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To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors (Head Office and district offices), Heads: Management and Governance, Heads: Curriculum Support, Circuit Managers, Principals of ordinary public schools and Chairpersons of governing bodies

Short summary: *This circular serves to guide schools with the establishment and functioning of their Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) committees to ensure quality education and effective curriculum delivery.*

Subject: Roles, responsibilities, and composition of the LTSM committee at schools

1. Schools are reminded that in line with the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS)* requirements, every learner must have access to a core textbook per subject. Schools are expected to issue textbooks to learners for both classroom and home use to support learning. Measures to safeguard and retrieve textbooks should be balanced with the imperative of ensuring equitable access to curriculum resources.
2. The principal is the accountable officer for the management of LTSM at the school and, together with the LTSM committee, plays an important role in the implementation of the school's LTSM policy and the overall management of textbooks, workbooks, literature study guides and other resources at school.
3. The LTSM committee should be established at each school to oversee the fair, accountable, and curriculum-aligned procurement and usage of textbooks. This committee, together with the governing body, plays a central role in upholding the principles of equity, transparency, and academic excellence at the school. By fulfilling their responsibilities, the LTSM committees directly contribute to improving learning outcomes and supporting educators with reliable and consistent classroom resources.

4. The LTSM committees serves as a structured mechanism within schools to guide the selection as well as the ordering, distribution, and monitoring of textbooks and other LTSM. Their work is to ensure the following:
 - 4.1 Curriculum alignment: The textbooks selected must be in line with the CAPS and the latest educational guidelines set by the Department of Basic Education.
 - 4.2 Fairness and equity: Every learner has to have access to the necessary textbooks, for every subject and every grade, regardless of their socio-economic background.
 - 4.3 Accountability: Schools should follow proper procedures in using allocated budgets for textbook procurement, ensuring sound financial management procedures.
 - 4.4 Sustainability: Committees should promote a culture of caring for textbooks, monitoring their use, retrieval, and replacement to extend their lifespan.
5. Core responsibilities of LTSM committees typically include:
 - 5.1 Needs analysis and planning: Conducting quarterly audits to determine which textbooks are in stock, which are missing or damaged, and which need to be replaced, while ensuring that the school textbook retrieval policy is enforced at year-end.
 - 5.2 Budget management: Working with the school's financial team and governing body to manage textbook funding and making purchasing decisions within the limits of the allocated LTSM budget.
 - 5.3 Selection and procurement: Reviewing of the approved national catalogue of textbooks and selecting textbooks that best meet the school's teaching and learning needs. Ensuring inclusive representation in the decision-making process to avoid bias.
 - 5.4 Inventory control and distribution: Overseeing the safe storage, labelling, and issuing of textbooks to learners and educators.
 - 5.5 Monitoring and reporting: Monitoring textbook usage in classrooms to ensure they are being used effectively. Reporting to the principal, governing body, and relevant district officials on textbook status and needs.
 - 5.6 Promoting responsibility among learners: Encouraging learners and their parents to take responsibility for the care and return of textbooks. Implementing clear consequences for lost or damaged books in line with school policy.
6. Key LTSM time frames, which the committee must include in their management plan, are indicated in **Annexure A**. (attached) These key dates are also communicated each year in the school planning calendar.

7. The composition of a typical LTSM committee consists of:
- 7.1 The principal (or his/her delegate): provides oversight and ensures alignment with school policy.
 - 7.2 The LTSM coordinator: manages the day-to-day textbook processes and records.
 - 7.3 The departmental and/or phase head(s): bring subject, and phase specific insights into textbook needs.
 - 7.4 Subject educators: assist in evaluating and recommending appropriate textbooks.
 - 7.5 A governing body member: ensures accountability and stakeholder involvement.
 - 7.6 The school finance officer or administrator (optional): supports budget tracking and compliance.
8. Kindly bring the contents of this circular to the attention of all concerned.

SIGNED: B WALTERS

HEAD: EDUCATION

DATE: 2025-09-02