

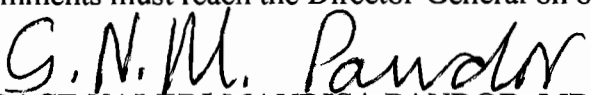
NOTICE 1439 OF 2008**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT 84 of 1996****CALL FOR COMMENTS ON NATIONAL MINIMUM UNIFORM NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE**

I, Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, Minister of Education after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers and in terms of section 5A of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No 84 of 1996), hereby determines National Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure, as set out in the Schedule.

All interested persons and organisations are invited to comment on the norms and standards, in writing and to direct their comments to-

The Director-General, Private Bag X895, Pretoria, 0001, for attention: Mrs E Mamathuba, tel 012 312 5954, email mamathuba.e@doe.gov.za, fax 012 312 6058/ 086 554 2241.

Comments must reach the Director-General on or before 23 December 2008.


GRACE NALEDI MANDISA PANDOR, MP
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
DATE: 14-11-2008

SCHEDULE

NATIONAL MINIMUM NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

VOLUME 1

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BMP	Basic Minimum Package
CEM	Council of Education Ministers
DoE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Child Development
GET	General Education and Training
FET	Further Education and Training
HEDCOM	Heads of Education Committee
MEC	Members of the Executive Council
MoE	Ministry of Education
NEIMS	National Education Information Management System
ETSDS	Education, Training and skills development system
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
UI	Utilization index
Hs	Total school hours per week
nS	Number of spaces
VUI	Verification of index
TWHLA	Total weekly hours by learning area

Introduction

1.1. Equality of educational opportunity is one of the principles enshrined in our Constitution. The Ministry of Education (MoE) interpret this principle as entailing equity of both education resource inputs and thus education outcomes. The historical heritage of South Africa's Education, Training and Skills Development System (ETSDS) has been one of institutionalized inequalities. Just before the democratic transition in 1991, the per capita spending on a white child was 350 percent more than on a black child. Consequently, the distribution of key resource inputs that are known to facilitate teaching and learning were skewed.

1.2. Since the democratic transition of 1994, the MoE has endeavored to redress the stark historical inequalities in the distribution of education resource inputs and outcomes. By 2006, the per capita spending on a white child had declined to 22 percent more than what is spent on a black child. This differential is mainly due to fees and other private contributions that are outside the control of the system. While progress is being made, the racial composition of schools still remains a major explanatory factor for student learning outcomes (as evident in the matriculation pass rates) after controlling for socio-economic background and school inputs.

1.3. Historically, one of the most visible forms of inequalities in the provision of resource inputs has been the physical teaching and learning environment; the key elements of which include infrastructure, basic services, equipment, furniture, books and instructional materials. As with other areas of provision, substantial effort has been made to redress these inequalities. This effort notwithstanding, key elements of the physical teaching and learning environment remain insufficient and inequitable across schools. For instance, by 2006, 17 percent of schools were without electricity, 12 percent were without a reliable water source on site, 68 percent were without computers, 80 percent without libraries or library stocks, 61 percent without laboratories and 24 percent had overcrowded classrooms (45 learners or more). To date, there is still a significant backlog of schools that are run in unacceptable and even unsafe physical facilities.

1.4. During 2007, the MoE developed a *National Policy for Equitable Provision of an Enabling School Physical Teaching and Learning Environment (policy document)* to guide sufficient and equitable provision of key elements of the physical teaching and learning environment. These norms and standards follow a formal approval of the national policy by the Council of Education Ministers (CEM). It comprises Volume 1 of the national norms and standards which focuses only on school infrastructure and basic services. Norms and standards for other elements of the physical teaching and learning environment will be prepared at a later stage.

Legal, Policy and Institutional underpinnings

Policy underpinnings

1.5. The norms and standards presented in this document are underpinned by the above referred *National Policy for Equitable Provision of an Enabling School Physical Teaching and Learning Environment*. The policy comprises 6 strategic and 2 operational policy statements. The first of the 6 strategic policy statements calls for the development of norms and standards for equitable provision of an enabling physical teaching and learning environment as an urgent priority. The national policy further states that national norms and standards will be developed during 2008, fully adopted by the end of 2009, and implemented by 2010. This document is therefore the first step toward the operationalization of the national policy. It presents a draft norms and standards to be discussed and adopted at a national level. As a national instrument, these norms and standards will apply to **ALL** public ordinary schools (excluding hostels) that operate in South Africa, regardless of the ownership. Also, in the process of registering of independent school, The MEC will ensure that such schools oblige the minimum norms as indicated in this document. Further, considering the specificity and diversity for provision of special schools, all special schools shall oblige to these minimum norms as indicated in this document.