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Contents

No.		Gazette No.	Page No.
GOVERNMENT NOTICES • GOEWERMENTSKENNISGEWINGS			
Basic Education, Department of / Basiese Onderwys, Departement van			
7160	South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996): Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding .	54180	3

DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

NO. 7160 **20 February 2026**

SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT, 1996 (ACT NO 84 of 1996)

AMENDED NATIONAL NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL FUNDING

I, Siviwe Gwarube, Minister of Basic Education, in terms of section 35 read with section 39(7) of the South African Schools Act, 1996, (Act 84 of 1996) and with paragraphs 110 and 112 of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF), after consultation with the Minister of Finance and the Council of Education Ministers, hereby publish amendments to the NNSSF. The NNSSF were published in Government Notice No. 890, Government Gazette No. 29179 of 31 August 2006.

The NNSSF are hereby amended by updating the:

1. National Targets Table (Par. 109 of the NNSSF) for 2026 to 2028 indicative target amounts; and the
2. National Poverty Distribution Table (Par. 111 of the NNSSF).

The amendment is contained in the Schedule. The effective date for implementation of this amendment will be 1 January 2026.

Ms S Gwarube
Minister of Basic Education
Date: 18/02/2026

SCHEDULE

In terms of Paragraph 110 of the NNSSF, the National Targets Table published in Government Gazette No. 51962 Government Notice No. 2948, of 24 January 2025 is hereby updated to include 2028 target amounts. The no fee threshold will be R1,835 in 2026.

National table of targets for the school allocation (2026 – 2028)

	2026	2027*	2028*
NQ1 - NQ3	R1 835	R1 919	R1 994
NQ4	R919	R962	R999
NQ5	R315	R329	R342
No fee threshold	R1 835	R1 919	R1 919
Small schools: National fixed amount	R42 532	R44 489	R46 224

*2027 and 2028 figures inflation adjusted – Consumer Price Index (CPI) projected inflation rate adjusted. The No Fee Threshold remains unchanged as compared what was published on 24 January 2025.

No new data is available to update the national poverty distribution table (Paragraph 111 of the NNSSF) In terms of Paragraph 112 of the NNSSF. The table which was published in Government Gazette No. 51962 Government Notice No. 2948, of 24 January 2025, therefore remains the basis for the national poverty targeting in 2026:

National Poverty Distribution Table						
	Quintiles %					
	1 poorest	2	3	4	5	Total
EC	27.3	24.7	19.6	17	11.4	100%
FS	20.5	20.9	22.4	20.8	15.4	100%
GP	14.1	14.7	17.9	21.9	31.4	100%
KZN	22.1	23.2	20.2	18.7	15.8	100%
LP	28.2	24.6	24.2	14.9	8	100%
MP	23.1	24.1	21.5	17.7	13.5	100%
NC	21.5	19.3	20.7	21.4	17.1	100%
NW	25.6	22.3	20.8	17.6	13.7	100%
WC	8.6	13.3	18.4	28	31.7	100%
SA	20	20	20	20	20	100%

In terms of section 39(7) of the South African Schools Act, I hereby determine all learners in quintiles 1 to 3 (60% of the public school learners nationally) to be in no fee schools for 2026.

If funds are available, and after taking into consideration the possible funding implications this may have on other poverty related programmes involving no fee schools, the Provincial Education Department (PED) may offer Q4 and Q5 schools no fee status at least at the threshold level of R 1,835 voluntarily. In declaring these fee charging schools as no fee schools, the PEDs need to ensure all these schools are informed that they will be declared no fee schools from 1 January 2026. PEDs also need to ensure that these schools have informed parents of the change.

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