy was presented to (Department of Basic Education management structures, and approved by Heads of Education Department Committee [HEDCOM]) to be tabled at a CEM meeting for promulgation. The CEM of 19 July 2018 approved the policy. The department is currently preparing a gazette for promulgation,” said department spokesperson Elijah Mhlanga.

In October 2014, the department held its first consultation meeting with the home education community and other key stakeholders.

The meeting was attended by representatives from Home Education Associations, Pestalozzi Trust (the legal arm for some

parents); Independent Curriculum Providers; ISASA, Umalusi; South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI); South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE); Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET); and the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

In this meeting, Home Education stakeholders presented national and international research to the department.

A second consultation meeting with stakeholders was held in July 2015 where a discussion document was presented and a working group was set up involving all stakeholders.

“Unfortunately some of the stakeholders resigned from this process citing disagreements with the document, and that they would not be seen as part of the DBE team to review the 1999 policy.

“The Working Group however was able to continue with its work until the draft policy was gazetted in November 2017 for the public to make submissions within 21 days,” said Mhlanga.

The department received numerous requests from the public to extend the submission date to which it obliged and the new closing date for submissions, 31 January 2018, was communicated to the public.

A total of 740 submissions were received. Between February and July 2018, the working group captured submissions received, analysed them and reviewed the policy after having considered progressive inputs.

Despite the submissions received, the department said there is a small group that is opposed to the policy but it remains confident that it has noted all comments during the consultative process.

“The department is aware that a small grouping is opposed to the policy and has been spamming departmental officials requesting that the policy not be promulgated.

“However considering the extensive and all-encompassing consultation process the department is confident that all comments on the policy have been adequately ventilated, all in the best interest of ensuring that every child has a right to basic education as enshrined in the constitution and the approved policy will get promulgated as approved by CEM,” said Mhlanga.

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