GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNAL MEMO

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To: Directors: Districts
CES: Circuit Managers
CES: District Education Support
DCES: Education Support/ISS
District: School Health Coordinators (SES)
Principals and School Governing Bodies of Public Schools

RE: DBE CIRCULAR NO.20 OF2026: RESURGENCE OF MPOX, INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared M-pox as a Public Health Infection of International Concern (PHEIC) on 23 July 2022, making M-pox a notifiable disease in South Africa. The Department of Health has also noted with concern a resurgence and increase of case of Mpox in the country over the past few weeks and is therefore urging the population to be vigilant of its symptoms. One of the prevention strategies recommended by the WHO is **public education and community engagement**.

Kindly find attached the above DBE circular which is intended to provide information and advice on M-pox to school communities, and re-state the prevention measures that must be implemented.

The DBE circular outlines the following:

1. **Symptoms of M-pox and transmission modes of the disease:**
    - Skin rash
    - Temperature of above 38,5; chills, headaches and
    - General lethargy (low energy) and back ache
    - Mpox virus spread through close physical contact (not through air) with body lesions, body fluids and contact with contaminated materials used by those with the disease.

2. **Resurgence of M-pox in South Africa.**
   The national Department of Health (DOH) has **advised vigilance** in the general population and indicated that there is **no cause for concern at present.**

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3. Advice to School Principals, Staff, Learners, and Parents

The DOH advises that the risk to school communities is very low. Most cases were identified between and among adult males. Rather, high vigilance is advised. M-pox is spread by **close physical contact** with someone with M-pox disease and is not airborne.

Where there is a suspected case of Mpox based on the symptoms in Section 1 above, the individual should be isolated, sent home, and advised to seek medical help. The principal should then contact the nearest health facility or the District or Provincial Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP) coordinator for further advice. Please remember:

- Always seek information from trusted sources like the Health Department, **www.health.gov.za**; Department of Basic Education; **www.education.gov.za**, the National Institute of Communicable Diseases **www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/mpox-2/** and the WHO **www.who.int**

4. Prevention Measures

Schools are reminded to encourage regular washing of hands with clean water and soap. Where water or soap is not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser may be used regularly.
Sick learners and staff should stay away from school to avoid spreading any infection and seek medical attention immediately.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Anyone can be infected with or pass Mpox onto others through close physical. Contact. Schools must ensure that staff and learners are not stigmatised or discriminated against in any way because of the virus.
5.2 Please bring the contents of this Memo and the DBE Circular to the attention of all schools, staff and parents.
5.3 Let us work together to keep our schools safe and healthy spaces for all staff, learners, parents and visitors.

Yours sincerely



Mr Albert Chanee
Acting Head of Department
Date: 03.11.2026

Cc: DDG: CMD
A/DDG: Education Support
Chief Director: School Interventions
Chief Directors: Districts
Chief Director: Public Ordinary Schools