

Gauteng Education processing applications

The Gauteng Department of Education has processed 682,142 applications since it introduced the online application process.



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Parents had to apply for their children between April and June 2016 and the deadline was 1 June 2016.

Addressing the media in Johannesburg on Wednesday, Gauteng Education MEC Panyaza Lesufi said the applications can be disaggregated as follows:

- 118,534 applications are for Grade 1 and 91,221 for Grade 8 learners.
- Duplicate applications are 451,759.
- Applications for in-between grades are 18,425.
- Applications for independent schools are 2,223.

“This yields a total of 209,755 applications for Grades 1 and 8. If the late applications of 17,612 are included, total applications are for Grade 1 and 8 are 227,367. It should be noted that 20,505 applications were received from relocating learners.

“Based on current capacity, the department enrolled 231,386 Grade 1 and 176,854 Grade 8 learners, or a total of 408,240, in 2016. This may suggest that there is sufficient space to accommodate all learners that have applied but does not take into account the late applications in January,” said MEC Lesufi.

Since the placement period commenced, the department had managed to place over 6,534 learners in schools around the province. To date, 3,389 Grade 1 and 3,145 Grade 8 learners have been placed.

Placement of learners began on 24 June and is ongoing. The department intends placing all learners by 7 September 2016. Priority is accorded to parents that met the 1 June deadline.

The placement process is as follows:

- Schools draw their waiting lists and then submit to the District Directors to sign off;
- Schools then place learners according to the approved lists and
- Schools will inform parents of the outcome using different modes of communication e.g. SMS and letters.

Learners were placed according to first, then second and lastly third choice school options with required documents submitted to the school for verification. Option refers to one of the following criterion:

- School closest to home address;
- School closest to work address;
- Sibling presence in the same school and
- School of specialisation.

Acceptance or rejection of placement

Parents will be informed through an SMS or letter regarding the status of their applications.

“They have seven school days from the date of receiving the notification to confirm acceptance or rejection of placement offers.

“Parents can either go to the school or online to confirm or reject the offer. Parents that fail to confirm acceptance or rejection of the offer will forfeit such an offer and the next parent will be placed in the available space,” said MEC Lesufi.

The department has urged all parents to confirm or reject the placement offers in order to fast track the placement process.

Parents that are for one reason or the other not happy with the placement are advised to approach the District Director. Objections and applications will be dealt with later once the placement process has been completed in September.

“Despite the challenges faced in the early days with the online application system, the department is pleased with the progress recorded to date. The system has proven its value by creating fairness and equity, as well as making it easy for parents to apply for their children.

“Further, the Department has valuable data that is essential to plan class allocation and infrastructure, provision of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM), allocation of educators, scholar transport and nutrition,” MEC Lesufi said.

Getting learning materials to schools

MEC Lesufi said the national Department of Basic Education has appointed three service providers for the management and distribution of learning and teaching support material.

The companies are Zylec Investments (textbooks), African Paper Products (stationery) and Palm Stationery Manufacturers

(stationery).

The Gauteng Education Department has appointed Bongani Rainmaker Logistics to place orders with the afore-mentioned service providers.

School feeder zones

A task team has been established to advise on the issue of feeder zones, as per the Constitutional Court ruling.

The Constitutional Court ruled in favour of the department with regard to admission regulations.

The ruling set aside the provision that a child falls into a school's feeder zone if the child's home or parents' place of work is within a 5km radius of the school. The department now has to develop a new feeder zone policy and revert to the court for approval.

The task team is made up of school governing body (SGB) associations, trade unions and departmental representatives.

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