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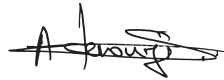
Department of education SASA Policy

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A AMMENDMENT HISTORY:

Amendment Date	Version	Amendment Date	Final Approval Level

B. APPROVAL

Title	Name	Date	Signature
Director	O.D Adewuyi	12 Feb,2025	

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The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 is the primary law governing the country's school system, with the Department of Basic Education overseeing its policies and recent amendments. It establishes a uniform system for the organization, governance, and funding of schools.

The Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act, which took effect on December 24, 2024, made significant changes to SASA. The Department of Basic Education is currently issuing new regulations and policies to implement these changes.

Key provisions of the SASA policy

School governance (SGBs)

The Act mandates the establishment of democratically elected School Governing Bodies (SGBs) for all public schools. SGBs consist of parents, educators, non-teaching staff, and learners (in high schools). SGBs are responsible for setting and monitoring school policies on admissions, language, fees, and the code of conduct.

Compulsory education

Expansion of compulsory schooling: As of December 2024, the BELA Act makes Grade R, and Grades 10 to 12 compulsory, in addition to the previous grades 1 through 9.

Compulsory age: All children must attend school from the year they turn seven until they reach the age of 15 or complete the ninth grade, whichever comes first.

Attendance enforcement: The Act establishes procedures for monitoring learner attendance.

The principal must investigate an absence of three consecutive school days without a valid reason and report it to the SGB for intervention.

Admission policies

Non-discrimination: Public schools must admit learners without any form of unfair discrimination.

No admission tests: SGBs and school officials are prohibited from administering tests related to a learner's admission.

Payment of fees: Learners cannot be refused admission if their parents are unable to pay school fees.

Department authority: Recent amendments have enhanced the Head of Department's authority regarding learner admissions after consulting with the SGB.

Language policy

Official languages: The BELA Act recognizes South African Sign Language as an official language for teaching and learning in public schools.

Additional languages: The Head of Department may direct a school to adopt more than one language of instruction and must ensure the school has the necessary resources to do so.

Provincial control: Amendments have shifted some control over language policy from SGBs to provincial education officials.

Disciplinary policies

Prohibition of corporal punishment: The Act prohibits corporal punishment in all schools, explicitly defining it to include any act that intentionally causes a child pain or discomfort.

Discipline codes: SGBs must adopt a code of conduct for learners, which includes disciplinary procedures.

Funding and school types

Funding norms: The Act outlines funding norms that prioritize redress and target poverty to allocate funds for the public school system. "No-fee schools": The Education Laws Amendment Act of 2005 authorizes the declaration of schools in poverty-stricken areas as "no-fee schools".

Public and independent schools: SASA establishes two types of schools: independent (private) schools and public schools.

Role of the Department of Basic Education

The Department of Basic Education is responsible for the overall implementation of SASA, which includes:

Setting national education policy.

Ensuring the democratic transformation of the education system.

Monitoring and evaluating the education system.

Collaborating with provincial education authorities to implement policy.