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Statement on the Implementation Guidelines for the 2024

Amendments to the South African Schools Act

NAPTOSA acknowledges the release of the *Guidelines for Purposes of Implementing Certain of the 2024 Amendments to the South African Schools Act*, issued by the Department of Basic Education on 12 June 2025. These Guidelines serve as a practical tool to support the implementation of the *Basic Education Laws Amendment Act (BELA), 2024*, which came into effect on 24 December 2024.

NAPTOSA recognises that stakeholder consultation did take place in the drafting of these Guidelines, as noted by the Department and affirmed in the Minister's accompanying letter to MECs and Heads of Departments. We do, however, remain concerned that the short consultation period and the non-binding nature of the Guidelines may limit their overall impact. Without enforceable obligations, there is a risk of inconsistent implementation across provinces – particularly on critical matters such as compulsory Grade R, language policy, admissions, and the roles of School Governing Bodies.

We further note the Department's intention to release draft national regulations, norms, and policies for public comment by the end of June 2025. NAPTOSA urges that this next phase of the policy process be grounded in inclusive, transparent, and well-timed engagement, ensuring that stakeholder input is meaningfully integrated and that practical realities on the ground are taken into account.

NAPTOSA is particularly concerned about the recommendation that ECD centres offering Grade R register as independent schools. While aligned with legislative provisions, this may prove unfeasible for many under-resourced centres unless accompanied by robust provincial support, infrastructure investment, and capacity development.

In light of the above, NAPTOSA reaffirms our commitment to advocate for policies that are equitable, legally sound, and supportive of quality public education for all. We will continue to engage constructively with the Department of Basic Education and all stakeholders to ensure that the Amendments to the South African Schools Act are implemented in a way that advances the rights of learners, protects the professional interests of educators, and strengthens the public education system across all provinces.

Members are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the guidelines and contact NAPTOSA provincial offices with any questions or concerns related to the implementation in your respective schools.



Scan the QR Code to access the guidelines:

In solidarity,

Mr BL Manuel

Executive Director

