



I.K Nkoane Education House

156 Barkly Road  
Homestead  
Kimberley 8301

Private Bag X5029  
Kimberley 8300  
Republic of South Africa

Tel: 053 839 6500  
Fax: 053 839 6580/1  
Web:ncdoe.ncpg.gov.za

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquiries: Ms V. Willemse/Mr D. Rolse/Ms P Motsamai  
Reference: L2.10.2  
Landline: 053 832 8088  
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**CHIEF DIRECTOR: DISTRICT OPERATIONS**  
**DISTRICT DIRECTORS**  
**DISTRICT OFFICIALS: TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**  
**CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALISTS**  
**CIRCUIT MANAGERS**  
**SUBJECT ADVISORS**  
**SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: HIGH AND COMBINED SCHOOLS**  
**EDUCATOR UNIONS**

**CIRCULAR: 28/2024**

**OPTIMISING DISTRICT TEACHER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (DTDC) OPERATIONS  
FOR SEAMLESS IMPLEMENTATION OF ONLINE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT  
PLATFORM (OTDP)**

### **A. RATIONALE**

As outlined in the *Integrated Strategic Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) in South Africa, 2011-2025*, Provincial Education Departments are mandated to establish and develop Provincial Teacher Development Institutes (PTDIs), District Teacher Development Centres (DTDCs) and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), with the aim of enhancing support to teachers and access to professional development opportunities at the local level.

The Department of Basic Education *Guidelines for Provincial Teacher Development Institutes and District Teacher Development Centres* provide a clear framework for the establishment and effective and efficient functioning of DTDCs.

The aim of this circular is to emphasise the significance of our DTDCs in fostering continuous professional teacher education and development activities and to institute an online teacher development approach to realise training interventions.

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## **FUNCTIONS OF THE DISTRICT TEACHER DEVELOPMENT CENTRES**

Currently, we are operating with five (5) District Vodacom Centres regarded as District Teacher Development Centres. The purpose of these Centres is the provision of teacher professional development. The DTDCs also aim to be places where Professional Learning Communities should meet to enhance their professional learning for the improvement of their classroom practice. The centres should have resources and materials available to support teacher learning. As per the DBE Guidelines, the functions of DTDCs include:

- Following the national programme provided by the PTDIs;
- Facilitating teacher development programmes led by appointed Subject Specialists;
- Supporting teachers in accessing appropriate development opportunities through SACE-approved providers
- Assisting teachers to take the diagnostic self-assessment (online and/or paper-based), do course identification and help teachers source funding to register for the required courses;
- Serving as central meeting venues for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and offering resources to support PLC activities.

DTDCs will also serve as local central meeting venues for PLCs and support sites for teachers in terms of curriculum support, shared resources, and delivery of continuing professional development courses.

District Directors are hereby mandated to assign Subject Advisors or IT Officials in the interim to manage the DTDCs or consider secondment and acting appointments in line with the requirements of the Organisational Structure. Currently it is only John Taolo Gaetsewe District that has officially appointed a DTDC Centre Manager.

Furthermore, we encourage the Information Technology (IT) Directorate to assess all DTDCs for potential hardware and software upgrades, connectivity strength, and address any shortcomings for future planning and budgeting purposes.

School Governing Bodies and Principals are requested to encourage teachers to utilise DTDCs effectively and embrace opportunities for continuous professional development. Let us work together to foster a culture of lifelong learning and excellence in teacher education.

## **B. DBE ONLINE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Online Teacher Development Programme (OTDP) refers to professional development workshops, courses and programmes that are primarily delivered online, following asynchronous and synchronous approaches depending on the nature of topics and goals.

This hosting of courses endorsed by SACE and integration with SACE is not yet available and will be available next year. This part of the platform is still under development.

In future, the online platform will assist teachers with access to quality SACE-endorsed programmes and opportunities for ongoing development, thereby improving prospects for improved classroom practices and learning outcomes.

The online platform has a portal for self-reflection and assessment, and it hosts a library of resources from the DBE and its partners. For this platform to be effective, there is a need to have a strong theory of change that can assist teachers in transitioning from the manual to the online platform.

The platform is currently a microlearning platform for self-initiated teacher professional learning. Microlearning modules earn Type 1 SACE CPTD points, which the teachers must claim on the SACE portal at this stage. The microlearning platform does offer customised learning pathways and online professional learning communities.

Data generated through the online platform will enable better planning for full programmes. It will also make it easy for DTDCs and PTDIs to work with subject advisors and Teacher Development officials to monitor progress on the implementation of programmes to respond more effectively to teacher needs through the development of relevant programmes that are responsive to teacher needs.

### C. ONLINE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

To register on the Online Teacher Development Platform of the South African Department of Basic Education, please follow these steps:

#### Step 1: Accessing the Platform

1. Open a web browser (such as Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, or Mozilla Firefox) and navigate to the following URL: <https://dbe-tpd.org>



#### Step 2: Logging In

1. On the login page, please click on and complete **ONLY** these TWO fields:
  - o **Your ID Number**
  - o **Your Last Name (Surname)**
2. If the platform does not recognise you, you will be asked to complete a manual registration form. Please submit the form once complete.
3. Need help logging in? Refer to our video guide:  
<http://nicpd.online/help/login/login.mp4>

### Step 3: Introduction and Terms of Use

1. Review the introductory screens, which include:
  - o A **Terms of Use** document (scroll down and accept)
  - o A demonstration video (if you do not want to view it now or in the future, scroll down and click the checkbox; then close the video).

### Step 4: Verifying Your Profile

1. You will be asked to verify yourself. Watch our helpful video guide to see how to do it: <http://nicpd.online/help/verify/verify.mp4>
2. Please add your school as well. Refer to our video guide: <http://nicpd.online/help/select-school/select-school.mp4>

### Step 5: Searching for Content

You can search for content in one of two ways:

- **By Title:** Watch our video guide to learn how: <http://nicpd.online/help/search-title/play.mp4> (e.g., typing "RCP" in the Search by Title field will find the Teacher Mentor modules)
- **By Category/Sub-category and Topic** (all in one process): Watch our video guide to learn how: <http://nicpd.online/help/search-cat/play.mp4> (e.g., typing "Reading" in the Category Search field will find all the Reading modules)

### Further Assistance

- For user support during registration and log in, direct a WhatsApp message to **076 307 9426**
- Refer to the **Help** link at the top right of the platform screen for additional resources
- We recommend downloading the video guides for ease of reference
- Note the link to the help files: <https://nicpd.online/help/>
- The registration video: <https://nicpd.online/help/login/login.mp4>
- The registration video is available for download at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FY5EJXNO8CBvossWg4OusmSdJplVNBaH/view?usp=sharing>

Please contact your District Centre Manager and Administrative support for further assistance or to access to the District Vodacom Centre for online support.

#### **D. DISTRICT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO REALISE A SUCCESSFUL ONLINE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM (OTDP) PROCESS**

**DISTRICT CENTRE MANAGERS:** The responsibilities may, but are not limited to the followings:

- Support district administrators to assist users and maintain organisational data;
- Assist walk-in teachers with registration on the platform. Should they need assistance with their log in details, help with the retrieving process;
- Advocacy on the platform – advocate on the value of the platform and potential for supporting teachers development generally and individualised professional learning of teachers;
- Report of teachers as users, i.e. registration and accessing the online modules;
- Provide a conducive environment where teachers can meet and share practices;
- Keep a record of users and provide statistics of how many teachers visit the centre, and also how many attend workshops every day. This stats should be provided to the Provincial Administrator.

#### **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- User maintenance at the district level. This includes:
  - Support all teachers as district users.
  - Liaise with the Provincial Administrator when bugs are reported, or improvements are suggested.
  - Import teachers in bulk to the platform as verified users

#### **Please note the following:**

- access is available to, amongst others, all basic administrators (DBE, Provincial or District officials) at their level
- Reporting can be enabled by filtering by date, person, module, topic to note:
  - CPTD Points earned
  - Modules selected and completed
  - User engagement
  - PLCs created
  - Questionnaire trends

Kindly bring the content of this Circular to all teachers at schools, as all teachers are encouraged to register on the OTDP and advance their own professional development.

Yours sincerely



**DR MI ISHMAIL**

**ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: EDUCATION**

**DATE:** 29.07.2024