



DBE APPROVES RELEASE OF ALL GRADE 8 AND 9 MATHEMATICS TEACHERS ON MONDAYS

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) issued Circular S1 of 2015, dated 9 January 2015, approving the release of all Grades 8 and 9 Mathematics teachers from all schools every Monday to take part in training workshops. DBE cites the unacceptably low performance in Mathematics of learners in Grade 9 as the reason for this decision.

DBE states in Circular S1 that this approach is “to provide intense and continuous support to the Grade 8 and 9 teachers through the 1 + 4 Model of Teacher Development, Support and Curriculum Coverage” (one day’s training and 4 days’ teaching!).

DBE places the responsibility of managing the so-called **1 + 4 Intervention Model** squarely on the shoulders of school management teams. They must ensure that timetabling is done in such a way that no teacher will lose teaching time. Mathematics teachers must be allocated periods from Tuesday to Friday and the number of periods and/or the amount of time allocated in the four days must cover the approved allocation for Mathematics lessons for the week.

The *1 + 4 Intervention Model* was discussed by the NAPTOSA National Standing Committee on Friday, 30 January 2015 and the unanimous decision was that NAPTOSA could not support this initiative by DBE, in spite of the fact that the Union supports the development of interventions to improve Mathematics achievement levels in Grade 8 and 9.

Mrs Anthea Cereseto, Deputy President of NAPTOSA issued a press release on 1 February 2015 stating, inter alia, the following:

“It is evident that the DBE is operating on the presumption that these teachers (Grade 8 and 9 teachers) teach only one grade and one subject. The reality is that teachers often teach across the Senior Phase and the FET Phase (i.e. Grade 8 -12), some also, especially in smaller schools, teach more than one subject.”

“The implications of taking teachers out for a day a week are enormous. The repercussions will include: learners across grades being without teachers; loss of teaching time in other subjects; notional time requirements not being met; poor curriculum coverage and the general quality of teaching and learning will be impacted on.”

Mrs Cereseto also stated that the complexities of high school timetabling will not allow these problems to be solved by time-table adjustments.

She emphasised that the initiative was only presented to stakeholders at a departmental meeting earlier this week and that NAPTOSA was not included in the planning of this intervention. On behalf of NAPTOSA the Deputy President called on the DBE to halt the implementation of this initiative and engage with all stakeholders on a more productive way forward. (For a copy of the DBE circular and NAPTOSA’s press release, go to www.naptosagp.org.za and click on *Bulletin Board*.)

NAPTOSA is of the opinion that the *1 + 4 Intervention Model* must also be referred to the ELRC for negotiations as it may have an adverse effect on the workload of teachers.

SALARY NEGOTIATIONS 2015

Salary negotiations commenced in September 2014. We reported previously that labour had tabled its consolidated salary demands, including a salary increase of 15%. The employer responded on 27 November 2014 with an offer of a 3 year multi-term agreement of 5% for each of the 3 years and in December 2014 followed it up with a revised offer of projected CPI for each of the 3 years. The latest National Treasury projections for the 3 years in question are 5,8%, 5,5% and 5,3% respectively. The offer of the employer also includes (no agreement has been reached yet on the employer’s offer):

- An improved medical aid subsidy for in-service GEMS members of 17,6% (5,6% for 2012; 5,8% for 2013 and 6,2% for 2014). This is as a result of lack of adjustment on the medical aid subsidy for the past three years. The future adjustment of medical aid subsidy for in-service GEMS members will be in line with the average CPI of the preceding 12 months (note, not in line with medical inflation).
- An increase of 2 days in family responsibility leave for employees with children with severe special needs.
- Allowing employees to exercise a choice of the month in which they wish to have their service bonus (13th cheque) paid to them.

No date has been set yet for the continuation of negotiations.

Other matters being dealt with in the PSCBC (outside salary negotiations) are, inter alia, the Government Employees Housing Scheme (GEHS); danger allowance; review of public Service remuneration policy and PSCBC Resolution 3/99 (applicable to public servants); and review of PMDS (applicable to public servants)

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