

Oversight visits to assess school readiness

The Portfolio Committee on Basic Education will this week visit three provinces to assess school readiness for 2021 academic year.



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Educators are returning to school today in preparation for schools reopening on 15 February 2021.

The chairperson of the committee, Bongiwe Mbinqo-Gigaba, said the oversight visits will assess the readiness of all the stakeholders - from the national Department of Basic Education to the school level, to ensure the safe reopening of schools.

As part of its programme, Mbinqo-Gigaba said the committee is going to visit certain identified schools in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.

“The school readiness visits are even more significant this year, considering the impact of Covid-19 on the 2020 academic year and the inherent risk it continues to pose going into the 2021 academic year.

“It is essential that through our oversight work, we ensure that everything is in place to secure a safe return of students and teachers to classrooms,” Mbinqo-Gigaba said.

In assessing the impact of the adjusted level 3 lockdown regulations on the reopening of schools, the chairperson said the committee will pay close attention to the adherence to health protocols, procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE), and plans to cover the 2021 curriculum, given the delayed 2021 academic year.



Revised 2021 academic calendar: Schools only set to open mid-February

15 Jan 2021



The committee will also pay close attention to infrastructure including maintenance; safety and security; the availability of water and sanitation; processes for screening, testing and tracing; scholar transport; plans to initiate the school nutrition programme, and assessment of plans to distribute Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSM) to schools.

“In Gauteng, the committee will also receive an update on the state of the admission and registration of learners, considering the influx of learners into the province.

“It will also visit schools in Gauteng’s Ekurhuleni North District,” Mbinqo-Gigaba said.

The committee will interact with stakeholders including the national Department of Basic Education, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Departments of Education, including the offices of the MECs, associations of school governing bodies, organised labour and the South African Principals' Association.

Meanwhile, Basic Education Deputy Minister, Dr Reginah Mhaule and Limpopo Education MEC, Polly Boshielo, will also visit schools across Sekhukhune East District today.

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