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**TO: HEADS OF PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS
HEADS OF DIFFERENT EDUCATION UNITS/DEPARTMENTS
PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR HOME EDUCATION
DISTRICT DIRECTORS AND OFFICIALS
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
HOME EDUCATION COMMUNITY**

CIRCULAR NO S24 OF 2025

GUIDANCE ON HOME EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 51 OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT, 1996 (SASA), AS AMENDED

1. PURPOSE OF THE CIRCULAR

1.1 The purpose of this Circular is to provide interim guidance on implementing the curriculum and assessment requirements for Home Education as set out in Section 51 of SASA, as amended. In particular, this Circular clarifies the statutory requirements that:

- A home education programme must be “predominantly comparable” in content and skills to the national curriculum (Section 51(2)(a)(iii)); and
- The assessment of learners must be “not inferior in standard” to that required by the national curriculum (Section 51(2)(a)(iv)–(vi)).

1.2 As the Regulations for Home Education will not be finalised and promulgated during 2025, the Minister has directed the Department to issue interim guidance to ensure consistent implementation of Section 51. Accordingly, this Circular:

- Clarifies the meaning and intent of Section 51.
- Provides guidance to Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) on advising parents about curriculum and assessment expectations until Regulations are finalised.
- Confirms that parents may select diverse curricula, provided these meet the statutory criteria.
- Ensure that implementation protects the rights of parents and upholds the best interests of learners.
- Provides a clear and practical interim framework to promote consistency and effective implementation across provinces.

2. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS (Section 51(2)(a)(iii))

2.1 Parents may select any curriculum, including Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), international curricula, faith-based programmes, eclectic approaches, or self-curated learning, provided it is at least predominantly comparable to the national curriculum determined by the Minister.

- 2.2 Compliance with curriculum requirements should be assessed by verifying that the learner's programme includes:
- Age-appropriate and grade-appropriate learning.
 - A progressive acquisition of knowledge and skills consistent with the chosen curriculum and aligned with the broad aims of the national curriculum.
 - Exposure to the broad learning fields recognised in the national curriculum (e.g., languages, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, creative arts, life skills, physical education, and where applicable, economic and management sciences).
- 2.3 The term "comparable" does not imply identical content or structure. Officials must consider whether:
- The learner engages in meaningful learning across broad learning fields.
 - Skills and competencies develop progressively over time.
 - Educational experience is coherent and of suitable breadth and depth relative to the learner's age, grade and developmental needs.
- 2.4 Parents may demonstrate curriculum comparability through practical evidence such as:
- Learning field summaries.
 - Resource lists (books, online materials, field trips, kits, documentaries, practical resources).
 - Descriptions of teaching and learning approaches (e.g., project-based, inquiry-based, experiential, thematic or integrated).
- 2.5 Comparable phase-level learning goals and expected outcomes.
- PEDs may not require lesson-by-lesson correspondence with CAPS, nor may they prescribe textbooks or specific teaching materials. Parents may select resources appropriate to their chosen programme.
- 2.6 This approach aligns with Section 51, which establishes a distinct system of home education that must meet a comparable standard, not replicating CAPS or school-based programmes.
- 3. ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS (Section 51(2)(b)(i)-(vi))**
- 3.1 Assessments must demonstrate progress appropriate to the learner's age, grade level and ability, confirming that the learner is acquiring a standard of knowledge and skills not inferior to those expected in the national curriculum.
- 3.2 Compliance may be demonstrated using a combination of evidence, including:
- Standardised assessments in mathematics and the language of learning and teaching were appropriate.
 - Portfolios containing written work, projects, drawings, transcripts of learning conversations, photographs, recordings of practical work, journals, logs or learning summaries.
 - Structured questionnaires or reflective tools completed by parents and/or assessors.
 - Descriptions of the learner's achievements and growth in independence, curiosity, application of knowledge and problem-solving.
 - Curriculum-specific or self-curated assessments (quizzes, assignments, project outcomes).
- 3.3 For learning fields other than Mathematics and the language of learning and teaching, PEDs must recognise portfolio-based and evidence-of-learning approaches as compliant and appropriate.
- 3.4 A standard "not inferior" to the national curriculum should be interpreted as assessment that:
- Meaningfully measures learning.

MR. H. M. MWELI
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DATE: 11/12/2025



Yours sincerely

Your cooperation in implementing this guidance across all provincial structures is appreciated.

- Ensure national consistency in interpretation and implementation of Section 51.
- Provide immediate clarity to families, PED officials.
- Prevent unnecessary curriculum disruption.
- Reduce legal risk and potential disputes.
- Stabilise the implementation of Home Education until the Regulations are finalised.

6.1 Issuing this Circular will: **6. BENEFITS OF ISSUING THIS GUIDANCE**

- continue providing support and written guidance to parents.
- avoid province-specific interpretations that undermine national consistency.
- respect the constitutional and statutory authority of parents to determine the most suitable home education programme
- adopt a facilitative, supportive approach during this transitional period.

5.1 PEDs are encouraged to: **5. ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT GUIDANCE FOR PEDS**

- The breadth and richness of the learning experience.
 - Progression over time.
 - Whether the learner meets appropriate phase-level outcomes.
 - The coherence and suitability of the overall programme.
 - Whether the programme and assessment standard is not inferior to that of the national curriculum.
- 4.3 Where eclectic or self-curated education is used, the assessor must focus on evidence of meaningful engagement and developmental progression, rather than subject-by-subject alignment with CAPS.
- 4.2 The assessor must evaluate:
- 4.1 Phase-end assessments must be conducted by a competent assessor, as defined in the Act.

4. ROLE OF THE COMPETENT ASSESSOR

- Demonstrates progression across fields.
- Reflects development of core competencies (e.g., scientific reasoning, social understanding, artistic expression, physical development, personal and social responsibility).
- Aligns broadly with phase-end expectations typically observed at Grades R-3, 6 and 9.
- Assessments are not required to resemble school-based CAPS assessments where a different curriculum or alternative assessment method is used.