



NAPTOSA NORTH WEST

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NEWS FLASH

TO *THE NAPTOSA NORTH WEST UNION REPRESENTATIVE*
Please make this communication available to ALL NAPTOSA members at your school/college/office.

CHANGE IN MATHS MAY HIT MATRIC RESULTS

School experts have warned this year's matric results could drop as many Grade 12 teachers in state schools struggle to prepare pupils to write a compulsory section on Euclidean geometry and probability for the first time.

Euclidean maths, formerly included in the maths curriculum before being thrown out by the Basic Education Department in 2008, involves the properties of shapes. It dates back to Greek mathematician Euclid's theories of circles and triangles in 300BC.

Wits University maths education expert Lynn Bowie indicates that providing proof in the answers is a strong element of the content, which required a thorough understanding by teachers.

The content was reintroduced in 2010 when universities warned that matriculants signing up for engineering and related courses were not coping because they had no knowledge of Euclidean concepts.

This year all Grade 12 pupils will write two maths papers that will include the concepts, which were previously tested in the optional maths paper three.

The Department of Basic Education argues that with the implementation of the new Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in Grade 10 in 2012, the teaching and testing of both learning areas was compulsory. The Department of Education wants the current Grade 12 class to be tested in these learning areas in both maths papers this year.

NAPTOSA and maths experts such as Lynn Bowie of Wits argue that teachers had not been teaching the Euclidean concepts because they didn't know how to go about the subject. Our fear as NAPTOSA is that if teachers' knowledge is limited, kids will obviously struggle. NAPTOSA is of the opinion that the Department of Education should have trained the teachers and introduced this more gently as it covers a fairly big chunk of the curriculum.

It is a known fact that a lot of focus is on results in this country and if the introduction of this subject is implemented in a 'big bang approach', the consequences may be detrimental.

NAPTOSA is in doubt as to whether we have the requisite number of teachers able to teach this. We have to ask what the department has done to prepare teachers, to ensure they are ready. Teachers need to be well prepared to teach the subject. "We cannot set up our teachers and learners for failure"

If not properly introduced, results-focused schools could channel matric pupils to softer options such as channelling their pupils into maths literacy.

It will be important to hear stakeholders in education, and particularly members' views on this matter. Members are requested to submit their views on the subject to the provincial office at gmasondo@naptosa.org.za or to doriccam@naptosa.org.za

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