NASIONALE NUUSBRIEF | NATIONAL NEWSLETTER
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OKTOBERVAKANSIE & 0.5M SOSIALE AFSTAND

Is daar waarheid in gerugte?

Voortvloeiend uit 'n baie lang vergadering op versoek van die SAOU en die ander vier onderwysvakonde met die DBO op Saterdag, 14 Augustus 2021, kan die volgende terugvoering ten opsigte van verskeie gerugte in onderwyskringe gelewer word:

KANSELLERING VAN OKTOBERVAKANSIE

Daar was verneem dat die DBO beoog om die Oktoberskoolvakansie te kanselleer ten einde te kompenseer vir die 5 skooldae wat verlore geraak het agv die vroeër sluiting vir die wintervakansie. Die DBO is daaroor gekonfronteer omdat nie een van die onderwysvakbonde hoegenaamd daaroor gekonsulteer was nie.

Die DBO het erken dat die Komitee van Onderwysministers (KOM) en die Komitee van Onderwyshoofde (KOH) reeds op die volgende besluit het:

- Dat die 5 dae vanaf 4 tot 8 Oktober 2021 benut moet word om verlore skooldae in te haal; en
- Die derde en vierde skoolkwartaal sal geskei word deur 'n langnaweek deur 23 September 2021 as skoolvakansiedag te verklaar.

Nodeloos om te stel, was die onderwysvakbonde hoegnaamd nie daarmee geneë om dit te aanvaar nie. Die volgende redes word deur die SAOU aangevoer:

- Eensydige handelinge soos hierbo gestel, is absoluut onaanvaarbaar;
- Die sluiting van skole 'n week vroeër vir die wintervakansie was noodgedwonge om stygende infeksies en die derde golf hok te slaan;
- Die absolute fiksasie om ten spyte van buitengewone omstandighede agv die huidige Covid-pandemie die skooljaar as normaal te ag, en ten alle koste die 200 skooldae per jaar na te jaag, maak doodgewoon nie sin nie;
- Opvoeders werk tans besonder pligsgetrou en doen alles binne hulle vermoë om die ingekorte kurrikulum te dek;
- Talle opvoeders en leerders is geestelik moeg weens die voortdurende spanning agv Covid-19,

OCTOBER HOLIDAY & 0.5M SOCIAL DISTANCE

Is their truth in rumours?

Emanating from a long meeting with the DBE at the request of the SAOU and the four other teacher unions on Saturday, 14 August 2021, the following feedback in regard to several rumours in education circles, can be provided:

CANCELLATION OF OCTOBER HOLIDAY

It was learnt that the DBE intends to cancel the October school holiday to compensate for the five school days that were lost as a result of the earlier closure for the winter holidays. The DBE was confronted as not one of the teacher unions was consulted in any way whatsoever.

The DBE admitted that the Committee of Education Ministers (CEM) and the Heads of Departments Committee (HEDCOM) have already decided as follows:

- That the 5 days from 4 to 8 October 2021 must be utilised to compensate for the lost school days; and
- The third and fourth terms will be separated by a long weekend by declaring 23 September 2021 as a school holiday.

As can be expected, the teacher unions were not prepared to accept such decisions. The following reasons were advanced by the SAOU:

- Unilateral actions as stated here above, is absolutely unacceptable;
- The closure of schools a week earlier for the winter holiday was aimed to limit infections and to curtail the effect of the third wave;
- The absolute fixation to insist on the normal 200 school days per annum despite the fact that the world is experiencing an extraordinary period as a result of the Covid pandemic, makes no sense whatsoever;
- Educators are extremely diligent and do their utmost to ensure that the trimmed curriculum is covered;
- Many educators and learners are emotionally drained as a result of the continuous stress due

die voortdurende risiko van infeksie en die druk om die kurrikulum te voltooi;

- Distrikskantore dring jaarliks daarop aan dat promosie- en puntestate van skole teen einde November ingedien moet word en in die proses raak die laaste twee weke van die skooljaar verlore. Dit is alombekend dat leerders nie terugkeer na die skool na voltooiing van die eksamen of die laaste toets nie. Benut eerder hierdie laaste twee weke;
- Die benadering om alle skole volgens die beginsel van "een skoengroote vir almal" te benader is sinneloos. Talle skole is op datum;
- Die aandagspan van leerders, veral jonger leerders, is beperk en vereis behoorlike rusperiodes;
- Talle opvoeders, en ouers, het reeds finansiële verpligtinge vir die Oktober-vakansie aangegaan. Wie sal hulle vergoed?
- Daar is ook verneem dat die SBL-organisasies nie die voorgenome skrapping steun nie; en.
- Die onderwys funksioneer nie in 'n vakuum nie en het 'n plig teenoor die vakansiebedryf wat tans op sy knieë is.

Die DBO het deeglik van die baie sterk teenkanting van die onderwysvakbonde kennis geneem en onderneem om die saak terug te verwys na die KOM en die KOH. Die boodskap sal wees dat hulle eensydige optrede geen ondersteuning geniet nie.

Terugvoering sal binnekort aan die SAOU en die ander onderwysvakbonde gelewer word. Lede sal op hoogte gehou word.

0.5M SOSIALE AFSTAND

Ten spyte daarvan dat die derde Covid-19 golf nog in talle provinsies hoogty vier en infeksies in baie skole daartoe lei dat skole moet sluit, het die DBO by die Nasionale Covid Beheerraad en die Kabinet aansoek gedoen dat dat die sosiale afstand in laerskole verminder moet word van 1m tot 0.5m. Die rede wat die DBO aanvoer is dat jonger leerders in laerskole nie so vatbaar is vir infeksies nie, en as hulle siek word, word hulle nie so ernstig siek nie.

Die SAOU en die anderwysvakbonde se standpunt hieroor is duidelik gekommunikeer, nl:

- 0.5m impliseer eintlik dat sosiale afstand in laerskole oorbodig is;
- Daar moet onomstootlike wetenskaplike bewyse wees dat die gesondheid en lewens van jonger kinders nie in die najaag van kurrikulumdekking in gevaar gestel word nie; en
- Dat die gebrekkige sosiale afstand, of soos hierbo gestel eintlik geen sosiale afstand, nie opvoeders op groter risiko sal plaas nie.

to Covid-19, the continuous risk of infections and the pressure to complete the curriculum;

- District offices annually insist that the promotion and mark sheets of schools must be submitted by the end of November. In the process the last two weeks of the school year is lost as no learner returns to school after the completion of the examinations or the last tests. The proposal is that the last two weeks of the term must rather be used;
- The approach to regard all schools in terms of the principle of "one size, fits all" makes no sense. Many schools are up to date;
- The attention span of learners, especially younger learners, is limited and proper periods of rest is required;
- Many educators, and parents, have already incurred financial expenses for the October holidays. Who will reimburse them?
- It has also been learnt that the SGB organisations do not support the proposed cancellation of the holidays; and
- Education does not function in a vacuum and is duty bound not to sacrifice the holiday industry that is currently on its knees.

The DBE duly took note of the strong objection of the teacher unions and undertook to refer the matter back to the CEM and HEDCOM. The message will be that their unilateral decisions do not enjoy any support whatsoever.

Feedback will be provided shortly to the SAOU and the other teacher unions. Members will be kept abreast of developments.

0.5M SOCIAL DISTANCING

Despite the fact that the third Covid-19 wave is still active in many provinces and infections in many schools have required closures, the DBE applied for a relaxation in primary schools of the 1m social distancing to 0.5m with the National Covid Command Council and the Cabinet. The reason that the DBE advances is that younger learners in primary schools are not as susceptible to infections and if they become sick, it is not as serious.

The SAOU and the other teacher unions communicated as follows in this regard:

- 0.5m actually implies that social distancing in primary schools is actually superfluous;
- There must be immutable scientific evidence that the health and lives of younger learners will not be placed at risk in the endeavour to ensure curriculum coverage; and
- That the 0.5m social distance, or as stated here above, actually no social distance, will not place educators on greater risk.

Daar is bevestig dat geen besluit nog in die verband deur die DBO geneem is nie, dat 1m steeds geld en dat daar volledig met onderwysvakbonde gekonsulteer sal word alvorens 'n besluit in die verband geneem word.

ALGEMEEN

Die SAOU veg vir die belange van lede. Skakel ons te enige tyd oor enige aspek wat u pla.

DIE SAOU GEE OM!

It was confirmed that no decision has yet been taken in this regard. The 1m still applies and that teacher unions will be consulted prior to any decisions in this regard.

GENERAL

The SAOU fearlessly fights for the rights of members. Contact us at any time with your concerns

THE SAOU CARES!