

PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SCHOOLS EDUCATION ACT, 1999
(ACT No 1 OF 1999)

DETERMINATION OF POLICY RELATING TO SCHOLAR TRANSPORT

I, Nomsa Jajula, Member of Executive Council responsible for Education in the Eastern Cape, acting in terms of section 4 (1) (c), (d) and (2) of the Schools Act, 1999 (Act No 1 of 1999), hereby determine policy relating to scholar transport in the Province as set out in the Schedule hereto.

N JAJULA

MEC: Department of Education

SCHEDULE

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REVISED POLICY GUIDELINES FOR SCHOLAR TRANSPORT

1. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.1 Department: The Department of Education of the Province of the Eastern Cape.

1.2 District Manager: The departmental official in charge of a District Education Office and all schools that fall in that District.

1.3 Circuit Manager: An Education Development Officer or other official in charge of a group of schools that make up part of the District Education Office.

1.4 Application Form: The prescribed STS 1 form used by the Department.

1.5 Claim Form: The prescribed STS 2 form used to claim for transport provided during a month.

1.6 Sliding scale: The departmentally approved scale which indicates the percentage of the full subsidy payable to a parent according to the family gross annual income.

1.7 Transport provider: The owner of an approved vehicle who enters a contract to convey learners along a specified transport route approved by the Department.

1.8 Suitable School: A school, which offers the relevant phase of education and the learner's language of learning and teaching.

1.9 School Day: An official school day as prescribed in the Departmental school calendar.

1.10 SGB: The School Governing Body of the school elected in accordance with the S A Schools' Act 84 of 1996.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education of the Eastern Cape Province has recorded with great concern that there are learners who walk long distances to and from school. In many instances this has resulted in poor attendance by learners; increased drop-out rates and, in some remote areas, a start to schooling at a late age by some learners or even failure to obtain any schooling at all.

With a view to addressing this problem, the Department decided to introduce a system of subsidized transport or boarding for certain learners.

It is Departmental policy to take the primary school to the learner and to take the learner to the secondary school. This means primary

schools should be as near as possible to the majority of learners and secondary learners should be accommodated at centrally situated schools that serve as many learners as possible.

Where schools are not near to learners, a boarding allowance or a transport subsidy should be provided for the learners concerned. Under no circumstances may a learner qualify for a boarding allowance and a transport subsidy.

The Department is committed to providing this service to all learners who qualify but, due to financial constraints, priority will be given to learners in the most disadvantaged communities and those very far from the nearest school. As funds permit, this will be gradually extended to other areas.

This document therefore outlines very briefly the policy guidelines which the Department will employ to render and administer scholar transport to needy schools throughout the Province of the Eastern Cape.

3. CONDITIONS FOR PROVISION OF SCHOLAR TRANSPORT

The subsidized scholar transport service will be available to learners from Grade R to Grade 12 subject to certain conditions. These include but are not limited to:-

3.1 the availability of access roads on which to transport the learners;

3.2 a transport provider who is willing to render the service and meet the conditions and requirements specified in clauses 5, 2, 6 and 11 of this document;

3.3 there are learners that qualify for subsidies on that particular route; and

3.4 the approval of a transport route by the District Office of the Department.

4. WHO MAY APPLY/WHO QUALIFIES

4.1 Learners who live in and attend school in the Province of the Eastern Cape

AND

4.2 Who have to walk a distance of 10 km or more to and from school (i.e. 5 km one way)

OR

Who have to walk a distance of less than 10 km (minimum of 2,5 km, but who are in Grade R/the Foundation Phase or who have physical disabilities

AND

4.3 Who do not receive a hostel boarding allowance

AND

4.4 Whose parents' gross annual family income is below the relevant salary indicated on the current approved sliding scale

AND

4.5 Who are attending the nearest suitable school.

5. PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

5.1 PARENTS

5.1.1 An application form (STS 1) must be obtained timeously from the principal of the school.

5.1.2 The parent must complete the form in accordance with the instructions provided.

5.1.3 The parents must have the application signed by a Commissioner of Oaths that is NOT the principal of the school attended by the learner.

5.1.4 The application must be returned to the school BEFORE 15 NOVEMBER of the year before that for which the subsidy is requested.

5.1.5 Parents must be aware that any incomplete or late form may mean that the child is not given a subsidy until after the form has been processed and approved.

5.2 PRINCIPAL AND SGB

5.2.1 The Principal and SGB must ensure that all application forms are handed out to parents by 1 November of the year, before that for which subsidies are required.

5.2.2 The principal must ensure that forms are correctly filled in, that he/she has signed the relevant sections and that forms are submitted before the due date to District Office.

5.2.3 The Principal, SGB and the Circuit Manager must decide on the routes, get them approved and acquire the services of a transport

provider The Circuit Manager should ensure that the correct procurement procedures are followed.

5.2.4 The Principal and SGB together with the Circuit Manager must inform the Transport Provider about Departmental procedures with regard to transport subsidies and must ensure that the Transport Provider understands the contract before signing it.

5.2.5 The Principal and SGB must be aware that the submission of late or incomplete forms may mean that no subsidy will be given until after the forms have been processed and approved Payments may not be backdated.

5.2.6 The Principal and SGB must ensure that parents who do not receive the full subsidy pay the difference owing to the transport provider monthly This must be done through the school.

5.3 THE DISTRICT OFFICE

5.3.1 The District Office must ensure that application forms are provided to all the relevant schools by the end of October of the year before that for which subsidies will be provided.

5.3.2 The Circuit Manager must assist the school with the selection and approval of transport routes and transport providers and must ensure that schools and transport providers understand Departmental policy on transport subsidies.

5.3.3 District offices must ensure applications are received from schools as soon as possible after 15 November, that they are processed and that schools are informed which applications have been approved before the school opens for educators in the following January.

6. TYPES OF VEHICLES THAT MAY BE USED

Since the conveyance of learners to and from school is regarded as a public transport service, the transport used for this purpose should conform to national road safety standards Sedans, mini buses or bakkies with canopies may be used but they must-

- always be in a roadworthy condition and the SGB should be able to request the transport provider to prove that the vehicle is roadworthy;

- be driven by drivers with valid drivers' licences and valid public driving permits;) not exceed the carrying capacity that appears on the

registration certificate;) be owned by people who have adequate personal liability insurance.

7. ROUTES

7.1 The principal and SGB, with the assistance of the Circuit Manager, should determine the transport routes to be used and submit detailed applications for those routes to the relevant office.

7.2 After receipt of the applications, the relevant office will verify the routes before approval can be given.

7.3 The approval of a route will depend on, among other conditions, those conditions that are set out in clauses 3 and 4 of this document.

7.4 Verification and approval of routes thereof will be done by the District Office subject to certain conditions These include but are not limited to-

- (a) meeting conditions that are set out in section 3 of this document;
- (b) there are learners who meet requirements specified in section 4 of this document.

7.5 Applications for new routes must be made to the District Office before 30 June of the year before such routes will come into operation.

8. SUBSIDY

The maximum subsidy per learner shall be determined by the Head of Department and may be reviewed from time to time.

9. CLAIM PROCEDURE

9.1 Claims may only be made for those learners whose applications have been approved before the start of the school term by the District Office.

9.2 Transporters and schools are to keep a record of the number of learners transported each day.

9.3 At the end of each month the school must complete a claim form (STS 2) for each transport provider These must reach the District office within 5 working days of the end of the month Failure to do so may result in a late payment or no payment.

9.4 The Principal is accountable for the correct completion of the claim form (STS 2).

9.5 The claim form must be certified as correct by the Principal and countersigned by the Chairperson of the SGB or a delegated parent SGB member.

10. PAYMENT PROCEDURE

10.1 Payment will be made electronically to the bank account of the school. The transport provider must complete and submit all documentation required to enable the Department to pay him/her.

10.2 Payment is only made for the actual number of school days on which transport is provided. These days are the days on the official school calendar on which learners actually go to school.

10.3 Payment per learner will only be made for the days on which a learner actually attends school. Provided a learner misses fewer than five days a month, a full amount can be paid.

10.4 Payment for transport on days on which transport is provided when it is not a school day (e.g. sport or cultural activities) will be the responsibility of the SGB and the amount payable must be negotiated between the SGB and the transport provider.

11. CONTRACTS

11.1 A contract must be signed between the Transport Provider and the school represented by the SGB and the Principal before the service is rendered.

11.2 The contract must include, among other things, control measures and payment procedures.

11.3 No principal or educator may sign a contract as a transport provider.

12. MONITORING AND CONTROL

12.1 The District Manager is responsible for ensuring that the service is properly monitored and controlled and should send an official at least once per term to monitor the situation.

12.2 Principals as site managers will be expected to provide all information required when visited by an official from the District or Provincial Office.

12.3 The following can be checked:

12.3.1 Transport is actually being provided.

12.3.2 The contract is in place.

12.3.3 The school's attendance register agrees with the attendance recorded on the STS (2).

12.3.4 Payments are being made to the transport provider.

12.3.5 The correct type of vehicles are being used and they appear to be in a roadworthy condition.

12.3.6 No principal or educator is benefiting from the subsidy system.

12.3.7 The distances travelled exceed the minimum laid down for a subsidy.

12.4 The Provincial Office will from time to time monitor the operation of this service in all districts.

13. DEVIATIONS FROM THE POLICY

Strong motivations from schools to deviate from the policy may be considered in the following cases:

13.1 A learner qualifies to attend a comprehensive or specialized school or a school offering certain subjects and it is in her/his best interests to attend the school.

13.2 An application is submitted later than 15 November of the previous year (e.g a learner only enrolls at the school in January).

13.3 A claim is submitted more than five working days after the end of a month.

13.4 The use of a vehicle other than the type of vehicle allowed (e.g an enclosed trailer pulled by a tractor in certain rural areas).

13.5 A Principal or educator has to convey learners to school (A subsidy will only be considered if the distance exceeds the normal distance travelled to school by the principal/educator by more than 10 kilometres)

14. ADDENDA

14.1 Addendum 1: STS 1 Application Form (English).

14.2 Addendum 2: STS 1A Application form (Afrikaans).

14.3 Addendum 3: STS 2 Claim Form.

14.4 Addendum 4: Approved amounts payable.

14.5 Addendum 5: Draft contract for Transport Provider.

14.6 Addendum 6: Sliding scale.

ADDENDUM 4

TRANSPORT SUBSIDIES

APPROVED AMOUNTS PAYABLE

The maximum amount payable per learner per month will be R50.

The maximum amount can be paid provided learners attend school and schools are officially open for all or part of at least four weeks in the month.

In the event of a school holiday falling during part of a month, an amount of R12.50 per learner will be payable for each week or part thereof that the learners attend school and the schools are officially open.

This rate will remain in force until changed by means of a notification from the Head of Department of the Department of Education of the Province of the Eastern Cape.

In cases where parents do not qualify for the full subsidy, they will be responsible for paying the difference between the subsidy they receive and the full subsidy to Transport Provider via the School.

If Transport Providers wish to charge a sum higher than that provided for by the subsidy, they must negotiate this with the SGB The parents of the learners, and not the Department, will be responsible for paying the difference, via the school, to the Transport Provider This amount must be recorded in the contract.

A payment is made only for days on which a learner attends school However, if a learner is absent for five or fewer days per month, the subsidy will be paid in full.

