# FACTORS THAT LEAD TO LOW PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN FARM SCHOOLS IN THE MADIBENG AREA

by

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# DECLARATION

I declare that '**Factors that lead to low parental involvement in farm schools in the Madibeng area'** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

**Signature**

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# DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents; my late father Mukundwa Simon Vhulahani and my mother Nkhakhiseni Rachel Vhulahani for inculcating the love of studying and also for supporting and encouraging me through all my studies.

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May I pass the words of fervent gratitude to the following people:

# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| SASA | South African Schools Act |
| SGB | School Governing Body. |
| SMT | School Management Team |
| ABET | Adult Basic Education and Training |
| ACE | Advanced Certificate in education |
| NDPE | National Diploma in Primary Education |
| B. Tech | Bachelor of Technology |
| SPTD | Senior Primary Teachers Diploma |
| FDE | Further Diploma in Education Management |
| B.Ed. Hons | Bachelor of Education Honours |
| CAPS | Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement |
| QLTC | Quality of learning teaching Campaign |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |

# ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate factors that lead to low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area. The qualitative research method was used for the study and the interviews were used to collect data from the participants, particularly in-depth interviews and focus group interviews. The study discovered that the majority of teachers and parents did not know what parent involvement was; and it was also discovered that low parental involvement bears a negative effect on learners' performance, learners' discipline, cleaning campaign, fundraising, teachers moral, functionality of School Governing bodies and the effectiveness of the Quality of learning and teaching Campaign. As a result of the findings the study recommended measures to curb low parental involvement in schools around the Madibeng Area.

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# CHAPTER 1
# INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND AIMS

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Madibeng Area is a part of Madibeng local municipality found in the North West Province. It covers areas such as Brits Town, Hartbeespoortdam, Oukasie Township, Mothothlhung Township, and Damonsville Township, villages such as Majakaneng, Bapong, Segwaelane, Bethanie, Modikwe, MmaKau and surrounding Farms. I selected this area of Madibeng because a larger part of Madibeng municipality consist of rural and farm areas and I am also well conversant with the area because I am the principal of one the schools in this area. 77% of schools are found in rural and farming areas, 5% of schools are found in the township and 18% of schools are either Former Model C or are found in town. Most of the schools are in the quintile 1 and 2 category and they are non-paying fee schools which shows that they are in the high poverty stricken communities. The majority of parents are not working or they are working in the farms around Madibeng areas of which their income is very low.

According to the analysis information based on the 2001 population Census that was conducted by Statistics South Africa and the Municipal Demarcation Board out of 197 419 people who were economically active 86 146 (58.3%) is employed and 61563 (41.7) is unemployed. For those who were employed, 41% of them worked in the Elementary Occupations and Plant and Machine Operators. This analysis show that most of the people in this area are living under poor conditions.

Most of rural and farm schools that are found in this area have a serious challenge of parental involvement. The majority of parents found in rural and farm school areas have always shown very low involvement in education of their children. Because of the lack of parental involvement in schools, principals and teachers are always confronted with challenges of learner discipline. SASA has given parents more powers to govern the schools through School Governing Bodies. Section 23(2) of SASA stipulates that "elected members of the governing body shall comprise a member or members of each of the following categories:

- Parents of learners at the school;
- Educators at the school;
- Members of staff at the school who are not educators; and
- Learners in the eighth grade or higher at the school."

In spite of all this, most of the parents from rural and farm schools do not use this opportunity fruitfully as directed by SASA, they also do not regard this as something important for efficient and effective teaching and learning, hence most of the School Governing Bodies are not functional. Most of the principals of rural and farm schools particularly in Madibeng area usually complain about lack of parental involvement in school activities, they would use platforms such as principals' meetings or workshops as the form of seeking attention of the authority in order that they can get assistance in this regard.

Generally, in most rural and farm schools there is very low attendance of parents' meetings. Most of the elected members of School Governing Bodies do not finish their term of office which is three years, as indicated in section 31(1) of SASA which says "the term of office a member of governing body other than a learner may not exceed three years." In some instances some parents would not come to school even if they are invited to discuss their children's performance or intervention strategies. The lack of parental support may affect schools in different ways, for example, there may be high level of ill-discipline among learners, low level of performance among learners.

Reitz (1990:120) says "By involving parents in the implementation and assessment of education, administrators can help broaden the participation of parents and increase their feelings of ownership and commitment regarding schools. A common ground must be established for parents and educators to work cooperatively. Various opportunities for parental involvement must be provided through which both can work together to help achieve what is best for public school students". Reitz (1990:281) continues to argue that parental involvement in children's education is a key factor in children's academic success. Parents who facilitate and supervise their children's school work, attend regular parent-teacher seminars and communicate with school

personnel regarding their children's needs, create a climate conducive to their children's achievement.

Hornby (1995:127) says "Gains are made when parents are involved as supporters of their children's learning or are simply kept informed about their progress at school. The result showed that primary school children who read aloud to their parents two to four times a week from books sent home from schools made significantly greater gains in reading achievement than children receiving additional assistance at school."

Lyons, Robbins and Smith (1983:49) argue that "while it may be difficult to link increases in achievement test scores with help that students receive at home, there are other effects of successful home assistance that can be traced. Learners, whose parents help them at home, not only learn more, but also have a more positive attitude towards learning. Attendance is better, learners feel more comfortable with classwork and they come to school with greater confidence when parents actively support the learning process at home".

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Rural and farm schools located in Madibeng area of Bojanala District seem to experience low parental involvement.

## 1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study was important in order to assist the parents from rural and farm schools of Madibeng Area of Bojanala Education district to begin to be involved in the schools where their children are attending. The findings of the research would also assist parents to realise the importance of parents' involvement in education. The improvement in parent involvement might also help the improvement in the performance of schools in many respects.

## 1.4     RESEARCH QUESTION

**In identifying factors that lead to low parental in schools of Madibeng Area the following main research question will be asked.**

What are the factors that lead to low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?

The following sub- questions need to be addressed:

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

## 1.5     AIMS OF THE STUDY

- The aim of the study was to investigate factors that led to low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area, in order that this behaviour can be curbed.
- The study also aimed at investigating what to be done to improve parental involvement in rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.
- The significance of the study would be the indication of improvement in parental involvement of rural and farm schools in Madibeng area.

## 1.6    LITERATURE PREVIEW

Documents such as minutes of the parents meetings would help to see what was discussed in the parent meetings and the contribution by parents towards school developments. Attendance registers would help in identifying the number of parents who were attending parent meetings in different schools. Documents such as admission register and attendance register for learners would also assist the researcher to establish the number of learners who attended the school in a particular year. Performance report cards might be used to establish whether parents were concern with their children's education through comments they have written in the report cards and also to check if whether they had at least appended their signatures. Intervention forms which looked at the progress of learners academically might also bear as witness to confirm whether parents were cooperative in that regard. Visitors' book and records of correspondence or letters which invited parents to the meetings might also be used to check if whether parents were cooperating by coming to school, after they were requested to do so.

Lai and Robinson (2006: 136) say "You can also need to use documents to check or explore constrains, actions, or consequences that are not an explicit port of your research question." Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2006:121) argue that "Documents and artefacts are another form of qualitative data collection tool. These may include documents or objects that existed before the start of the study or those documents, such as journals, created after the study has begun as requested by the researcher. Documents artefacts produced before the study by the participants generally include things like public records, personal writing, or instructional materials" Documents and records were also important for collecting information in order to establish parental involvement.

Fuller and Olsen (1998:130,136) Define parent involvement in schools as "Parents who come to school as visitors to support school events, volunteer to assist teachers, administrators and children in class-rooms and in other school activities." They again went further to say many low-income parents share common beliefs that present barriers to parent involvement in schools (Ibid).

Breivogel and Gordon (1976:97) articulate that "poor families do not have time to devote to their children; they trade time for money to search for work, to moonlight, to find cheap food, to seek out an acceptable inexpensive place to live, to try and find cheap second hand spare replace the parts for a disabled car"

Lareau (2000:3, 6) stated that parent involvement was positively linked to school success, many parents were not as involved in schooling as teachers would like them to. This lack of involvement was not random: social class had a powerful influence on parent involvement patterns.

Elias, Olender, Mastroleo (2010:3) indicate that "as proven, when the teachers and parents have a strong and a positive relationship, learners' achievement improves. With collaboration and teamwork, we have observed that even with severe academic deficiencies, learners show improvement when parents are involved."

According to Elias Olender, Mastroleo (2010:3) many learners exhibited a sense of security in knowing that both their teachers and their parents were helping them to do well in their school. When parents were involved in education they became closer to the teachers and there would be continuous engagement and subsequently there would be a development of trust between them

## 1.7    RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a qualitative approach because the study is interested in the behaviour of parents that do not want to be involved in their children's education. The qualitative approach is very relevant for issues that have to do with behaviour or attitude. For the fact that the study is all about relationship, perception and behaviour of parents with regard to their involvement in the schools, it may be addressed through qualitative method. Martens (1998:159) states that "qualitative methods are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific program, practice or setting." In this situation a qualitative approach was relevant because the researcher would look deeper into how parents in rural and farm areas view and perceive the whole situation of their involvement in schools.

## 1.8    DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

The study sought to investigate factors that lead to low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area. The qualitative research method was used for the study and the interviews were used to collect data from the participants, particularly in-depth interviews and focus group interviews.

The focus group interviews were important for the study because its characteristics were explicitly used of the group interaction to produce data and insight that would be less accessible without interaction found in the group (Ibid).  Kumar says "in focus group interviews broad discussion topics are developed beforehand, either by the researcher or by the group. Members of a focus group are able to express their opinion while discussing these issues." (Ibid)

## 1.9    DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher read the notes that were collected from school community; parents, teachers and principals through interview. As for the recorded interview, the researcher changed it to the written form in order to make it readable and understandable. The researcher grouped data according to its categories, which were according to where it came from, for example data from parents, teachers and principals, each one of them was grouped separately. The researcher coded data in order access and interprets it easily. After receiving data from parents, teachers and principals, the researcher made some interpretation and came up with some conclusion which reflected the researcher's understanding of all data received. Later on, the researcher reported the findings.

According to Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle (2006:302) the first task for data analysis was to make sure that data was in the form that can be easily analysed. If interviews were tape recorded, preparation involved transferring the information from the recorded interviews into a written form.

## 1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

It was indicated above that the study happened at three rural and farm school in Madibeng. Madibeng Area of Education found in the Bojanala Education District in the North West Province. The research on investigating factors that lead to low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area was limited to rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area of education in Bojanala Education District of North West Province. The area was chosen because the researcher is the principal in one of the schools that fall under such category of rural and farm schools.

## 1.11 ETHICAL ISSUES

For the researcher to ensure that the study was ethical, a letter was sent to the Madibeng area office and the schools wherein the study was conducted. The researcher ensured that before getting information from the participants he introduces himself. The researcher also asked for participants' permission and consent before collecting data from them. The researcher also explained to them what data collected from them was going to be used for. The information collected was also treated with highest confidentiality it deserved and it did not prejudice a respondent in anyway. According to Kumar (2005: 212) a researcher has an obligation to use appropriate research methodology in conducting a study.

## 1.12 CHAPTER DIVISION

**Chapter 1**

**Introduction and the background of the study**

This chapter is the introduction of the study, which includes the following parts

- Title
- Introduction
- Problem Statement

- The Research Question
- Aims of the study
- Literature Preview
- Methodology
- Data collection strategies
- Data Analysis
- Ethical issues
- Division of chapters
- Explanation of concepts

**Chapter 2**

**Literature Review**
Detailed Literature review pertaining to parental involvement in schools, particularly rural and farm school.

**Chapter 3**

**Research Methodology and Research Design.**
This chapter dealt with research design and the methodology to be used when gathering information.

**Chapter 4**

**Presentation of Findings, Analysis and Discussion.**
This chapter provided the results and analysis and discussions of the results,

**Chapter 5**

**Summary, Recommendations, Limitations and Conclusions**.
This chapter gave the summary of the research, recommendations based on the research findings to address low parental involvement, limitations and conclusions.

## 1.14    EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS

**School Management Team.**

The team comprises of the school principal, deputy principal and heads of departments and their sole responsibility is to manage the school activities.

**School Governing Body**

Is the body of the school that has a responsibilities of governing the school which will among others develop policies for the school and ensuring that the school in running according to the set policies.

# CHAPTER 2
# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1    INTRODUCTION

Olsen and Fuller (2008:128) describe parent involvement as something that includes any activities that are provided and encouraged by the school and also empower parents in working on behalf of their children's learning and development.

Rich (1987:9-13) states that although the roles of parents and teachers are different, they are complementary. The family is in the ideal position to prepare for, expand, and extend the work of the school. Despite the changes in today's families, parents continue to care for their children and teachers care about achievement of their learners.

Shea and Bauer (1985:5) emphasize that parents and schools need to be involved with each other because they have a common element which is children. To the young child, home and school are two of the most important areas in which the child functions. The child spends a majority of time in these areas. In order to assist the child and to provide the most effective learning environment, both school and home must be in cooperation. This shows that parents are one of the key stakeholders of school which must never be neglected.

## 2.2    FACTORS THAT LEAD TO LOWER PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

The process of involving parents in the education of their children has some built-in obstacles. First, parents and teachers often have ideas about each other that make it difficult for them to work together. The parent may see the teacher as knowledgeable and critical of parents and may feel unwelcome and unskilled in the school environment. The teacher may feel that the parent does not want any help and expects the teacher to change the child. The teacher may feel completely unwelcome in the home environment. Some teachers may be untrained in working with parents; this contributes to the difficulty of involving parents. Teachers are often unaware of the

feelings of parents about their children. Some teacher education programs fail to help the beginning teacher to understand community attitudes about child rising. (Click, 1981:193)

### 2.2.1    Attitude of parents

(Sawyer & Sawyer, 1993:413) state that closely related to the problem of perceived inability is the problem of negative attitudes on the part of the parents. Another source of parents' negative attitude is the school life experienced by those parents. Adults who were failed by rigid education system that did not meet their needs are not inclined to be particularly supportive if their children are enrolled in a similar type of system. It means that some of the parents who did not succeed in their primary or secondary school education may have a negative attitude against that particular system of education that made them to fail which may subsequently make them not to cooperate with the schools where the children are attending.

(Wright, Stegelin & Hartle, 2007:278) states that some parents may have had negative experiences when they were in school, so they might not want to participate in schools events, thinking that some of the same experiences mighty occur again. Some parents may have unresolved issues with school policies, that is, dress code, attendance, and so forth so they will avoid involvement in school activities. Some parents may not feel competent to work with teachers in the classroom or with schools on decision making committees. Some schools don't ask for parental and community support.

Gestwicki (2000:153) emphasizes the issue of parents' attitudes by showing that parents have their own childhood histories of encounters with teachers and learning experiences. Some of these may be positive, causing the parents to automatically consider a teacher as a friend. But in many parents, painful memories of past school experiences cause unconscious responses to a teacher as someone who will disapprove, correct, or "fail' the parent. With such an underlying assumption, many massages from a teacher may be interpreted more negatively than the sender intended. Some parents, particularly in lower socio-economic classes, have had numerous encounters with case workers, social workers, and other figures in authority. Gestwicki (2000:153) also argues that a parent who has a history of dehumanizing or

disillusioning experiences with professional people may already have erected barriers in the form of negative expectations.

According to Edwards (2004:36) some parents feel that if they simply send their children to school they have fulfilled all their responsibility. After sending them to school they do not want to become involved in their children school lives. They feel that it is only the school's responsibility to educate their children.

## 2.2.2   Attitudes of teachers

Sawyer & Sawyer (1993:414) states that educators tend to see the appropriate involvement of parents as outside of the school curricula activities. Parents are generally viewed negatively and they are seen as a cause of many problems. They are frequently seen as pushy, resistant to teacher recommendation, neglectful of their children and difficult to contact. .A number of reasons cited by teachers for excluding parents from programs as:

- they are not qualified;
- they do not understand the language of development process;
- they are unfamiliar with instructional strategies and material;
- overqualified parents who may also be teachers exert too much pressure on the teacher; and
- they make unreasonable demands or suggestions. (ibid )

According to Wright, Stegelin & Hartle, (2007:278) some schools or teachers may not value families as resources in the educational process. Schools or teachers have put forth signals that teachers are the authority figures and are not open to questions. Both schools and families may not be knowledgeable or open to certain cultural practices that differ from their own.

### 2.2.3   Work and health

Many employers do not have flexible leave policies that enable parents to participate in the educational programs of their children. Other parents are not able to become involved in their children's educational programs due to health reasons. Chronic illness, physical barriers at inaccessible buildings, and other health factors may make participation unrealistically difficult for parents (Sawyer & Sawyer, 1993:413).

### 2.2.4   Limited resources allocated to schools

Swap (1993:18) shows that because financial resources that are allocated to schools may not be sufficient to address all school matters. Most schools have chosen to concentrate in the revenues that remain in essential personnel, programs, and supplies. These decisions make it difficult to initiate or maintain outreach programs for parents, and this also signals that schools do not consider home-school partnership essential to mission. The lack of availability of money for start-up or expansion of partnership activities becomes a psychological and practical barrier to successful outreach.

### 2.2.5   Lack of time

Edwards (2004:36) describes today's schools as institutions that are expected to do many things such as  resolving racial conflict and build an integrated society; inspire patriotism and good citizenship; provide values, reduce conflict in the society by teaching children to get along with others.  In other words nearly all nations' problems are reflected in demands placed on the nation schools. This means that the school management teams will have an added responsibility of facilitating parent involvement in school.

In describing the lack of time for parent involvement Swap (1987:7-8) also emphasizes that parents and teachers are both busy, with multiple demands upon their time. In the past, mothers have borne the primary responsibility for communicating with the school on behalf of their children. Swap (Ibid) also says that nowadays mothers are no longer easily available for conversation with teachers. In fact, a revolution is occurring in the

work place that affects schools profoundly. Their struggle to balance the competing demands of work and family life leaves little time for involvement with their children's schools. Mothers who are not working may be returning to school. Other mothers may be deeply committed to volunteer activities, in part because fewer individuals are now available to respond to community needs. In support of scarcity of time, Swap (Ibid) proclaims that in many communities, the available time of parent at home is likely to be fragmented by increasingly busy schedules of children, as each child requires transformation to lessons, sporting events, and other activities.

Participation in in-service activities and commitments to meeting school and student needs before and after school decrease availability. Time is precious; time is fragmented; teachers and parents are stressed by the multiple demands of their professional, family and individual responsibilities and interests. Swap (1987:7-8).

Wright, Stegelin & Hartle (2007:278) confirm what Swap says that parents may be too busy, not always by choice, some may have to work two jobs to make ends meet, and others may have demanding jobs by choice. Edwards (2004:36) also confirms the lack of time with regard to parent involvement and shows that many parents work long hours to put food on the table and feel they are doing all what they can for their children at home.

## 2.2.6    A history of distrust and miscommunication in family school interactions

Many schools have not kept a close watch on population make-up of parents that they serve. Additionally schools often make assumptions about parents, which cause them to be distrustful of their involvement. When left unexplored, this lack of understanding of and acceptance for the families and community of the students, act to further substantiate parents' own mistrust of the educational system. In many instances neither school nor do the family be sure what steps to take in order to rebuild the trust or create better lines of communication. (Edwards, 2004:36).

### 2.2.7 Poor communication between home and school

A destructive pattern can evolve in a number of ways, but typically, they begin when parents are poorly informed about ways they can help their children to be successful. If the child is not successful, and the parents do not know what to do to support success, parents feel helpless and powerless. When the school continues to convey messages about their children's problems without offering concrete ways for the parents to support the child's achievement, parents often become withdrawn, defensive resentful, and hostile (Olsen & Fuller, 2008:196).

### 2.2.8 An unintentional exclusion of poor, minority and immigrant parents from school activities

With all of the many families that schools have to serve they may not have the expertise to address the needs of all these families. Immigrant parents often feel that the school activities are not culturally sensitive and do not address their concerns (Edwards, 2004:42). This tendency usually happens when these minority parents are taken for granted, when they attend meetings at school their language is not considered and also when schools send letters with information to the parents they do not use the Language of the minority or immigrants group at school.

### 2.2.9 Level or grade of a learner

According to Olsen & Fuller (Ibid) as learners get older, parental involvement declines dramatically. All types of parent involvement decline between the sixth and twelfth grades, by this time a relatively small number of students benefit from active parent involvement, ranging from simply inquiring about the student's schoolwork to actually helping with that work and participating in parent functions at the school.

### 2.2.10 Different expectations regarding norms and behaviors

In most instances, these differences arise because of beliefs, values and norms that are held by the parents and the teachers involved. Someone who holds a different value perspective may view behavior as inappropriate, irresponsible, or immoral that

may be perfectly normal or acceptable to another person. Attempts to solve problems between home and school are often thwarted by a clash of two essentially reasonable but contradictory value positions (Olsen & Fuller, 2008:197).

Lombana (1983:44) pronounces that the way in which individuals are alike and the ways in which they differ both contribute to communication problems. The basic motive of all human behavior concerns and instinct to preserve the "self-concept" and any threats to the self-concept serve as major communication barriers. Thus, all individuals seek to preserve their self-image and instinctively react defensively when they feel threatened. Lombana (Ibid) also states that although there are many ways in which human beings are similar, there are even more ways in which they differ. Because people differ in their backgrounds experiences, and viewpoints, they will attach different meanings to words and other forms of communication. In other words because of the different perspective towards issues there is always a conflict of ideas between parents and teachers and this lead to low parental involvement.

### 2.2.11 School behaviors or administrative policies that make parents feel unwelcome

There are policies that discourage parent involvement in the school according to Gestwicki (ibid) who also shows that some schools and centres have policies that discourage or forbid contact and discussion between parents and staff other than supervisory personnel, perhaps on the ground that unprofessional contacts may take place.

Olsen & Fuller (2008:198) asserts that by not providing information about expectation, about expected academic and social behaviors, a disjuncture between the home and school occurs. Scheduling special events or asking parents to volunteer when they are unable to be at the school sends a strong message that the parent is not wanted there.

## 2.2.12  Fear of criticism

Gestwicki (Ibid) says many teachers dread parental criticism and so avoid any possible source of these. This is particularly true of young teachers who fear that their positions may not be accepted because of the lack of teaching experience or because they have not experience parenthood firsthand. Teachers unsure of their own abilities fear any negative feedback that may confirm their inner doubts, dreading parents' discovery of their mistakes or inadequacies. They put an invisible "Do not enter "sign on their classroom door that conveys to parents that their presence and opinion are not welcome. Even though many parents are uncertain that what they are doing are "right" yet feeling they must prove that they  are right in order to be accepted as capable parents, defensiveness against any suggestion of change often results. If a teacher gives the impression of evaluating parents' efforts, it may be easier to avoid her or be defensive rather than hear the results of her evaluation.

According to Diffily (2004: 48-49) teachers react more dramatically when an adult comes to their classroom. They become fearful. These teachers are afraid that the other adult an administrator, another teacher, or a parent is thinking negative things about them or their teaching and is there to criticize. Everyone worries about what to do when a parent, obviously in a bad mood, comes into the room or sends a complain letter. But the fear of criticism can overwhelm some teacher. This occurs more often with first-year teachers, teachers who are not confident about their teaching practices and teachers who do not feel very good about themselves in general.

## 2.2.13  Effects of demographic change

According to Swap (1993:14-15) the stress of families experiencing separation and divorce affects the behaviour and performance of children in classrooms. The relative unavailability of mothers employed outside the home limits their helpfulness during school hours and results in less supervision of children after school.

Swap (Ibid) said that because demographic changes also affect teachers, their availability for meetings before or after school also cannot be taken for granted especially when their time is not compensated or when special arrangements for child

care need to be made. Yet expectations for teachers' performance have been increasing despite more complex teaching environments and declining community support for schools. For all these reasons, taking on the additional responsibilities of reaching out to parents in new ways may not feel rewarding to teachers.

According to Diffily (2004: 47) many times the reasons families do not get involved in their children's class have nothing to do with negative feelings about school or not being able to work out the logistics of getting to the school. Most families today live hectic lives, and few of us know all of the issues that another family copes with. Some families care for an elderly relative, which can be a time-consuming responsibility. Some families experience financial difficulties and have to take on second or even third, job. Many families face problems that they are not willing to share with their child's teacher.

In outlining the effect of demographic change Canter & Canter (1991:24-25) asserted that "the term "at risk student" was very popular. They could coin another term "at risk parent." Those were parents who were at risk of being overwhelmed by the stress in their lives. They did not feel they had time or energy to support their children's education to the degree necessary to ensure their children's success. According to Canter and Canter (Ibid) at-risk parents were found in all kinds of households. While it was true that many at-risk parents could be found in the most affluent two-parent homes, the point was, there could be many reasons why parents are overwhelmed with their lives: poverty, divorce, illness, or job stress. Those parents might feel that school was the last thing they had the time or energy to deal with. Overwhelmed parents were a very real roadblock to getting the support needed." Canter & Canter (1991:24-25)

### 2.2.14 Lack of knowledge around parental involvement

Teachers may lack knowledge of the need for, or the ability to provide, multiple ways of sharing information with families. (Wright, Stegelin & Hartle, 2007:278).In other words some of the teachers and administrative staff may not have proper knowledge on how to encourage parent involvement and also what strategies can they use to involve parents.

In confirming the lack of knowledge by teachers as one of the causes of low parental involvement    Diffily (2004: 36) states that training is also a factor in how much involvement teachers encourage. He said that early childhood educators indicated that they were not always confident about how they should go about working with families that was also confirmed by most of the teachers who said that there was little or no attention given to working with families in their college courses.

## 2.3    PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE FARM

### 2.3.1    Historical Overview of a Farm School

According to Gardiner (2008:27-28) historically, farm schools were under the auspices of mission churches, funded by the church but often subsidized by relevant Provincial Education Departments. The schools were managed by the churches, and farmers themselves, on whose land the school were situated. Gardiner (Ibid) also said that when the nationalist came to power in 1948, the situation began to change dramatically. The mission schools and the involvement of the churches in the provision of education to black children was viewed by the state as potentially subversive, and as grand apartheid thinking steadily took place, the government sought to remove farm schools from the hands of churches and place them under the state control (Ibid). Mehl, Browne & Ashley (1994:3-4) said that farm schools were placed under the direct control of the farmer on whose land the school was situated. In order to keep the rural population of South Africa fragmented and dependent, the state stipulated that centralized schools in white farming areas would not be allowed, the building of hostels for teachers and pupils will be prohibited and children from nearby towns and squatter communities would, in most instances, be forbidden to attend farm schools.

Farm schools are located on privately-owned commercial farms. They provide primary education, and very occasionally secondary education, mainly to the children of black farm workers. In the past, such schools were controlled entirely by individual farmers. Up until the mid-1990s, farmers had the power to open and close schools, to decide which learners were allowed to attend and what grades the school could offer, and to control school funds (Ibid).  Children from neighboring farms were allowed to attend the school with the permission of the farmer, and farmers advised the Department on

the appointment, control and discharge of teachers (Ibid). This was the situation even though the schools were largely funded by the state, which actually employed the teachers (Ibid).

### 2.3.2 The Findings of Previous Researches

### Study 1

Ngwenya (1998:69) in his research conducted in different schools of Vanderbijlpark Circuit found that teaching is also affected by the fact that teachers cannot get parents involved in the education of their children. The majority of parents, being illiterate, do not understand the problems encountered by the teachers at the schools. The parents are just happy that their children attend school. They seem not to realize that they have to see to it that their children are provided with needs of the school, e.g. books. They are not aware that their children have to do some school work at home. The attitude of parents makes it difficult for the teachers to realize the important task of making the child aware of the demands of his personal and social responsibilities.

### Study 2

Dugard, Mintoor, Ngwenya, Nkosi, & Wilson (2005:27) found that all the parents they interviewed were farm workers who worked for between nine and thirteen hours a day six or seven days a week. Work on weekends (especially on Sundays) meant more pay. Farm workers were usually paid a daily rate of between R15 and R50, depending on their gender, the nature of their work, and the length of time they had been employed on a particular farm Ibid. Given these rates of pay and working conditions, and the seasonal nature of much farm work, it is almost impossible for parents to involve themselves in their children's education, either by helping with school work or developing a relationship with their children's educators. Most of these former learners, who are now parents, continue to send their children to the same farm school they went to. Another factor retarding parental involvement in school life is that the teachers tend to live far away from the school communities. Educators who were interviews lived between 50 km and 130 km away from the school. Poor or expensive transport links meant that some educators hitchhike to work. Organising parents' meetings at weekends and on public holidays (when many parents are off work) is an undesirable challenge for them. A principal can only organise a weekend or afternoon

meeting with parents if he or she lives in teachers' accommodation in the school grounds or owns a car.

**Study 3**

Venter in his study found that the principals, teachers and parents agreed that parental involvement was important for academic achievement.

- 96% of the principals agreed that the parents could play a bigger role in learner cognitive development.
- Almost half of the principals (46%) indicated that they do not have a parental involvement programme.
- 70% of the principals admit that it is their responsibility to take the necessary steps to develop or enhance parental involvement through a programme.
- 46% of the principals indicated that parental involvement in their school is good; however, when the teachers were asked how they experience parental involvement at their school, they stated it was not good or could be better.

The principals, teachers and parents agreed that the lack of support from the Department of Basic Education, long working hours, illiteracy, and socio-economic problems were the main challenges to parental involvement in schools.

- 80% of the principals agreed with the statement that the Department of Basic Education does not provide adequate support to the school for parental involvement.
- 88% of the principals indicated that parents' long working hours affect parental involvement negatively. All the parents said that long working hours prevent them from being involved.
- 76% of principals agreed that the illiteracy of parents is detrimental to parental involvement. Parents said that they did not understand the work the children were doing at school.
- 80% of principals also agreed that the socio-economic problems of the parents affect parental involvement negatively. Venter (2011:51)

**Study 4**

Davids (2010:71) shows that the major finding of the study is that farm-worker parents in rural farms of Citrusdal area are involved in their children's education. Over 80% of the farm-worker parents involved in the study indicated that they were involved in their children's education. The study found that most of the practices of the parents to indicate they were involved in their children's education were at home. For instance the parents indicated that they talked to their children about the school day, they motivated and encouraged their children about education, supervised their children's homework, and assisted them with spelling, mathematics and other skills. The study also found that parents participated in some school activities as an indication that they were involved in their children's education at school. Female parents were more involved than male parents in their children's education in the rural, farm area of Citrusdal according to the findings of this research. Another interesting finding was that, despite belonging to different schools, all parents participants appeared to be equally engaged in various activities at home and at-school to indicate their involvement in their children's education.

## 2.4   THEORY ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Three theories on parental involvement are put into perspective in order to discuss parent involvement in schools. These theories outlined some of the fundamentals in dealing with parental involvement, they look at what should be done, how it should be done and they also look at the main players in parent involvement. These theories are rich with regard to tactics on addressing parental involvement to an extent that if one was to follow them  to the latter when addressing issues of parental involvement one was going to achieve positive results.

### 2.4.1   Six steps of parent involvement

Olsen and Fuller (2008:130-143) outlines six steps of parent involvement that has been developed by Joyce Epstein, sociology research professor at John's Hopkins University as follows:

## 2.4.1.1 Basic responsibilities of families

The most basic involvement of parents is their continuous responsibility for raising their children and providing them with food, clothing, shelter, health and safety. It means parents should form the foundation for their children's success in school by providing and maintaining a positive home environment that is conducive to learning and the development of physical, intellectual, social , and emotional skills values. This is a continuous process of teaching and guiding children throughout their school years and helping them build self confidence and self-esteem. Schools will have to take an active role in assisting parents with parenting and child rearing skills, helping in understanding child and adolescent development, and providing ideas for creating a home environment that supports children's learning at each age and grade. Teachers and administrators need the families to assist schools in becoming better informed about their children and families.

## 2.4.1.2 Communication

Effective communication is essential for building a successful partnership between school and home. It requires the school to build a two-way sharing of information, with conscious efforts from the school to engage in give-and-take conversations, establish common goals, and follow up with consistent interactions between the school and home. Without good two-way communication between the school and the family, other levels of involvement are made much more difficult to achieve. Children are involved as couriers in taking messages from school to home and bringing them back to school from home. The school's basic obligation is to consistently and effectively provide information about school programs and children's progress through school-to-home and home-to-school communication.

## 2.4.1.3 Volunteering

The typical activities in this category are parental assistance to teachers and administrators in supporting the school program and helping with children's schoolwork and activities, including field trips, class parties, and class performances.

The following are volunteers for teachers: volunteers in classrooms, volunteers outside the classroom and also volunteer as members of audiences.

### 2.4.1.4 Learning at home

Home-based learning not only enhances children's learning experiences but also serves many purposes. It should reinforce, support, and strengthen learning that has been introduced and shared at school. Most parents help their children through their past school experiences and knowledge of school subjects. Most of the parents across all grades want more information about their children's homework, homework policies, and tools for helping their children.

### 2.4.1.5 Decision Making

Decision making involves a partnership process in which parents and educators come together and share their ideas and views, solve problems, and take actions toward a shared vision that contributes to school goals and policies. Parents can act as leaders for other parents by representing their opinions, ideas, and concerns on behalf of their children's learning and development.

### 2.4.1.6 Collaborating with the Community

Schools and teachers should also see the community in a broader context by including community members who are interested in improving the quality of education. Community members can provide the schools with materials, people, and natural resources; therefore schools need to make connections with various community members such as large and small business, religious communities, cultural groups, government agencies, and other organizations.

### 2.4.2 Maslow's five "universal desires"

Rich (1987:25-26) indicates that teachers can apply Maslow's five "universal desires" to parent-teacher relationship as follows:

- Recognition – let parents know that they are significance educators of their children. Share with them some examples from the research; give them a greater sense of their importance in their children's lives.

- Affection – Let parents know that you understand and know personally how difficult it is to be a parent today and juggle the tasks of family and job. Share the experience that show that all parents, including teachers themselves as parents have similar problems and joys.

- Power – let parents know that the school believes that every family has strengths, such as the parents' love for their children. This strength can be mobilized to help the family, teachers, and children. This is a 'nondescript' view of families.

- New Experiences- Encourage parents to try new teaching activities at home and enjoy the real thrill that comes in teaching seeing children learn! Share with families home teaching ideas that are nonthreatening and easy to do, such as using a laundry to teach reading classification skills to young children, and using newspaper ads to teach older youngsters how to find the best buys in the foods.

- Security -- let parents know that they are needed and wanted. Try to avoid making them feel guiltily for not having been involved before or for being unable to attend school events during the workday. Because of their own school experience, many parents start with basic insecurity about school. You can reduce this feeling by sharing as much information as possible about how the school works, about teachers' concerns for parents' needs.

## 2.4.3   Models of Home-School Relationships

Swap 1993 (28-57). Outlines four models of Home-School relationship as follows:

### 2.4.3.1  The protective model

The goal of protective model is to reduce conflict between parents and educators, primarily through the separation of parents' and educators' functions. It is called

protective model because its aim is to protect the school from interference by parents. This model is driven by three assumptions:

- Parents delegate to the school the responsibility of educating their children.
- Parents hold school personnel accountable for the results.
- Educators accept this delegation of responsibility.

Thus, parents involvement in decision making or collaborative problem solving would be seen as inappropriate and an interference with the educator's job.

The single advantage of this model is that it is generally very effective at achieving its goals of protecting the school against parental intrusion in most circumstances.

**The disadvantages are that it:**

- Exacerbates many conflicts between home and school by creating no structures or predictable opportunities for preventative problem solving.
- Ignores the potential of home-school collaboration for improving student achievement.
- Rejects rich resources for enrichment and school support available from families and other members of community that could be available to the school.

### 2.4.3.2 The school-to-home transmission model

The goal of this model is to enlist parents in supporting the objectives of the school. Its assumption is that:

- Children's achievement is fostered by continuity of expectations and values between home and the school.
- School personnel should identify the values and practices outside school that contribute to school success.

- Parents should indorse the importance of schooling, reinforce school expectations at home, provide conditions at home that nurture school development and support school success, and ensure that the child meets minimum academic and social requirements.

The school-to-home transmission model acknowledges the continuous interchange between home and school and the important role that parents play in enhancing educational achievement of their children.

### 2.4.3.3 The curriculum enrichment model

The role of the Curriculum Enrichment model is to expand and extend the school's curriculum by incorporating into it the contributions of families. The assumption is that families have important expertise to contribute and that the interaction between parents and school personnel and the implementation of the revised curriculum will enhance the educational objectives of the school. This orientation has emerged for different two reasons. One of these has been to make the curriculum more accurately reflect the views, values, history, and learning styles of the families represented in the school.

A second reason for parents to be involved in curriculum enrichment occurs when schools can improve their curriculum by drawing on special expertise that parents may have to share by virtue of their education and background. Interaction between parents and school personnel can result in , for example , the installation of computer lab, instruction for teachers in the use computers in the classroom , the addition of mathematics or Science curriculum that is more experienced-based, the integration of the newest technology in a vocational training program, or instruction in music composition.

In each case, two important assumptions guide the interaction between parents and teachers:

- Parents and educators should work together to enrich curriculum objectives and content.

- Relationships between home and school are based on mutual respect, and both parents and teachers are seen as experts' resources in this process of discovery.

## 2.4.3.4 The Partnership Model

In The Partnership Model, the primary goal is for parents and educators to work together to accomplish a common mission, generally for all children in school to achieve success.

It emphasis on two-way communication, parental strengths, and problem solving with parents, promotes a single unifying mission that suffused the entire culture and galvanizes all aspects of the school. In the Partnership model, parent involvement is seen not as addendum, as an indispensable component of school reform.

There are four element of true Partnership between home and school:

- Creating two-way communication. Parents and educators have vital information to share. Educators share information with parents about children's progress in school; their expectations and hopes for the school and the children; and their curriculum, policies and programs. Parents share information with educators about their child's needs, strength, and background; and their expectations and hopes for the school and their child.

- Enhancing learning at home and at school. Parents contribute to children's learning by having high expectations, providing a setting that allows concentrated work, supporting and nurturing learning that occurs in school and elsewhere, and offering love, discipline, guidance, and encouragement.

- Providing mutual support. Educators support parents by offering educational programs for them that are responsive to their interests and needs. Parents support educators in many ways, such as volunteering in schools, organizing

and planning activities, raising money, and attending functions such as plays, sports events.

- Making joint decisions. Parents and educators work together to improve the school through participation on councils, committees, and planning and management teams. Parents and educators are involved in joint problem solving at every level: individual child, classroom, school and district. Swap (1993:28-57).

## 2.5   CONCLUSION

In the discussion above the history of farm schools as well as different ways in which parents can be involved were clearly indicated. Parental involvement in education is seen as imperative for the good performance of learners. In other words parental involvement is important for the efficiency and effective running of the school.

According to the discussion above minority of parents are involved in schools whiles majority of the parents are not involved in schools.  Most of the factors that lead to low parental involvement were explained well to an extent that they may assist a researcher or a scholar to know the obstacles he or she may be faced with in dealing with parental involvement.

Different theories such as Six Steps on Parental Involvement by Epstein, Marlow's five Universal desires and Swap Model of Home-school Relationship were brought into perspective and they displayed different approaches in addressing parental involvement, however, all of them showed the importance of involvement.

# CHAPTER 3
# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN.

## 3.1    INTRODUCTION

This chapter succeeds chapter two which outlined the literature review wherein different schools of thought concerning parental involvement in schools were put into perspective. It also looked at the background of parental involvement in schools, issues such as factors that lead to low parental involvement in schools, parental involvement in the farm schools, theory of parental involvement in the farm schools and it also outlined different ways of involving parents.

Chapter two gave a base of this chapter of research methodology and research design in the sense that it shown theoretical background of what other authors and scholars perceive parental involvement and how they explained that. For the fact that the study was about parental involvement in schools, the relevant research methodology used was the qualitative research approach because it is interested in issues concerning behaviour and attitude.

This chapter looked at the Qualitative research approach, its characteristics and why it was chosen for this study. This chapter also looked at the research design which will give the details where the research was conducted. It also outlined data collection strategies of which the interviews were the only instrument used to collect data. Entities such as reliability and validity; limitation and ethical consideration were also to be discussed in this chapter.

This research focused on investigating factors that lead to low parental involvement in farm schools in the Madibeng area which is located in Madibeng municipality under Bojanala District in the North West Province

The Qualitative research approach addressed the following questions:

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?

The aim of the question was to look at the level of the understanding by different stakeholders of what a parental involvement in education was.

- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?

The aim of the question was to check if whether there were some benefits for having parental involvement in education.

- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

The aim of the question was to identify the obstacles that hinder parental involvement in education.

- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?

The aim of the question was to identify the causes of low parental in the school around Madibeng area.

- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

This question sought to bring solutions on how parental involvement can be improved.

## 3.2    THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE UNDERLYING THE STUDY

As the study was to investigate the factors that lead to low parental involvement in education, the researcher used phenomenological theory as a theoretical lens for the study. Daly (2007:94) shows that the purpose of a phenomenological study is to investigate the lived experience of one or more individuals in relation to a phenomenon

of interest. The goal of phenomenological research is to understand and describe the participants' experience of their everyday world as they see it.

The researcher also used social constructionism theory as a theoretical lens to analyse the study. Greene, (1999:325-325) says the social constructionists perspective suggests that persons are always creating and recreating a world of meaning, which is referred to as a process of construction. This on-going and evolving process results in freedom of interpretation, misinterpretation, and innovation, while simultaneously these constructions are manifestation of language use within a culture. Miley, O'Melia, Dubois (2007:31-32) states that a constructivist view postulates that events occurring in people's lives come to have meaning only when interpreted by the people experiencing the events. Two people can experience the same event very differently because each constructs a personalised, idiosyncratic view of what has occurred. The reality each person constructs is not consciously chosen. Instead, a person's reality is rooted in the individual's history, expectations, and sense of self. Each of us selectively attends to, interprets, and acts on our beliefs about ourselves and the world around us.

The discussion above shown that phenomenological theory and social constructionism theory were relevant for the study because, the study was investigating the experience of different stakeholders from different schools.

## 3.3    RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.3.1    Research Approach

Johnson & Christensen (2000:312.) define qualitative research as the research relying primarily on the collection of qualitative data. Qualitative researchers tend to rely on the inductive mode of scientific reasoning, and the major research objective of this type of research is exploration or discovery. This means that qualitative researchers generally study a phenomenon in an open-ended way, without prior expectations, and they develop hypotheses and theoretical explanations that are based on their interpretations of what they observe (Ibid). Qualitative researchers prefer to study the

world as it naturally occurs, without manipulating it. Johnson & Christensen (2000:312.)

The Qualitative research approach was selected because it was very much relevant for this study as it is not about the investigation of quantity of things but it is about investigating societal challenge which must be addressed from qualitative point of view.

Mathews & Ross (2010:142) describe some relevant characteristics of qualitative research as follows:

- Ontological and epistemological approaches are interpretivist.
- Research questions may be developed using subsidiary questions.
- The research question can be answered by describing and explaining events and gathering participants' understandings, beliefs and experiences.
- Researcher may only have a general idea of what he is looking for.
- Research design/ strategy may be fluid and evolutionary.
- Usually no use of tools: the researcher is seen as the main instrument for collecting data.
- Data may be in any form.

David & Sutton (2011: 82) describe qualitative research as one that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. As a research strategy it is inductivist, constructivist and interpretivist. Fraenkel, Norman & Hyn. (2012: 426 – 427) also outlined some of the general Characteristics of Qualitative Research as follows:

- The natural setting is the direct source of data, and the researcher is the key instrument in qualitative research.
- Qualitative data are collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers.
- Qualitative researchers are concern with the process as well as product.
- Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.

- How people make sense out of their lives is a major concern to qualitative researchers.

Mathews & Ross: (2010:142.) say "Qualitative Research Methods are primarily concerned with stories and accounts including subjective understandings, feelings, opinions and beliefs. Qualitative data is typical gathered when the data collected is the words or expressions of the research partisans themselves."

**Advantages of qualitative research**

David & Sutton (2011:82) describe the following advantages of Qualitative research:

- Qualitative research usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. As a research strategy it is inductivist, constructivist, and interpretivist.
- Qualitative methods: methods of social research that employ no quantitative standards and techniques; based on theoretical and methodological principles of symbolic interactionism, hermeneutics and ethnomethodology.
- Qualitative observations: scientific observations that are not recorded in any standardized coding formant.
- Qualitative data: data which express usually in words, information about feelings, values, and attitudes.

**Disadvantages of Qualitative Research**

Kumar (2011:103-104) describe some of the disadvantages of Qualitative Research as follows:

- In qualitative studies the distinction between study designs and methods of data collection is far less clear.
- In a qualitative research little attention is paid to the study designs or the other structural aspects of a study, hence a replication of a study designs becomes

almost impossible. This leads to the inability of the designs to produce the findings that can be replicated.

Vockell & Asher (1998: 210) describes a list of limitations that may occur because of poor procedures in qualitative research as follows:

- Inadequate amount of evidence. Assertion in research conclusion may be unwarranted by the data or may not include events and scenes that would have confirmed the statements.
- Inadequate varieties of kinds of evidence. The researcher may have failed triangulation of data by using several sources or field or sites, or may have failed to employ the multimethod, multitrait, and alternative hypothesis approaches to data collection and analysis.
- Lack of attention to discrepant cases. The Researcher may fail to examine on a comparative basis individuals and instances that do not conform to the initial theories and explanations that seem to hold for most individuals and cases.

### 3.3.2   Design

Mathews & Ross (2010:111) described designing research as going back to one's research questions and thinking about what one is hoping to be able to do with the data collected in order to be able to address those research questions. Johnson & Christensen (2000:233) describe the research design as the outline, plan, or strategy you are going to use to seek an answer to your research question or questions. In other words, when you get to the stage of designing your experiment, you have to identify the plan or strategy to be used in collecting the data that will adequately test your hypothesis. Planning a research design means that you must specify how the participants are to be assigned to the comparison groups, how you are going to collect and analyse data. (Ibid)

Kumar (2011: 94) defines research design as a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer the questions validity, objectively, accurately and economically. A research design is the arrangement of conditions of collection and analysis of data

in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research to the research purpose with economy in procedure. Kumar (Ibid) also emphasises that through a research design you decide for yourself and communicate to others your decisions regarding what study design you propose to use, how you are going to collect information from your respondents, how you are going to select your respondent, how the information you are going to collect is to be analysed and how you are going to communicate your findings.

As indicated above this study focused on investigating factors that lead to low parental involvement in farm schools in the Madibeng area which is located in Madibeng municipality under Bojanala Education District in the North West Province. Three farm schools in which the study was conducted were chosen, and 21 participants from these schools were selected as follows; three principals, nine teachers and nine parents. They were selected because they are farm schools and the study wanted to focus on the situation in the farm schools only. These schools were also selected because they were farm schools around the area where my school was found and I have good working relationship with the principals. The schools were also selected because of their accessibility and the willingness of the School Management and School Governing Body to participate in the study.

The data from these schools was collected through interviews with the following people; principals, teachers and parents of each and every school and all interviews were audio-recorded. Only in-depth and focus-group interviews were used to collect information from the participants. In-depth interviews were used to collect information from principals of all schools whereas focus-group interviews were used when teachers and parents were interviewed.

Principals and teachers were interviewed in English whiles all parents were interviewed in Setswana. Interviews with principals were conducted in the afternoon, afterschool in their offices whiles interviews with teachers were also conducted in the afternoon, afterschool, in the room provided by the school management, particularly for the interviews.

For the fact that most of the parents were working during the day and the majority of them were living far away from the school, parents from two of the three schools were interviewed in the afternoon at their respective homes, however, parents from one of the three schools were interviewed in the afternoon at their respective schools in the classroom provided by the school for the purpose of interviews.

### 3.3.3   Sampling

The study was taking place in Bojanala Education district which is also under Bojanala district municipality, one the four district municipalities in the North West Province. Bojanala education district is constituted by 553 schools, which are found in seven Area Offices, Lethlabile Area Office with  81 schools, Madibeng Area Office with 89 schools, Moretele  Area Office with110 schools, Moses Kotane East Area Office with 66 schools and Rustenburg Area Office with 140 schools.

The study took place in schools of Bojanala district with the main focus in Madibeng Area. Madibeng Area is a part of Madibeng local municipality found in the North West Province. It covers areas such as Brits Town, Hartbeespoortdam, Oukasie Township, Mothothlhung Township, and Damonsville Township, villages such as Majakaneng, Bapong, Segwaelane, Bethanie, Modikwe, MmaKau and surrounding Farms. 77% of schools were found in rural and farming areas, 5% of schools are found in the township and 18% of schools are either Former Model C or are found in town.  Most of the schools were in the quintile 1 and 2 category and were non-paying fee schools which shows that they were in the high poverty stricken communities. It was reflected in the table found in the following chapter that the majority of parents were not employed while some were working in the farms around Madibeng areas of which their income was very low.

The data was sought from three farm schools of which 21 participants were interviewed, three principals from three schools , nine teachers were interviewed wherein three were from each school and also nine parents were interviewed , three per school. Out of the nine parents interviewed from all three schools eight of them were females while only one was male. It was clearly tabulated in the next chapter that from the nine parents interviewed five of them attended school up to grade 11; two of

them attended school up grade 9, one attended school up grade 8, and one attended school up grade 4.

The age groups of teachers were as follows; five of the teachers were within the age group of 40 and 49 years; three of the teachers were within the age group of 50 and 59 years, and one of the teachers was 60 years.

Qualifications of the nine teachers who were interviewed were divided as follows; three of them studied up to Advanced Certificate in education (ACE) level, two of them studied up to National Diploma in Primary Education (NDPE), one of them studied up Bachelor of Technology (B. Tech), one of them studied up Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD), one of them studied up to Further Diploma in Education Management (FDE) and one of them studied up to Bachelor of Education Honours (B.Ed. Hons).

With regard to teaching experience; one of the teachers had between 1 and 10 years teaching experience, two of the teachers have between 10 and 19 years teaching experience, five of the teachers have between 20 and 29 years teaching experience and one of the teachers has between 35 and 39 years teaching experience.

During the process of analysis related data was assembled under one umbrella group, thereafter different categories were developed which resulted into the development of themes based on the research questions.

### 3.3.4   Data Collection

### 3.3.4.1 Interviews

Interviews were the only instrument used for data collection in this study. According to Kumar (2011:144) an interview is a verbal exchange, often face to face or otherwise, though the telephone may be used in which interview tries to elicit information, beliefs or opinions from another person. Kumar (2011:144)

### 3.3.4.1.1  In-depth interview

Arthur, Waring, Coe & Hedges. (2012: 170-171)   define an in-depth interview as purposeful interactions in which an investigator attempt to learn what another person knows about a topic, to discover and to record what a person has experienced, what he or she thinks  and feels about it, and what significant or meaning it might have. At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience in terms of.

In-depth interviews were used to interview the principals of different schools because it is very much relevant when one person is interviewed on a one on one basis. The principals were interviewed in English.David and Suttan (2011: 245-246) outlines some of the advantages and disadvantages of face-to-face or in-depth interview.

**Advantages of In-depth interviews**

- Depending on the research topic, a greater response rate can be achieved.
- Direct personal contact between the researcher and the potential interviewee to arrange a convenient interview time can, as long as it is conducted in a professional manner, result in the building of both rapport and respondent commitment to the research study.
- Personal contact is often combined with other forms of communication, including introductory letter, information leaflets, post cards on research updates and thank you notes.
- There can be greater use of open questions, where the respondent's own words are recorded, and the interviewer can provide additional explanation, if required, to aid the respondent's understanding of the question.
- Prompting can be included with the questions and, if a question is inappropriate, data on why no response was made can be recorded.

**Disadvantages of In-depth interview**

- The issue of anonymity is no longer applies, though the interviewer can make assurances of confidentiality.

- There is also the potential for both interviewer effect and interviewer bias.

- Interviewer bias can occur through both the verbal comments and non-verbal cues of the interviewer.

- The age, social background and sex of the interviewer are all interviewer effects that could influence the responses given by the interviewee.

- Compared to a postal or telephone interview survey, the costs of face-face methods can be much more.

- A considerable amount of researcher time is involved in arranging the interview, and sometimes having rearranged the interview to accommodate the interviewee's daily schedule. Contacting interviewees is initially often by letter or, where appropriate, by e-mail.

- Another disadvantage of this kind of interview is relating to the potential risk to the researcher, which may not only of be of physical personal safety but also of potentially psychological and traumatic situations.

### 3.3.4.1.2  Focus groups interviews

Arthur, Waring, Coe & Hedges. (2012:186) describe group interviews as a way to gather many opinions from individuals within a group setting but are largely didactic between the interviewer and each individual in the group. In educational research focus groups can be used for a multitude of purposes, gauging opinion, evaluating services, generating theory, learning from experiences, understanding the everyday use of language, interpreting cultures, reshaping people's views, political action and empowerment of marginalised groups.

Two focus group interviews were used to interview a group of teachers and a group of parents from all schools which were part of the study. Teachers were interviewed in English because they were comfortable with English and parents were interviewed in

Setswana because all parents could only understand a bit of English but they could understand and express themselves very well in Setswana.

In describing focus group interviews, Silverman (2004: 177-180) says "focus group methodology is the way of collecting qualitative data, which essentially involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group of discussion focused around a particular topic or set of issues. The focus group discussion is recorded, the data transcribed and then analysed using conventional techniques for qualitative data. The focus group provides a way of collecting data relatively quickly from a larger number of research participants. Focus groups are well suited to exploring 'sensitive' topics, and the group context may actually facilitate personal disclosures." According to Kumar (2011:160), in the focus group interview, you explore the perception, experiences and understanding of a group of people who have some experience in common with regard to a situation or event.

**Advantages of Focus Group Interviews**

Mathews & Ross (2010: 250) described the advantages of focus group kind of interview as follows:

- Particularly useful for exploratory research and idea/theme generation.
- Group membership can be empowered.
- Can provide a relaxing safe setting that is potentially, disinhibiting and may allow groups to be researched in their natural setting.
- Gives access to group dynamics and may indicate how people arrive at their decisions or choices.
- Can be relatively low cost and economical: 'lots of opinions or information at one time.
- Works particularly with groups that have oral traditions.
- With regard to Flexibility, it allows the use of different formats and techniques.

Babbie (1998:248) describes some of advantages of focus Groups as follows: Focus group kind of interview is a socially orientated research method capturing real-life data

in a social environment. It has flexibility, high face validity, speedy results and it is low in costs.

**Disadvantages of Focus Group Interviews**

Mathews & Ross (2010: 250-251) describe some Limitation of Focus group.

- Success of the group often depends on the skill of the facilitator.
- The researcher has a limited control over the data generated.
- Failure to consider the relative power, social positions, cultural issues etc., of group members can affects results.
- An artificial setting may be uncomfortable and unnatural for participants.
- The actions of dominant or subservient personalities can affect validity.
- Group opinion and individual opinions may be different and can be hard to separate.
- Can be costly, particularly if the participants do not attend.
- There are potential problems with confidentiality.
- It is often difficult to do more than identify major themes.
- Focus group output may not be generalisable.

Babbie (1998:248) describe five disadvantages of focus Groups:

- Focus groups afford the researcher less control than individual interviews.
- Data are difficult to analyse.
- Moderators require special skills.
- Difference between groups can be troublesome.
- Groups are difficult to assemble; and
- The discussion must be conducted in a conducive environment.

### 3.3.5   Data Analysis

The constant comparative method was used to analyse data because it involves a line-by-line reading of data and making note of codes. Samaras (2011:208).

Samara (2011:208) affirms that self- study researchers may employ an inductive approach in their data analysis- that is the constant comparative method which entails taking information from data collection and comparing it to emerging categories. That is you are constantly comparing initial codes as new data come forth from your multiple data sources to develop and saturate the category.

For the fact that some of the participants like parents were interviewed in Setswana, I had to translate their responses into English for ease of data analysis.

The only instrument I used to collect data was interviews, and the interviews were conducted with principals, teachers, and parents. For every interview I conducted with all participants it was audio-recorded. After audio-recording interviews, I listened to the audio record, and thereafter transcribed them into notes.

The qualitative data analysis method was used in analysing data. The data was transcribed into notes, and I read the notes time and again until I had a clear understanding of what the participants were saying.

During the process of analysis all related data were assembled under one umbrella group, thereafter different categories were developed which resulted into the development of themes based on the research questions so that the research could not lose track but rather should remained focused.

I also used the steps of analysing data as described by Kumar (2011: 278) to develop themes in the following way:

Step 1: Identify the main themes.

I went through the descriptive responses given by the respondents to each question in order to understand the meaning they communicated. From the responses I developed broad themes that reflect the meaning.

Step 2: Assign codes to the main themes.

I wrote themes and assign codes to each of them, using numbers or key words,

Step 3: Classify responses under the main themes.

After identifying the themes I go through the transcripts of all my interview notes and classify the responses or contents of the notes under the different themes.

## 3.4    RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Kumar (2011:184) postulates that "validity in the broader sense refers to the ability of a research instrument to demonstrate that it is finding out what you designed it to and reliability refers to consistently in its findings when used repeatedly."

According to Johnson & Christensen (2000:100) "reliability refers to consistency or stability. With respect to psychological and educational testing and assessment, reliability refers to consistency or stability of the scores we get from the tests and assessment procedures. If a test is reliable, it will produce similar scores or responses on every occasion." Johnson &Christensen (2000:100).

In order to have reliability achieved in this research all research processes were followed, which means that if the same research was to be conducted by different person the same outcome will be achieved.According to Johnson &Christensen (2000:100) validity, is a judgement of the appropriateness of the interpretations and actions we make based on the score or scores we get from a test or assessment procedure.

For the fact that the researcher visited all schools and interviewed all participants physically and again gave the opportunity to each and every participant to express him or herself freely without any influence in one way or the other, to confirm validity of research.

## 3.5     LIMITATIONS

One of the limitations was that the study may not claim to have received everything that the study would have wanted to get because majority of participants would not want to expose the dirty linen in public. In other words they were very much reluctant to talk about anything that sounded negative about their school.

In spite of this all negative attitude that has been shown by some the participants, I had to convince them by emphasising that the information they have provided is confidential and that nobody will have access to this information

## 3.6     ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### 3.6.1     Before the research

Before going to different schools, I sought permission from the Bojanala District of Education Department in the North West Province through the Area Manager of Madibeng Area. The letter requesting for access and permission granted are attached in the appendices section of this research report.

### 3.6.2     During the research

The participants were made to read sign a consent form after it was explained to them, more especially parents who could not understand English. The Consent form also guaranteed confidentiality of the whole information they were going to provide. The consent form articulated the rights of participants very well; the right to participate in the study or right to withdraw at any time from the study.

### 3.6.3     After the research

After the research all Consent forms, all sheets and any other information collected were kept safe to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

## 3.7    CONCLUSION

This chapter focused around the research methodology and design. In the introduction of this chapter, the qualitative research approach was outlined as the approach which was going to be used for the study and why it was selected. The introduction also explained the research questions for guidance to ensure that the research remained on track. The Research design and data collection strategies of which the interview was the only instrument used to collect data were discussed. The section on sampling was also discussed and also data analysis which included among other things the methods of data analysis. Other important issues discussed were the reliability and validity, limitations and summed up with the ethical considerations. The following chapter will look at the presentation of findings, analysis and discussion.

## CHAPTER 4
## PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1    INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to investigate factors that lead to low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng Area. As discussed in chapter three of this study it was indicated that the qualitative method was going to be used because it was relevant for this study as it is not about the investigation of quantity but it is about investigating societal challenge which must be addressed from the qualitative point of view.

Mathews & Ross: (2010:142.) assert that "qualitative research methods are primarily concerned with stories and accounts including subjective understandings, feelings, opinions and beliefs. Qualitative data becomes typical when the data collected is in words or expressions of the research participants themselves."

Johnson & Christensen (2000:312.), "define qualitative research as research relying primarily on the collection of qualitative data. Qualitative researchers tend to rely on the inductive mode of research, and the major research objective of this type of research was exploration or discovery. This means that qualitative researchers generally study a phenomenon in an open-ended way, without prior expectations, and they develop hypotheses and theoretical explanations that are based on their interpretations of what they observe. Qualitative researchers prefer to study the world as it naturally occurs, without manipulating it." Johnson & Christensen (2000:312.)

Chapter two outlined the literature review wherein different schools of thoughts concerning parental involvement in schools were put into perspective.

Chapter three looked at the qualitative research approach, its characteristics and why it was chosen for the study. The chapter also looked at the research design which gave the details as to where the research was conducted. It also outlined data collecting strategies of which the interviews were going to be the only instrument used

to collect data, particularly in-depth interview and focus group interview. Reliability and validity; limitations and ethical considerations were also discussed.

This chapter is going discuss data that was acquired through in-depth interviews and focus on group interviews. The chapter is also going to look at characteristics of selected schools, principal, teachers and parents.

In this chapter some key questions for the study were addressed.

The chapter addressed the following main question:

- What are the factors that lead to low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?

The above-mentioned main question was supported by other subsidiary questions that were addressed by the study:

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

## 4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED SCHOOLS

**Table 4.1: Information from selected schools.**

| Schools | School A | School B | School C |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Number of Leaners | 275 | 198 | 136 |
| Number of educators in school | 13 | 10 | 04 |
| Number of Classroom | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Principal's office. | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Telephone. | Yes | No | No |
| Computers. | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Access to internet. | Yes | yes | No |
| Photocopy Machine. | Yes | yes | Yes |
| Electricity | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Water | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Toilets | Yes | Yes | Yes |

All the schools had the same number of classrooms and each one of them had a principal's office for administration. Only school A had a telephone, the other two schools B and C did not have phone. All schools had computers even though school B and C had one computer each which was meant for administration purpose and school A and B had access to internet whiles school C did not have access to internet. All schools had photocopy machines, electricity, water and toilets.

## 4.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

### 4.3.1 The principals of schools

**Table 4.2: Principals of schools**

| Principal | School A | School B | School C |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Gender | Female | Male | Male |
| Age | 55 | 47 | 39 |

| Marital Status | Married | Married | Married |
|---|---|---|---|
| Home Language | Sepedi | Sepedi | Setswana |
| Highest Qualification | B.Ed. Hons | Primary Teacher Diploma | ACE: Management |
| Number Year in a teaching Profession | 33 years | 23 years | 17 years |
| Experience as a Principal | 7 years | 8 years | 6 years |

Two of the principals interviewed were male and one of them was a female. All principals were married and two of them spoke Sepedi whereas one of them spoke Setswana. The age, teaching experience and experience as the principals varied.

### 4.3.2   Teachers from different schools

**Table 4.3: Teachers at school A**

| Teachers | Teacher 1 | Teacher 2 | Teacher 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Gender | Female | Male | Female |
| Age | 48 years | 44 years | 55 years |
| Marital Status | Married | Married | Married |
| Home Language | Sepedi | Setswana | Setswana |
| Highest Qualification | B. Tech. | SPTD | ACE |
| Teaching Experience | 22 years | 21 years | 29 years |
| Grade currently taught. | 4 and 5 | 6 and 7 | 1 |

**Table 4.4: Teachers at school B**

| Teachers | Teacher 1 | Teacher 2 | Teacher 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Gender | Male | Female | Female |
| Age | 54 years | 41 years | 60 years |
| Marital Status | Married | Married | Divorced |
| Home Language | Setswana | Setswana | Setswana |
| Highest Qualification | NPDE | FDE Management | NPDE |
| Teaching Experience | 24 years | 16 years | 37 years |
| Grade currently taught. | 5,6 and 7 | 4, 5, 6 and 7 | 2 |

**Table 4.5: Teachers at school C**

| Teachers | Teacher 1 | Teacher 2 | Teacher 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Gender | Female | Female | Female |
| Age | 49 years | 42 years | 51 years |
| Marital Status | Married | Married | Single |
| Home Language | Sepedi | Setswana | Setswana |
| Highest Qualification | ACE | ACE | BED. Hons |
| Teaching Experience | 22 years | 9 years | 18 years |
| Grade currently taught. | 6 and 7 | 2 | 3 |

The majority of teachers interviewed were female and out of nine teachers interviewed 7 of them were female and only two were male. All teachers interviewed were forty years and above. Seven of the nine teachers interviewed were married and the other

two were single and divorced respectively Seven of the nine teachers interviewed spoke Sepedi and the remaining two spoke Setswana.

The information given above was important because it enriched the whole process of the research in the sense that the researcher would be able to know the people from which data is taken. The information also helped the researcher to distinguish data according to demographic nature of population. It also helped the researcher to come up with a hypothesis about a particular group of people in relation to the study.

### 4.3.3  Parents from different Schools

**Table 4.6: Parents at school A**

| Parents | Parent 1 | Parent 2 | Parent 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| Gender | Female | Female | Female |
| Age | 36 years | 41 years | 32 years |
| Marital Status | Married | Married | Single |
| Home Language | Xitsonga | Sepedi | Setswana |
| Highest Standard/Qualification | Grade 9 | Grade 11 | Grade 11 |
| Type of Employment | Domestic worker | Unemployed | Self-employed |

**Table 4.7: Parents at school B**

| Parents | Parent 1 | Parent 2 | Parent 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| Gender | Female | Female | Female |
| Age | 29 years | 29 years | 31 years |
| Marital Status | Single | Single | Single |
| Home Language | Sepedi | Sepedi | Tshivenda |
| Highest Standard/Qualification | Grade 4 | Grade 9 | Grade 11 |

| Type of Employment | Unemployed | School Bus-Monitor | School Bus-Monitor |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

**Table 4.8: Parents at school C**

| Parents | Parent 1 | Parent 2 | Parent 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Gender | Female | Male | Female |
| Age | 37 years | 51 years | 48 years |
| Marital Status | Single | Single | Divorced |
| Home Language | Sepedi | IsiNdebele | Setswana |
| Highest Standard/Qualification | Grade 11 | Grade 8 | Grade 11 |
| Type of Employment | Domestic Workers | Self-Employment | Contractor |

Eight of the nine parents were female and only one was a male. Six of the nine parents interviewed were single and the two were married while one parent was divorced. Four of the parents were employed whereas five of them were unemployed. With regard to the home language four of the parents spoke Sepedi two spoke Setswana whiles the other three spoke Tshivenda, IsiXhosa and IsiNdebele respectively.

Three categories of participants were asked questions in order to formulate themes. Even though most of the questions asked to different participants were the same however each category of participants was asked specific question. The following questions were asked to different participants: principal, teachers and parents.

Questions for Principals

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

Questions for Teachers

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?

What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

Questions for Parents

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

The data that was gathered through interviews questions are summarized in following five main themes in the following way:

- Understanding of parental involvement in schools,
- The importance of parental involvement in schools.

- Causes of low parental involvement in schools,

- The effect of low parental involvement in schools,

- Remedy towards low parental involvement in schools.

## 4.4  UNDERSTANDING OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

### 4.4.1  Reporting process

After collecting data through the interviews which were conducted with principals, teachers, and parents of schools in Madibeng Area, the qualitative data analysis method was used in analysing data. The data was transcribed into notes, and I read the notes time and again until I had a clear understanding of what the participants were saying.

When analysing data, all related data were assembled under one umbrella group, thereafter different categories were developed which resulted into the development of themes based on the research questions so that the research could not lose track but rather should remained focused. A number of topics were also developed. The actual verbatim words by the participants will typed in *italics.* Under each and every topic there will be discussion.

### 4.4.2  What do you think is parental involvement in schools?

- **Principal**

The principal of school A described parental involvement in education in the following way:

> *Parent involvement means participation by parents in the learners*
> *work and also communication with educators. Parents must also see*
> *to it that buildings are conducive for learning and teaching. Through*
> *SGB they must ensure that learners are safe at school.*

The principal at school B said that parent involvement in education was when parents took part in any activity that concerned learners at school, for example fundraising and support towards teachers.

The principal of school C also described parent involvement in the following way:

> *Parents are everything in education, education is what it is because of parents, they are the once who send their children to school. Any improvement done at school is done for the children of the same parents, therefore, the same education intended for the learners is going to benefit the parents also because the majority of parents cannot read and their children will help them in reading and also calculating. Therefore parents cannot be separated from schooling.*

- **Teachers**

One of the teachers at school A described parental involvement in education as way of involvement by parents for the sake of their children especially helping them with the implementation of new curriculum which encouraged parents' involvement.

One of the teachers at school A described parent's involvement in education as follows:

> *When parents take part in their children's education and want to know more about different activities at school like academic performance of learners.*

According to one of the teachers at school B parent involvement was described as follows:

> *Is when a parent helps the child to do homework, explain difficult material that were not clear to him or her in class, looking at the books of the child, buying the uniform for the child, check the cleanness of*

*the child when going to school, ensures that the child has enough food,*
*and also see to it that books are well kept.*

In the opinion of one of the teachers at school B parent involvement in education is as follows:

*When a parent show eagerness in the education of his or her child and*
*do whatever is needed for the child to get education.*

One of the teachers at school C supported the statement and said that parent involvement in education was when parents show interest in their children's education. Also, in supporting the statement above one of the teachers at school C said that parent involvement in education was, when the parents became part of their children's schooling and knew what was happening at school especially their children's academic performance.

One of the teachers at school B described parent involvement in education as follows:

*Is when a parent helps the child to do a homework, explain difficult*
*material that were not clear to the child in class, looking at the books*
*of the child, buying the school uniform for the child, check the*
*cleanness of the child when going to school whether it is acceptable*
*or not, and also see to it that books are well kept.*

One of the teachers at school C corroborated the statement above by one of the teachers at school B and said the following:

*Parents' involvement in education is when a parent assists a child at*
*home with a work that has been done at school by teachers.*

- **Parents**

One of the parents at school B agreed with the two teachers at school A and C that parent involvement was when a parent helped a child with homework, checked the

books to see whether a child was doing well or struggling with the school work and also signed the book to confirm that they had seen the books.

In describing parent involvement in education one of the parents at school A said the following:

> *Parent involvement means, wanting to know about your child, making sure that your child is clean, knowing everything about your child and what the child is doing at school and checking if whether the child does homework.*

According to one of the parents at school A:

> *Parent involvement means, wanting to know about your child, making sure that your child is clean, knowing everything about your child and what the child is doing at school and also to check if your child is doing the homework.*

In corroborating a statement above by a parent at school A one of the parents at school C described parent involvement as a school visit by parent to check whether their children were taught well.

One of the parents at school A, described parent involvement in education as a way of fulfilling some of their responsibility of attending parents meeting and also encouraging of children to study and do their homework.

Again another parent at school B described parent involvement as follows:

> *When a child comes home from school and a parent asks the child what he or she has learned at school and also to check if whether a child has homework to be done and also assist the child with homework and checking with the child how teachers are treating him or her at school.*

According to one of the parents at school B parent involvement was when a parent attended a parents' meeting and listened to the principal.

Two of the parents at school C corroborated one of the parents at school A and one of the parents at school B who said that one of the things that would show parental involvement was meeting attendance by parents.

**Discussions**

Fuller and Olsen (1998:130,136) Define parent involvement in schools as "Parents who come to school as visitors to support school events, volunteer to assist teachers, administrators and children in class-rooms and in other school activities." Fuller and Olsen (2008:128) describe parent involvement as something that includes any activities that are provided and encouraged by the school and that empower parents in working on behalf of their children's learning and development.

Even though different categories of stakeholders had described parental involvement in education in one way or the other, most of their descriptions did not show a wider perspective of what parental involvement was. The description that was attributed to the principals of school A and B showed that they had an idea of what parent involvement in the education of their children was, whereas the description attributed to the principal from school C showed that some of the principals did not actually understand the role that must be played by parents in schools, hence the problem of low parental involvement.

The contribution by some teachers from different schools reflects the low level of understanding of teachers on what parent involvement was in those schools, which was not pleasing when one thought that they should be the elite of the parents and community in that regard.

The contribution from parents in that regard also centred on helping learners and checking their work only and it did not consider other aspects of the school that need parent involvement such as supporting principals, teachers, other staff members,

school governing bodies and any other school activity which might need parent attention.

Steward (2000:122) regards parent involvement as a participation of parents in educational issues through School Governing Bodies. Parent involvement includes volunteer work, fundraising, attendance at school meetings, accompanying learners and educators on school excursions and similar kinds of activities."

## 4.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

### 4.5.1 Why is parental involvement so important in schools?

- **Principals**

The principal at School A responded in the following way:

*Because education also happen at home.*

That was also corroborated by the principal at School B who said the following:

*Because children need to be supported all the time, they need mentoring, guidance and they also need parents and teachers support.*

- **Teachers.**

According to one of the teachers at school A parent involvement in education was important because parents can have an in-depth knowledge of what was happening at schools and could also have first-hand knowledge of the performance of their children.

One of the teachers at school A in order to show the importance of parent involvement in schools said the following:

> *It important because, if the learner knows that the parent is in partnership with the teacher or SMT it will not be easy for a leaner to go astray or misbehave. If there is no partnership the leaner will dark and dive or play hide and seek and also telling the parents the opposite of what is happening at school and also telling the teachers at school about something that is not happening at home. e.g. we instantly send letters to the parents of which at some stage they do not respond because the learners or their children might not have given them letters.*

One of the teachers at school B described the importance of parental assistance to teachers in the following way:

> *In order to improve school results, to improve learners' performance, improve quality of teaching and to help with discipline of the leaners.*

According to one of the teachers at school B parental involvement was important in order for the parents to examine the performance of learners and also the development of school.

One of the teachers at school B has shown that parent involvement in education was important because where learners were given homework to do at home it would be easy for parents to help their children at home.

In emphasizing the importance of parent involvement in schools one of the teachers at school C said the following:

> *It is important, because in the new curriculum CAPS most of the work will also have to be done at home; these will need parents to work hand in hand with teachers.  Learners will be given a homework which must be done at home of which they may very well have to be assisted by parents.*

One of the teachers at school C confirmed that parent involvement helped learners to get the same message from both parents and teachers. According to one of the

teachers at school C parent involvement was regarded as important because of the following:

> *It helps to narrow the relationship gap between parents and teachers which makes a learner with no one to run to for protection of bad behaviour.*

- **Parents.**

One of the parents at school A said following way:

> *It makes teachers to work easily. If the teacher gives a learner any activity and the parent helps the learner at home the learner will be able to understand that activity very well.*

One of the parents at school A emphasized the importance of parent involvement in education in the following:

> *It is important in the sense that when the learner is at home he or she is assisted by parents and at school by teachers it will make the work easy for the learner. If the teacher sends me a letter that invites me to school I must honour the invitation. This will also encourage good performance, respect and many more good things. All these will help the child to have a bright future.*

One of the parents at school A argued that even though teachers were with the leaners for the rest of the day which might seem to be a long time, they might not know everything about learners, therefore, parents will have to support teachers in their work because they knew most of their children strong points and weak points better than teachers, hence parent involvement in schools was paramount.

In order to emphasize the importance of parents' assistance towards teachers one of the parents at school B said the following:

*It is important because teachers may not teach learners alone without the assistance of parents, we must be able to support and assist teachers as parents so that we can make their work easy.*

One of the parents at school B also said the following:

*It is important in order to maintain discipline among learners.*

According to one of the parents at school B parent involvement was important because it encouraged learners to study hard. One of the parents at school C supported the statement above and attested that parents know and understand their children more than teachers and therefore children will be freer with the parents than with teachers, which meant that some of the challenges faced by learners may only be revealed to their parents but not teachers.

One of the parents at school C said the following:

*We as parents must know that teachers must be supported; this will help our learners to be successful in their education because if the parent supports the teacher, learners may improve their performance.*

One of the parents at school C outlined the importance of parent involvement follows:

*Parent involvement is necessary because it will motivate teachers who may realize that because they are helped by parents they will have to work hard in order to appease parents to support and help them even in future.*

**Discussion**

All schools unanimously agreed that parent involvement was imperative as it was one of the pillars of success of the school. Every stakeholder under study shown that even though they might not be doing enough to make parental involvement successful,

there were quite number of things that parent involvement could bring towards the success of schools.

Principals, teachers and parents contended that parent involvement was important so that children might be supported from all angles at all the times; children would need mentoring and guidance by parents when doing school work whiles at home.

According to teachers and parents from the schools under study, parent involvement in education was important because it had a greater role to play, for example one of the roles that parents played in supporting teachers was to ensure that there was discipline at schools. One of the parents regarded parent involvement in schools as important because if a leaner knew that parent was in partnership with the teacher or SMT it would not be easy for a leaner to go astray or misbehave, however, If the learner knew that there was no partnership the leaner would play hide and seek and also tell parents the opposite of what would be happening at school and also telling teachers at school about something that would not happen at home. They also asserted that parental involvement was important in order to improve quality of teaching which would subsequently result into the improvement in learners' performance or results.

Diffily (2004:7) says that, on their website, the National Parents Teacher Association summarizes the eighty-five research studies cited in the three documents (The Evidence Grows (1981), The Evidence Continues to Grow (1987) and a New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Students Achievement (1995)) by listing the following eleven the following eleven research findings:

- When parents are involved, students achieve more, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' educational level.
- The more extensive the parents involvement, the higher the student achievement.

- When parents are involved in their children's education those students have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently.

- When parents are involved students exhibit more positive attitudes and behaviour.

- Students whose parents are involved in their lives have higher graduation rates and greater enrolment rates in the post-Secondary education.

- Students from diverse cultural background tend to do better when parents and professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and learning institution.

- Student behaviour such as alcohol use, violence and anti-social behaviour decrease as parent involvement increases.

- Students are more likely to fall behind in academic performance if their parents do not participate in school events, develop a working relationship their child's educators, or keep up with what is happening in their child 's educators, or keep up with what is happening in their child school.

- The most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to (1) create a home environment that encourages learning; (2) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and (3) become involve in the children's education at school and in the community. (National PTA, 2002)

Teachers asserted that parent involvement in education was important in order to make parents to get an in-depth knowledge and first-hand information about the performance of their children.

Parents argued that parents involvement in education was important because even though teachers would be with the leaners for the rest of the day which might seem to be a long time, they might not know everything about learners, therefore, parents will have to support teachers in their work because they would know most of their children strong points and weak points

Shea and Bauer (1985:63) describe the benefits of teachers as the result of parental involvement in education as follows:

- Parent involvement increases teachers' understanding of the exceptional child and child life circumstances. Teachers obtained important information on the child s personal history, current problems, and family and home situation.
- Teachers learn to see the parents as individual worth of respect and understanding. They are also better able to support parents' efforts at home and thus improve the child's school experience as well.
- Through association with parents, teachers receive reinforcement of their efforts, which can improve their self-image and sense of professional identity.
- Parents' involvement increases the chances for teachers, work the child to succeed. Teachers can share instructional responsibility with parents and increase opportunities for individualized instruction.
- Parent involvement foster positive parent- teacher communication and reduces negative communication and miscommunication.

There were some issues that all stakeholders from these schools were not aware, which were also the cores of why parental involvement was important in the school. Click (1981:189) says that "many of those who took part in the early cooperative schools found that the involvement in the education of their young children had benefits they had not expected. The parents found they learned a great deal about their own child and gained a general knowledge of child development. They found comfort in knowing that other parents have same kinds of problems in raising their children. A few parents found that they gained a basic training that made it possible for them to become teachers when their own children were older."

Shea and Bauer (1985:62) describe the benefits of parents as the result of parental involvement in education as follows:

- Involvement in their child education helps parents fulfill their social and ethical duties to help the child develop fully as possible.

- Working with teachers helps parents change their behaviour, if necessary, improves educational value of family environment.

- With close association, parents perceive teachers as allies in the effort to raise the child.

- Involvement with understanding teachers and other parents improves parents' self-worth and self-satisfaction.

Olsen and Fuller (2008:129) describe some of the benefits of the parents who are involved in education of their children as follows:

- Parents increase their interaction and discussion with their children and are more responsive and sensitive to their children's social, emotional, intellectual developmental needs.

- Parent are more confident in their parenting and decision-making skills.

- As parents gain more knowledge of child development, there is more use of affection and positive reinforcement and less punishment on their children.

- Parents have a better understanding of the teacher's job and school curriculum.

- When parents are aware of what their children are learning, they are more likely to help when they are requested by teachers to become more involved in their children's learning activities at home.

- Parents' perceptions of the school are improved and there are stronger ties and commitment to the school.

- Parents are more aware of, and become more active regarding, policies that affect their children's education when parents are requested by school to be part of the decision-making team.

## 4.6 CAUSES OF LOW PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

### 4.6.1 What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

- **Principals**

According to the principal at school A the cause of low parental involvement in education in their school was a level of education of the majority of parents because majority of p    arents did not see the necessity and the importance of attending school by their children.

The principal of school A went further and said:

> *One of the challenges is that the distance between home and*
> *school is long to be travelled on foot; because of poverty around*
> *this area parents may not have money for a taxi or a bus in order*
> *that they can visit school.*

The principal of school B also said that the problem of low parental involvement was the long working hours spent by some parents, which meant that low parental involvement in education was as the result of the lack of time by some of the parents. The principal of school B also said the following as the cause of low parental involvement:

> *Some parents are just shunning their responsibility of taking care of*
> *their children's education.*

In showing the cause of low parental involvement in their school, the principal of school C said the following:

> *The cause is that almost all parents are working, some during the day*
> *until over the weekends.*

And again some of the problems experienced at school A were also experienced by the principal at school C who said that some of the causes of low parental involvement were the problem of transport to school and lack of interest because most of them were not educated.

- **Teachers**

According to one of the teachers at school A, one of the teachers at school B and two of the teachers at school C the cause of low parental involvement in their school was due to the fact that parents lacked knowledge and education around the importance of education. One of the teachers at school A went further and said that one of the causes to low parental involvement was because:

> *No extra effort to meet parents by teachers.*

In supporting the statement above one of the teachers at school B said the following:

> *The cause is their level of education and also by not having a clear knowledge around the importance of education and its impact in the lives of people.*

One of the teachers at school B also said the following:

> *One of the challenges is illiteracy, because most of parents are dropouts from school.*

In supporting the statement above one of the teachers at school C said the following:

> *They regard a teacher as the only one who should teach learners and is also the solution of everything about the learner's education. Majority of parents do not know their role and some of the parents do not participate in the school matters because they are not educated.*

Two of the teachers at school A and one of the teachers from school B said that one of the problems of low parental involvement was the low or lack of interest by parents. In supporting the statement above one of the teachers at school A said that one of the causes of parental involvement was:

> *Lack of interest by parents in their children school work, negative influence from other parents and illiteracy.*

One of the teachers at school A described one of the causes of low parental involvement as the problem of alcohol abuse. The statement above was also supported by one of the teachers from school B who said the following: "Alcohol abuse might also be the cause of low parental involvement."

According to one of the teachers at school B and one of the teachers at school C the cause of low parental involvement in their school was parents' inferiority complex. In confirming the statement above one of the teachers at school B said the following:

> *One other problem is inferiority complex by parents, some parents respect their bosses to an extent that they are afraid that teachers may talk bad about their bosses who may later get this information and fire them from their jobs.*

One of the teachers at school C supported the statement above and said that some parents distanced themselves from school due to inferiority complex.

One of the causes of low parental involvement that had been described by teachers was a language. One of the teachers at school C said the following about the impact of the language:

> *The other thing might be a language barrier because some parents come from different countries and when they are addressed in Setswana and English of which they do not understand any of these languages they disengaged from the school.*

One of the teachers at school B said that low parental involvement was caused by the type of work the parents were doing of which they always complained after work that they were tired, to an extent that they would not want do any other thing after work.

One of the teachers at school C described the kind of meetings they had with parents which were always formal as one of the causes of low parental involvement and she explained that in the following way:

> *Maybe is because there are no informal meetings and parents are only called when there is a problem.*

- **Parents**

According to two of the parents at school A, two of the parents at school B and one of the parents at school C, one of the causes of low parental involvement was that most of the parents did not care of what was happening at school including their children's education. In corroborating the statement above one of the teachers at school A said the following:

> *I think one of the reasons is that other people like to take things for granted.*

One of the parents at school B said the following:

> *Parents who do not care what the child has done at school or is doing.*

In support of the statement above one of the parents at school B said the following:

> *They are not interested in the future of their children.*

The statement above was also confirmed by one of the parents at school B who said the following:

> *Some parents shun responsibility; others do not take anything serious.*

According to one of the parents at school A and two of the parents at school C, one of the causes of low parental involvement was because of the high level illiteracy in that area. One of the parents at school A corroborated the statement above by saying the following:

> *Some are not involved because they are not educated even when children go to school they do not even want to check how the child school uniform looks like, also to check whether the child has bathed before going to school.*

One the parents at school C said that one of the reasons some parents do want to participate was because of illiteracy and they also did not see the importance of education and they did not dream of the brighter future of their children as a result of education. In support of the statement above one of the parents at school C said the following:

> *The problem is that they do not know of the importance of education*.

One of the parents at school C described one of the causes of low parental involvement as follows:

> *Some parents have a problem of alcohol abuse that is why they are not involved is school or education of their children.*

According to one of the parents at school C some parents did not want to be involved because of the fear of educators or the fear of unknown and also because of their interfering complex. One of the parents at school A said that others were unable to be involved because of work.

One of the parents at school C in describing one of the causes of low parental involvement the parent said the following:

> *Some do not want to be involved because they need money so can't work for free .For example money for food handlers people say is too*

*little people and they do not want to work for such amount, if the school invites parents to come to help they do not want to come, they would want to help if they will be rewarded or paid money for the work rendered. Some are not involved because of inferring complex; some people do not care of what their children are taught.*

According to one of the parents at school C, one of the causes of low parental involvement was because some parents were just disrespectful of the teachers and school management.

**Discussion**

The main issue that had been deduced from the interviews with the principals of Madibeng schools on the barriers to parent involvement in schools was that because some of the schools were far away from the settlement where learners resided, parents could not be involved, in other words, because of the distance between the school and the home which was long the parents could not participate in school activities.

One of the barriers to parental involvement raised by principals and teachers was the problem of time because almost all parents were workers in the farm of which they worked during the day until over the weekends without rest and they were always exhausted to be involved in schools. Also according to both parents and teachers from Madibeng Area, barriers to parent involvement in schools were caused by among other things high number of uneducated parents or high level illiteracy among parents, the low or lack of interest by parents towards education, the problem of alcohol abuse by parents, inferiority complex of parents.

Resources Parents may be too busy, not always by choice, with their work lives to become involved in the lives of their children at school. Some may have to work two jobs to make ends meet, and others may have demanding jobs by choice. Teachers may lack knowledge of the need for, or the ability to provide, multiple ways of sharing information (such as authority, visually, in print, and experimentally) with families. Wright, Stegelin and Hartle, (2007:278)

Issues of power between teachers and parents. When parents are not sure how to support their children's literacy learning or how to integrate themselves into the business of the school many feel paralyzed, inadequate, and powerless. Very often, parents don't know to which standards, methods, and content of their school-age child should be exposed. Their sense of uncertainty, anxiety, and fear increases because they begin to perceive themselves as inadequate. They feel they should know how to respond to their child's out-of-school linguistic and social capital needs, and they feel increasingly frustrated at having failed due to their incomplete knowledge about how best to help their children learn increasingly complex school lessons. When school fail to provide these parents with factual, empowering information and strategies for supporting their child's learning, the parents are even more likely to feel ambivalence as educators. Edwards (2004:36)

The changing nature of parents' role in children's lives. Some parents feel that if they simply send their children to school that they have fulfilled all their responsibility. After sending them to school they do not want to become involved in their children school lives. They feel that it is the school's responsibility to educate their children. Many parents work long hours to put food on the table and feel they are doing all what they can for their children at home, so teachers can assume that their children learn at school. Edwards (2004:36)

Even though some of the argument that were put forth by teachers were the same with those of parents, there was one barrier that was put forth by teachers only, a language barrier; because some parents came from different countries and when they were addressed in Setswana and English of which they do not understand any of these languages they disengaged from the school. Teachers also said that one of the barriers to parental involvement at schools was the kinds of meetings the school had with parents which were always formal and discussed issues in the formal way, in others words some of the parents would be attracted to school if there were some informal meetings.

The researcher discovered that some of the parents could not be involved because for any work they had rendered they would need money or any form of payment, in

other words they would want to be involved only if they would be rewarded or paid money for the work they have rendered, so they could not do any work for free. Again one of the barriers of parental involvement according to the parents was just a mere disrespectful of the teachers and school management by some parents, in other words they would not be involved as way of undermining teachers and management of the school.

It was very clear that there were quiet numbers of issues that make parental involvement not effective. Different authors and scholars outlined some of the barriers that influenced low parental involvement in schools in the following way:

Closely related to the problem of perceived inability is the problem of negative attitudes on the parts of the parents. Another Source of parents' negative attitude is the school life experience by those parents. Adults who were failed by rigid education system that did not meet their needs are not inclined to be particularly supportive if their children are enrolled in similar type of system. Sawyer and Sawyer (1993:413)

Olsen and Fuller. (2008:196) also show the following barrier towards parental involvement: As students get older, parent involvement declines dramatically. All types of parent involvement decline between the sixth and twelfth grades, by which time a relatively small number of students benefit from active parent involvement, ranging from simply inquiring about the student's schoolwork to actually helping with that work and participating in parent functions at the school. Olsen and Fuller. (2008:196)

Click. (1981:193) shows that "the process of involving parents in the education of their children has some built-in obstacles. First, parents and teachers often have ideas about each other that make it difficult for them to work together. The parent may see the teacher as knowledgeable and critical of parents and may feel unwelcome and unskilled in the school environment. The teacher may feel that the parent does not want any help and expects the teacher to change the child. The teacher may feel completely unwelcome in the home environment. Some teachers may be untrained in working with parents; this contributes to the difficulty of involving parents. Teachers are often unaware of the feelings of parents about their children. Some teacher

education programs fail to help the beginning teacher to understand community attitudes about child rising."

Attitude of parents. Closely related to the problem of perceived inability is the problem of negative attitudes on the parts of the parents. Another Source of parents' negative attitude is the school life experience by those parents. Adults who were failed by rigid education system that did not meet their needs are not inclined to be particularly supportive if their children are enrolled in similar type of system. Sawyer and Sawyer (1993:413)

Work and Health. Many employers do not have flexible leave policies that enable parents to participate in the educational programs of their children. Other parents are not able to become involved in their children's educational programs due to health reasons. Chronic illness, physical barriers at inaccessible buildings, and other health factors may make participation unrealistically difficult for parents. Sawyer and Sawyer (1993:413)

Attitudes of Educators. Educators tend to see the appropriate involvement of parents as outside of the school curriculum, in roles that parents have traditionally held. In his works with teachers, Rasinki (1989) has noted that parents are generally viewed negatively. They are seen as a cause of many problems. They are frequently seen as pushy, resistant to teacher recommendation, neglectful of their children and difficult to contact. Rasinki describes a number of reasons cited by teachers for excluding parents from program: they are not qualified; they do not understand the language of development process; they are unfamiliar with instructional strategies and material; overqualified parents who may also be teachers exert too much pressure on the teacher; and, they make unreasonable demands or suggestions. Sawyer and Sawyer (1993:414)

Beliefs and Values. Some parents may have negative experiences when they were in school, so they might not want to participate in schools events, thinking that some of the same experiences mighty occur again. Some parents may have unresolved issues with school policies, that is, dress code, attendance, and so forth, and so forth, so they will avoid involvement in school activities. Some parents may not feel competent to

work with teachers in the classroom or with schools on decision making committees. Some schools don't ask for parental and community support. Some schools or teachers may not value families as resources in the educational process. Schools or teachers have put forth signals (i.e. behaviours, wording of noted home) that teachers are the authority figures and are not open to question. Both schools and families may not be knowledgeable or open to certain cultural practices that differ from their own. Wright, Stegelin and Hartle (2007:278)

Edwards (2004:36) describes the following barriers on parental involvement:

Overburden school not seeing parent involvement as a top priority. Today's schools are expected to do many things: resolve racial conflict and build an integrated society; inspire patriotism and good citizenship; provide values, aspirations and sense of identity to disadvantaged children…reduce conflict in the society by teaching children to get along with others and to adjust to group living… fight disease and poor health through physical education, health training  and even medical treatment…end malnutrition and hunger through school lunch and milk programs; fight drug abuse and educate children sex….In other words nearly all nations' problems are reflected in demands placed on the nation schools. Edwards (2004:36)

A history of distrust and miscommunication in family school interactions this sentence is incomplete. Many schools have not kept a close watch on population make-up of parents that they serve. Additionally schools often make assumptions about parents, which cause them to be distrustful of their involvement. When left unexplored, this lack of understanding of and acceptance for the families and community of the students, act to further substantiate parents' own mistrust of the educational system. In many instances neither school nor do the family be sure what steps to take in order to rebuild the trust or create better lines of communication. Edwards (2004:36).

An unintentional exclusion of poor, minority and / immigrant parents from school activities. With all of the many families that schools have to serve they may not have the expertise to address the needs of all these families. Many poor minority, and or

immigrant parents often feel that the school activities are not culturally sensitive and do not address their concerns. Edwards (2004:42)

Olsen and Fuller. (2008:196) also show the following barrier towards parental involvement:

**Level or grade of a learner**. As students get older, parent involvement declines dramatically. All types of parent involvement decline between the sixth and twelfth grades, by which time a relatively small number of students benefit from active parent involvement, ranging from simply inquiring about the student's schoolwork to actually helping with that work and participating in parent functions at the school. Olsen and Fuller. (2008:196)

**Poor communication between home and school**. Destructive pattern can evolve in a number of ways, but typically, they begin when parents are poorly informed about ways they can help their children to be successful. If the child is not successful, and the parents do not know what to do support success, the parents feel helpless and powerless. When the school continues to convey messages about their child problems without offering concrete ways for the parents to support the child's achievement , parents often become withdrawn, defensive resentful, and hostile. Olsen and Fuller (2008:196)

**Different expectations regarding Norms and behaviours**. In most instances, these differences arise because of beliefs, values and norms that are held by the parents and the teachers involved. Someone who holds a different value perspective may view behaviour as inappropriate, irresponsible, or immoral that may be perfectly normal or acceptable to another person. Attempt to solve problems between home and schools are often thwarted by clash of two essentially reasonable but contradictory value positions. Olsen and Fuller (2008:197)

**Trivialization of the parent's role**. Volunteering  in the library, sponsoring fundraising events, or serving on the PTA council, although important for the overall functioning of the school, may be seen as trivial by parents because , although this activities support

the school and its programs they do little to directly support the success of a parent's individual child. Rather than volunteering for an activity that is seen as having a relatively low payoff for success of their children, many parents simply withdraw from school participation by the middle school years. Olsen and Fuller (2008:197)

**Conflict between family resources and school requirements**. The parents' inability to provide such resources may result in a student failing to meet course requirements or to engage in the kind of co-curricular activity that is clearly associated with school success. Olsen and Fuller (2008:198)

School behaviour that makes parents feels unwelcome. Withholding information about performance expectations is one of these practices. By not providing information about expectation, about expected academic and social behaviour, a disjuncture between the home and school occurs. Scheduling special events or asking parents to volunteer when they are unable to be at the school sends a strong message that the parent is not wanted there. Olsen and Fuller (2008:198)

## 4.7    THE EFFECTS OF LOW PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

### 4.7.1    What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area?

- **Principal**

In highlighting the effect of low parental involvement education, the principal at school A said the following:

> *Learners' performance will be affected negatively because parents will not be supporting them in any way.*

The principal of school B concurred with the principal of school A and said that low parental involvement will lead to poor learners' performance.

According to the principal of school C whenever parental involvement is low, teaching and learning will not be effective, for example, homework will not be written.

The principal of school A also said the following about the effects of low parental involvement in schools:

> *The school will not be able to complete some of the tasks such as policy development, activities such as fundraising will also suffer and parents will not have knowledge of what will be happening at school.*

The principal at school A also said the following about the effect of low parental involvement:

> *It will also lead to dysfunctional School Governing bodies, high level of absenteeism, activities such as cleaning campaign, fundraising, Quality of learning teaching Campaign (QLTC) will suffer without the involvement of parents.*

According to the principal of school B one of the effects of low parental involvement in schools was the increase of Ill-discipline among leaners.

- **Teachers**

One of the teachers at school A said the following about anticipated effect of parental involvement:

> *Low parental involvement will lead to poor school performance whiles learners' performance is affected negatively and teachers also will become demoralized.*

One of the teachers at school A supported the statement above by one of the teachers at school A in the following manner:

> *Low parental involvement hampers the progress of the school because there are a number of things that must be done by school, particularly SMT and teachers of which the parents must play a role, for example, a learner whose performance is very low or has dropped drastically to an extent that it needs serious intervention which must include parents, the problem of the learner may not be resolved if there would be no parent in the discussion.*

One of the teachers at school C said the following about the effects of low parental involvement:

> *Low parental involvement affects the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the school negatively in the sense that new curriculum gives parents a bigger role to play in supporting the learners, therefore, whenever they are not involved they leave a vacuum.*

In support of the statement above one of the teachers at school B said the following about low parental involvement:

> *It will delay the progress of learners because at some stage parents will be expected to visit schools for intervention purposes which will be focusing at the performance of learners.*

One of the effects of low parental involvement in schools was described by one of the teachers at school A as follows:

> *Low parental involvement will lead to high level of ill-discipline amongst learners because they will know that even if they misbehave at school teachers will not know whom to contact in order to discipline learners.*

In support of the statement above one of the teachers at school C said that low parental involvement would encourage ill-discipline among learners.

One of the teachers at school A said that low parental involvement would make the school not to achieve most of the goals, whereas one of the teachers at school B said that where there was low parental involvement, parents will not know the activities that are happening at schools.

One of the teachers at school A said that low parental involvement in education will delay the progress of leaners because at some stage parents will have to visit school for intervention of their children's classroom work, of which if they do not participate learners performance will be affected. That teacher also said that low parental involvement in schools will make the school not to achieve most of its goals.

- **Parents**

According to one of the parents at school B one the effect of low parental involvement was described as follows:

> *Learners will become ill disciplined.*

The statement above was also supported by one of parents at school C who said the following about discipline as one of the effect of low parental involvement in schools:

> *Learners will be ill-disciplined because they know that no one will rebuke them at home. Even if they misbehave at school they know that whenever teachers call parents they will not come to school. There will be a moral decay amongst leaners.*

In support of the statement above one of the parents at school B said the following about discipline as one of the consequences of low parental involvement:

> *Leaners will not attend school properly; they may claim to be attending school whiles not reaching or arriving at school.*

According to one of the parents at school A to confirm that low parental involvement result into ill-discipline the parent said the following:

> *Leaners will not write the homework because there will be no one to check if whether they are writing homework or not.*

According to one of the parents at school A one the effect of low parental involvement is that:

> *Leaners are going to fail whiles teachers not knowing where to run to when they experience problem with the leaners.*

One of the parents at school B said that one of the effects of low parental involvement was that the Pass percentage of leaners would remain low. The statement above was also supported by one of parents at school B said the following about the effect of low parental involvement in schools:

> *The performance of leaners will be affected because there will be no revision at home for the work done.*

One of the effects of low parental involvement was that parents could not know what was happening at school because they would not be involved. In confirming the statement above one of the parents at school A said the following:

> *Parents will not know what is happening at school there will be rumor mongering and speculation about may be about the misuse funds and many more things about the school which will result into conflict between parents and school management.*

One of the effects of low parental involvement as outlined by one of the parents at school C said that schools would not be effective because extra and co-curricular activities such as sports and trips would not materialize because they would need a support from parents.

One of the parents at school B emphasized the effect of low parental involvement and said the following:

> *It will be difficult for teachers to do their work properly because no one*
> *will be helping and checking learners' work at home.*

One of the parents at school B said that low parental involvement would also affect the school in many respects, for example finances, parents would not contribute money to school for any activity they might be requested to contribute for..

**Discussion**

According to the principal, teachers and parents one of the main issue that would be affected negatively by low parental involvement was learners' performance. In other words the school will have high failure rate among leaners which would negatively affect performance of the whole school. They also said that low parental involvement by parents would result into ill-discipline among learners because there would be no one to rebuke them at home. They also said that low parental involvement would affect teaching and learning negatively in the sense that new policy that have been developed gave parents a bigger role to play in support of the learners of which if they did not execute such mandates it would make learners not to do some of their work for example; homework would not be written by learners.

Principals and parents had shown that low parental involvement might also affect activities such as cleaning campaign, fundraising, because for a fundraising activity to be successful parents must also be involved, it could be through money or otherwise. Teachers and parents contended that low parental involvement would make parents not to have knowledge of what would be happening at school which will result into rumour mongering and speculation about the misuse of funds and many more things about the school which will result into the conflict between parents and school management, and subsequently affected the whole school at large. Teachers would be demoralise as they would be working without support from parents. They argued further and said that low parental involvement would make it difficult for teachers to do their work properly because no one will be helping and checking leaners' work at home.

The principals argued that low parental involvement will lead to high level of absenteeism in school, dysfunctional School Governing bodies, the tasks such as policy development in schools would be affected, and Quality of learning teaching Campaign (QLTC) will suffer without the involvement of parents.

Teacher also argued that low parental involvement would delay the progress of learners because at some stage parents will have to visit schools for intervention of their children's classroom work, of which if they did not participate learners performance would be affected; and the progress of school would be affected in many respects and the school would be unable to achieve its goal.

Parents argued that low parental involvement would lead into a moral decay among learners. Learners would not attend school properly; they might claim to be attending school whiles they were not reaching or going to school. Parents also confirmed that low parental involvement would also affect extra and co-curricular activities such as sports and trips because they would also need a support from parents.

Swap (1993:33 & 38) says that "When schools offer training and parents do not participate or follow through, school personnel often feel that their concerns about parents' deficiencies are confirmed. The deficit approach to family involvement, particularly for poor families, is very widespread, as this excerpt from a paper on parent involvement released by the U.S. department of education as part of its "Policies perspectives" series reveals." The effective functioning of the schools has depended on effective functioning of the family and community. What makes some ghetto schools functioning poorly are that the communities and families they serve are weak, lacking the social capital that will reinforce the school's goals. The goal of curriculum model is to expand and extend the school's curriculum by incorporating into it the contribution of the families. The assumption is that families have important expertise to contribute and that the interaction between parents and school personnel and the implementation of the revised curriculum will enhance the educational objectives of the school. The logic that drives this effort at curriculum reform is that:

- Continuity of learning between home and school is of critical importance in encouraging children's learning.

- The values and cultural histories of many children are omitted from the standard school curriculum, leading to a disruption of this continuity between home and school, and often to less motivation, status, and achievement for these children in school.

- These omissions distort the curriculum, leading to a less accurate and less comprehensive understanding of events and achievements and to a perpetuation of damaging beliefs and attitudes about immigrant and oppressed minorities.

Berger & Riojas-Cortez (2012: 183) says "Teachers who reach out to parents are more accepting of and more knowledgeable about the families than those who hesitate to be involved with parents. Studies show that teachers' involvement is more critical than family background in determining how students' progress. When teachers involve parents they find that parents are helpful. When teachers do not involve parents they often stereotype single parents and those with less education as not being helpful.

## 4.8    REMEDY OF THE SITUATION

### 4.8.1    What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

- **Principal.**

The principal of school A suggested that parental involvement can be improved in the following way:

> *By encouraging parents to attend Adult Basic Education and Training*
> *so that they can improve their level of education, because those few*
> *parents who are attending ABET centres are beginning to show the*
> *interest of education of their children.*

The principal of school B said in order to improve parental involvement in education parents had to be treated with courtesy whenever they visited the schools, it could be

normal visit or a parents meeting they should get something to eat or they must be catered with food.

In the opinion of the principal of school C one of things that had to be done in order to improve parent involvement in education was to give awards to the parents who were mostly involved at school.

All principals agreed that in order to improve parental involvement external agencies might be used; the principal of school A confirmed the statement and said the following:

> *Organizing Workshop through NGO, Social Workers, Clinics, Rape-wise people, breast Cancer – Women.*

The principal of school B also corroborated the views advanced by the principal of school A in the following way:

> *Invite people from different department, Nurses, Social Workers, Police, Business people.*

The principal of school C also supported the views expressed by both principals of school A and B and said that:

> *Different relevant department must come to school to do among other things, encourage the employers to grant their employees time-off so that they can go to school to address their children matters during school hours.*

- **Teachers**

In order to improve parent involvement one of the teachers at school A said the following must be done:

*We may use radio programme wherein we will encourage the involvement of parents of this area because people believe much in media; we will use the radio called Motsweding FM as it is the most listened radio station around this area. The program should be centred on learners whiles teachers and SMT are encouraged to do among other thing visit the parents.*

According to one of the teachers at school A, in order to improve parent involvement, parents had to be visited in their homes by teachers and SMT which subsequently led to the increase in parents' involvement at their school. In relation to the statement above one of the teachers at school C said the following:

*When parent have some activities in the community teachers may go and participate in those activities so that parents may see that they are one and the same with teachers.*

Teachers at school B emphasized empowerment of parents with regard to their roles and responsibilities in the education of their children as one of the key issues that must be done in order to improve parent involvement.

In order to improve parent involvement one of the teachers at school B said the following:

*The school must create a positive environment for parents participation in education, in other words parents must be shown the importance of education so that they can realize that their children may become something in the future, they must also know that education is the future of their children. In a nutshell a lot of talk and explanation must be done to the parents.*

In order to improve parent involvement another teacher at school B supported the statement above by one of school B teacher in the following:

> *Parents need a workshop on the importance of school and how parents must be involved.*

In support of two previous teachers at school B another teacher at school B said the following:

> *If we can start by educating the parents they will be able to assist their children, maybe we will have to start bit by bit with the low quantity of work until we reach the stage of high quantity and quality.*

In emphasizing the issue of capacity building towards parents as the way of improving parent involvement one of the teachers at school B said that different departments must intervene through someone from above who should come to address the parents.

One of the teachers at school B said that in order to improve parent involvement in schools ABET centres must be introduced because high level of illiteracy made the parents not to help their children with homework.

Some of the teachers at school A and C talked of informal engagement between parents and teachers as one of the issues that might be used to improve parent involvement. One of the teachers at school A said the following:

> *May be if parents are invited to come to school not in the parents meeting but in an informal gathering where parents may come to school to see what is happening in class.*

Also one of the teachers at school C agreed with what was said by the principal at school B:

> *May be teachers and parents must have informal gathering not in the form of a meeting but as a social gathering without entertaining school matters.*

In order to improve parent involvement one of the teachers at school A said the school must organize events with refreshment as mentioned previously by one of the principals. In support of the statement above one of the teachers at school C said that open day and fun day might also be introduced as way of trying to encourage parent involvement.

- **Parents**

According to one of the parents at school A the introduction of school cultural and open day might improve the involvement of parents at school because in those days parents would feel free to participate in any organised activity. The statement above was supported by one of the parents at school A who said the following:

> *May be schools may introduce cultural day or open day in order to improve parental involvement.*

The above statement was also supported by one of the parents at school C who said the following:

> *Cleaning and fun days must be planned properly in order to attract many parents come. For example sports competition between teachers and parents where teachers play against parents in soccer or netball.*

According to one of the parents at school C, in order to improve parent involvement schools should organise concerts which should involve all members of the school community including parents. The parent went further and said that schools may also introduce raffles as a form of enticing the parents.

In order to improve parent involvement one of the parents at school B said that educators must treat all parents equally.

One of the parents at school B said the following about the remedy to parental involvement:

> *May be the school should ensure that whenever there is a meeting or any activity that involves parents food must be served, may be that may attract parent to participate in the long run.*

According to one of the parents at school B, in order for parents to be involved the usage of the means of communication such as letter writing SMS must be improved, teachers should continue to write letters to the parents.

One of the parents at school C described empowerment of parents through workshops as one of issues that must be done in order to improve parent involvement; the parent also supported the statement above by following:

> *By teaching and educating parents, because majoring of parents are not educated some never attended school some attended school up to a very low grade or standard, they must be told that even if they are not educated they must know that they are important for the school to operate smoothly. Teachers and SGB members must take the responsibility of educating parents.*

**Discussions**

A number of solutions towards barrier were clearly articulated, of which if they were implemented they will be able to address the issue of low parental involvement in schools. All stakeholders should be able to support those solutions. The key stakeholders to make this success will be the principal and SMT who must play a greater role. Parents also have a greater role to play in their capacity as parents and through the SGB.

Principals and teachers agreed that parental involvement could be improved by encouraging parents to attend Adult Basic Education and Training so that they could improve their level of education or to reduce the level of illiteracy, because those few parents who are attending ABET centres are beginning to show the interest of education of their children.

The principals, teachers and parents agreed that in order to improve parental involvement in education, parents had to be treated with courtesy whenever they visited the schools, it could be a normal visit or a parents' meeting they should get something to eat or they must be catered for. In other words in order to make parents get involved in schools around the Madibeng area is that whenever the school organized events they had to make refreshment and food for parents.

The teachers and parents also emphasized empowerment of parents with regard to their roles and responsibilities in the education of their children as one of the key issues that must be done in order to improve parent involvement, the empowerment might also focus on the importance of education so that parents can realize that their children might become something in the future. In other words parents needed a workshop on the importance of school and how they might be involved. They also emphasized empowerment of parents with regard to their roles and responsibilities in the education of their children as one of the key issues that must be done in order to improve parent involvement, the empowerment might also focus on the importance of education so that parents can realize that their children might become something in the future. In other words parents needed workshops on the importance of school and how they might be involved. Teaching and educating parents was necessitated by the fact that majoring of parents were not educated, some never attended some only reached a very low grade or standard. They must be told that even if they were not educated they must know that they were very important for the school to operate smoothly.

Principals agreed that one of things that had to be done in order to improve parent involvement in education was to give awards to the parents who were mostly involved at school at the end of each year. They also agreed that in order to improve parental involvement external agencies such as NGO, Social Workers and Clinics, Rape-wise people, breast Cancer – Women, Nurses, Police, Business people and many other experts from different department. One of the issues the external urgencies had to address was to encourage the employers who mostly were farm managers to grant their employees the time-off so that they go to school to address their children's matters with teachers during school hours

Teachers also talked about the introduction of radio programme that will encourage parent involvement in education or schools, Motsweding FM in particular as it was the most listened radio station around the area of Madibeng. They also said that in order to improve parent involvement, parents had to be visited in their homes by teachers and SMT. They also talked of informal engagement between parents and teachers as one of the issues that might be used to improve parent involvement.

Parents emphasized the introduction of fun day, cleaning campaign, cultural day and open day as some of the important things that might improve the involvement of parents at school because in those days parents would feel free to participate in any organised activity. They also emphasized the introduction of raffles and concert as some of the ways of improving parent involvement. Therefore one of the issues they agreed upon was that parents must be given equal treatment by educator and SMT and effective way of communication must be used.

Authors such as Rich and Fitzgerald describe some of the important remedies for low parental involvement in the following manner. Rich (1987: 37) talked about the cards or mimeographed sheets that were printed with the following words "We Miss You" and an appropriate illustration. The cards might be an art class project. Send cards home when a child has been absent three or more days. With it include a personal note from the class. These cards tell children and their parents that they are missed. For student who are absent for extended periods, a weekly log of class activities and tape-recorded messages from classmates can also are sent home.

Rich (1987: 39) says the State-of -the -Class Message is the individual class news note that is sent home. These can be prepared and delivered by students once every month or two. This is a way to keep parents up to date on the activities in each class. Rich (1987:39) says **"**placing question or suggestion box in an easily accessible place in the classroom where parents can use it without being seen. They may appreciate anonymity. Make announcement in the parents meeting that their suggestions are given careful thought.  Make sure your families know how much the school appreciates them. Teachers can do it with an end-of-year tea, with certificates, a commendation, and "a million-dollar check" made out to each family. What is important is that each school shows that it cares about its families."

According to Rich (1987:40) "Invite parents to check out materials from the library to use at home. Schedule library hours to include at least one hour after-work weekly. Set a limit on the time the material can be borrowed and stick to it. Set up a day for children and parents to drop off outgrowing items and pick up those from other homes. Raincoats and boots, for example, rarely wear out."

Fitzgerald (2004:34) asserts that meeting with parents to discuss the progress that their child is making provide a valuable opportunity for two-way communication. To ensure that parental meetings are based on two-directional communication, more in the style of conference, practitioners can use documentation, photographic evidence, anecdotal notes and examples of children's work to make it more interactive. This will encourage an exchange of views and ideas and give practitioners a different perspective. This combining of information will allow a deeper insight to be gained of each child, which practitioners and parents can draw on to further enhance developmental opportunities.

**Parent conferences:** Fitzgerald (2004:34) says that meeting with parents to discuss the progress that their child is making provide a valuable opportunities for two-way communication. To ensure that parental meetings are based on two-directional communication, more in the style of conference, practitioners can use documentation, photographic evidence, anecdotal notes and examples of children's work to make it more interactive. This will encourage an exchange of views and ideas and give practitioners a different perspective. This combining of information will allow a deeper insight to be gained of each child, which practitioners and parents can draw on to further enhance developmental opportunities.

**Information sessions or workshop:** Fitzgerald (2004:37) explains that planned sessions with families can be useful forum to allow shared learning to take place. Edwards and Warin (1999) suggest that a reason for poor uptake at workshop is an over-emphasis on parents being told how to work in a teacher-directed style. So the challenge for practitioners is to create a sessions that are based around equal participation and problem solving with the aim of not doing more, but doing better.

**Worksite Seminars:** Berger and Riojas-Cortez (2012:76) say **"**It is important to note that in few instances, parents may appear to want to have control over every single aspect of the school or centre, but the principal or director may guide that quest for power more productive causes, such as giving the parents special project in which they take the lead. Each group requires a different response from the professional staff. The parents who tend to stay away will need time to overcome negative experiences and learn to appreciate that the school or centre can be trusted to help their children. If the school has an inviting and responsive climate, the three groups of parents in the middle ground will feel welcome. These groups, which encompass the largest portion of parents, will soon begin contributing to the school activities. They can also form a supportive advocacy for schools plans. Offering a variety of tasks and different degrees of involvement assures parents that they may contribute according to their talents and availability and allows all of them to be comfortable about coming to school and enjoying involvement in the educational process. It is up to the teachers and administrators to develop a school or centre that welcomes parents. They must be aware of their own feelings and ability to work with and support parents as they develop their plans for the upcoming year."

## 4.9    CONCLUSION

It was very clear from the discussions that different stakeholders within the school community had a different understanding of parental involvement in education. Most of the descriptions on parent involvement were narrow and they did no not cover the bigger scope around parental involvement. This chapter looked at characteristics of selected schools and participants within the schools. The discussions show that it was important for all affected stakeholders to have an understanding of the importance on parental involvement in schools. The chapter also looked at the importance of parental involvement in schools, causes of low parent involvement, the effect of low parental involvement in schools. The next chapter will focus on the summary, recommendations limitations and conclusions.

# CHAPTER 5
# SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

## 5.1    INTRODUCTION

Chapter one outlined the background of the study. It put forth the topic of the research. It also outlined the problem statement, the research question, aims of the study and literature preview. It also discussed methodology, data collection strategies, and data analysis to be utilized. It also looked at ethical issues, division of chapters and explanation of concepts.

Chapter two outlined the literature review wherein different schools of thought concerning parental involvement in schools were put into perspective. It also showed the theoretical background of what other authors and scholars perceive of parental involvement. It also looked at the background of parental involvement in schools, issues such as factors that lead to low parental involvement in schools, parental involvement in the farm schools, theory of parental involvement in the farm schools and it also outlined different ways of involving parents.

Chapter three looked at the Qualitative research approach, its characteristics and why it was chosen for this study. It also looked at the research design which gave the details of the area where the research was conducted. It also outlined data collecting strategies of which the interview was the only instrument used to collect data, particularly in-depth interview and focus group interviews. Entities such as reliability and validity; limitation and ethical consideration were also discussed in the chapter.

Chapter four discussed the data that was acquired through in-depth interviews and focused on group interviews. The chapter also looked at characteristics of selected schools, principal, teachers and parents. It also addressed some of the key research questions. It also made some conclusions on the findings of the study.

Chapter five provided the summary of the study concentrating on the understanding of parental involvement in schools; importance of parental involvement in schools; causes of low parental involvement; the effects of low parental involvement in

education at your school and the remedy towards low parental involvement. It also made some recommendation for parents, School Governing Bodies, School Management Teams staff, and the Department of Basic Education. Lastly the chapter looked at the limitations of the study.

## 5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to investigate the factors that lead to low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng Area. The study was able to discover that there were a number of factors that lead to low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area under the following issues:

### 5.2.1 Understanding of parental involvement in schools

With regard to the understanding of parental involvement in schools different stakeholders understood it in different ways. In other words different categories of stakeholders had described parental involvement in education in one way or the other and most of their descriptions were narrow. The study also discovered that two of the principals showed that they had an idea of what parent involvement in education was, whereas one of the principals did not actually understand the role that must be played by parents in schools.

The study also discovered that the majority of teachers did not understand what parental involvement in schools was, of which it would not be pleasing to be found among teachers who are expected to be the elite of the parents and community at large.

It was also deduced in the study that the parents' understanding of what would be parent involvement was not up to scratch because it revolved around helping learners and checking their work only without considering other aspects of the school that need parental involvement such as supporting principals, teachers, other staff members, school governing bodies and any other school activity which might need parents' attention. Steward (2000:122) defines parental involvement in a broader sense and says parental involvement as the participation of parents in educational issues through

School Governing Bodies. Parental involvement includes volunteer work, fundraising, attendance at school meetings, accompanying learners and educators on school excursions and similar kinds of activities.

### 5.2.2  The importance of parental involvement in schools

With regard to the importance of parental involvement in schools, all stakeholders from different schools agreed that parent involvement was important for the smooth running of the school. They also conceded that parent involvement would be of necessity in order for the school to achieve most or all of its targets.

It was also supported by Shea and Bauer (1985:62) who describe the importance of parental involvement in education as follows:

- Involvement in their child education helps parents fulfil their social and ethical duties to help the child develop fully as possible.
- Working with teachers helps parents change their behaviour, if necessary, improves educational value of family environment.
- With close association, parents perceive teachers as allies in the effort to raise the child.
- Involvement with understanding teachers and other parents improves parents' self-worth and self-satisfaction.

### 5.2.3  Causes of low parental involvement.

The study discovered that there were a number of causes of low parental involvement such as high number of uneducated parents or high level illiteracy among parents, long distance between home and school to be travelled on foot, the lack of time by some of the parents, shunning responsibility by some parents, No extra effort to meet parents by teachers, alcohol abuse by some parents, inferiority complex by parents, a language barrier, formal meetings held always, disrespectful of the teachers and school management by parents, long working hours and lack of reward or payment for the service rendered by a parent.

Wright, Stegelin and Hartle, (2007:278) supported the statements and said that parents may be too busy, not always by choice, with their work lives to become involved in the lives of their children at school. Some may have to keep two jobs to make ends meet, and others may have demanding jobs by choice. Wright, Stegelin and Hartle, (2007:278)

The above statement was also supported by Edwards (2004:36) who said that when parents were not sure how to support their children's literacy learning and how to integrate into the business of the school many felt paralyzed. Very often, parents did not know to which standards, methods, and content of their school-age child should be exposed. Their sense of uncertainty, anxiety, and fear increased because they began to perceive themselves as inadequate. They felt they should know how to respond to their child's out-of-school linguistic and social capital needs, and they felt increasingly frustrated at having failed due to their incomplete knowledge about how best to help their children learn complex school lessons. When school failed to provide these parents with factual, empowering information and strategies for supporting their child's learning, the parents were even more likely to feel ambivalence as educators. Edwards (2004:36)

### 5.2.4    The effects of low parental involvement in education at your school

The researcher also discovered that some of the effects of low parental involvement in education at those schools under study were poor learners' performance or high failure rate among learners; they also discovered that those learners' discipline would be affected, teaching and learning would also be negatively affected, and whiles learners renegaded on their duties. School- community activities such as cleaning campaign, fundraising would also be affected. The study also discovered that the information flow between the school and the community would be hampered. The teachers' moral, extra and co-curricular activities and functionality of School Governing bodies would also be affected.

It was also discovered that low parental involvement would lead to a moral decay among learners. Learners would not attend school properly instead they would rather

pretend to be going to school though they would not reach the school. It was also discovered that low parental involvement would also affect extra and co-curricular activities such as sports and trips.

Swap (1993:33 & 38) said that the effective functioning of the schools had depended on the effective functioning of the family and community. What made some ghetto schools to function poorly were that the communities and families they served were weak, lacking the social capital that would reinforce the school's goals. The goal of curriculum model was to expand and extent of the school's curriculum by incorporating into it the contribution of the families. The assumption was that families had important expertise to contribute and that the interaction between parents and school personnel and the implementation of the revised curriculum would enhance the educational objectives of the school. The logic that drives this effort at curriculum reform is that:

- Continuity of learning between home and school is of critical importance in encouraging children's learning.
- The values and cultural histories of many children are omitted from the standard school curriculum, leading to a disruption of this continuity between home and school, and often to less motivation, status, and achievement for these children in school.
- These omissions distort the curriculum, leading to a less accurate and less comprehensive understanding of events and achievements and to a perpetuation of damaging beliefs and attitudes about immigrant and oppressed minorities.

### 5.2.5   Remedy towards low parental involvement

The study discovered that some of the remedies to low parental involvement would be the introduction of ABET centres, acknowledgement of parents roles in the form of an award, policy development, parents empowerment through workshops, sourcing the services of radio and external agencies and also the introduction of unique days like open day.

Authors such as Rich and Fitzgerald describe some of the important remedies for low parental involvement in the following manner. Fitzgerald (2004:37) contends that planned sessions with families can be a useful forum to allow shared learning to take place. Edwards and Warin (1999) suggest that the reason for poor comprehension at workshop is an over-emphasis on parents being told how to work in a teacher-directed style. So the challenge for practitioners is to create sessions that are based around equal participation and problem solving with the aim of not doing more, but doing better.

Sawyer and Sawyer (1993:416) show the importance of communication and explain that "without frequent communication, there is little possibility of building and maintaining parental involvement. Goldenberg (1989) illustrates clearly the result of lack of communication: potential parental involvement is needlessly decreased. Communication must be multifaceted. First it should be a two way street. It should not be a matter of the teacher giving instructions to the parents and the parents simply following those instructions. Secondly, communication also needs to take place at various points surrounding the components of the instructional program. That is, communication should not be confined to notification of parents only when a child shows some difficulty. Communication needs to come well before such a situation arises. Thirdly, communication needs to include the concept of networking. Mechanisms should be in place that allows parents to meet and discuss issues with other parents, group of teachers and groups comprised of both parents and teachers." Berger and Riojas-Cortez. (2012:145) take communication as one of the most crucial components for creating and maintaining a constructive partnership with families; they therefore suggest that the following must be done:

- Regular, on-going, two-way communication from school to home and home to school is needed.
- Teachers setting flexible time option that meet parents' schedules.
- Administrators compensating teachers who need to meet parents after hours, such as in the evening or early in the morning.

- Teachers using print and non-print communications, including school or classroom newsletters and parent education newsletters that can be transferred onto video-or audiotapes if needed.

## 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY

The school must organise workshops to be attended by principal, teachers and parents. The workshops should look at the roles that must be played by parents in schools. In those workshops principals, teachers and parents must get a clear understanding of where parents must operate, what should be their roles. The workshops must also help principals and teachers on how they must help parents to play a significant role without hampering academic programmes for the school. It must also deal with issue of the labour rights which may also assist in addressing the challenges faced by farm and domestic workers.

### 5.3.1 Recommendations for the Parents

ABET must be introduced in the areas surrounding the schools understudy in order to help the parents to improve their skills and qualifications. The principals and teachers together with community leaders must play a bigger role in establishing these ABET centres. KhaRiGude which means let us learn. Literacy Campaign should also be introduced in those areas surrounding the schools to help parents with the basic educational skills such as reading, writing and mathematical skills.

The school through SGB must organise workshops for parents which may also focus on the importance of education towards their children. The workshops are expected to boost the confidence of the parents.

Berger (2008: 207-208) states the following must be done in order to achieve self – determination, attitudinal change, competence, and educational gains:

- Unstructured meetings with no goals, curriculum or trained leader.

- Meetings led by lay leaders to get comments, solves problem, study an issue, or become better acquainted.

- Meetings led by lay leaders who follow a curriculum devised by professionals, such as Active Parenting, Parent effective training and Systematic Training for Effective Parenting.

- Meetings called by a parent or a professional that involve members and respond to their concerns with professional support.

- Meetings called and led by a professional with participation by lay members.

- Meetings called, led, directed, and controlled by the professional, with members of audience as observers only.

## 5.3.2    Recommendations for the School Governing Bodies

All the schools under study must develop a policy on parental involvement which will outline what is expected from a parent and any other stakeholder concerned.

In confirming the statement above, Epstein (2001:309-313) asserts that "write a policy that outlines and discusses the state's commitment to parent involvement. An official written policy that specifies the state's perspectives, services, requirements, and expectations concerning parental involvement is the first step towards a viable parental involvement program."

In order to address the issue of the distance between schools and homes which made it difficult for parents to visit schools and to attend parents meetings, the SGB should negotiate with the owner of scholar transport in the sense that, whenever there will be a parents meeting transport may be provided so that parents may attend meetings in large numbers. The SGB should also raise funds in order to finance some of the trips by parents to schools.

### 5.3.3    Recommendations for the School Management Teams

The school must solve the problem of language in the sense that during parents' meetings, the SMT must ensure that all parents understand what is discussed in the meetings, they must organise interpreters for the foreign languages.

The School management teams must organise informal gatherings in which parents and teachers meet and have fun together so that they can be used to one another which will ultimately break the buffer that might be existing between teachers and parents.

The SMT must treat parents with respect and courtesy, and all parents must be treated equally, favouritism must be avoided, above all schools must create a positive environment for parent involvement.

Kostelnik, Sonderman, Whiren (1999: 246) describe ways in which teachers can establish a relationship with parents as follows:

- Make personal contact with families.
- Treat parents and other significant family members as individual.
- Show genuine interest in family members by listening carefully and responding.
- Provide openings for family members to share their concerns or inquire about their child's program experience.
- Listen attentively when family members speak to you.
- Respond to family members' queries honestly and directly.
- Be courtesy to family members. Treat family members with consideration and respects.
- Provide positive feedback to families about their children's progress and their own childrearing success.

The SMT's of schools under study must introduce the annual parents' award ceremonies in order to motivate those parents who are involved and also to encourage

those who are not involved in schools. Rich (1987:39) also emphasizes the previous statement states that "Make sure your families know how much the school appreciates them. Teachers can do it with an end-of-year tea, with certificates, a commendation, and "a million-dollar check" made out to each family. What is important is that each school shows that it cares about its families."

### 5.3.4   Recommendations for the Department of Basic Education

The department of education must use the radio and television programme on educational issues and civic education to popularise issues around the importance of parental involvement.

The Department of Education (DoE) should also introduce a compulsory government funded in service-training course on parent involvement which must be done by principals and teachers in order to equip them with the skills on how to involve parents in their schools.

Click (1981:189) contended that the education and training of teachers must include an understanding of parents and their attitudes toward raising children. Teachers must learn how to work with parents to care for and educate leaners. Experiences must be provided so that teachers can learn to respect and use the abilities of parents. Teachers should understand how family life and structure are affected when parents become involved in the school community. Involving parents in the activities of the school and the education of their children will change the traditional role of the teacher. It is up to the administrator and staff to learn to use involvement of parents in the early education of children for the benefit of both the school and the family.

Epstein (2001: 309-313) suggests that the following policies and actions at the state level will improve family- school connections and parent involvement progress:

- Support state requirements for teaching credentials to include credits for completing at least one comprehensive course in family and school connections and the use of parent involvement in teaching. Currently, teachers in training are not required to demonstrate knowledge or expertise in

understanding families or communities or ways to involve parents as partners with the school in their children's education. Yet very teacher entering the classroom must work every day with children, their families, family conditions and the connections between schools and homes.

- Support state colleges and universities in the development of comprehensive pre-service and in-service teacher and administrator training courses for improving practices of parent involvement. In addition to establishing requirements for credits, courses in parent involvement research and practice must be developed to provide training needed by teachers.

- Establish funding and recognition programs, including small grants, for school districts and teacher-administrators-parent teams in individual schools to develop and evaluate comprehensive programs in parent involvement over several years.

In a nutshell it would be of paramount important that all stakeholders concerned should have a clear understanding of what parent involvement was; this would result into effective involvement by parents and subsequently benefit the school in many respects.

## 5.4    LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.

There are few issues that made the study to have some limitations.  A number of the schools selected for the study might have resulted into some limitation in the study because the findings from only three schools may not necessarily give the correct generalisation of the whole country, however  If it was a bigger size of sample generalisation would have been more appropriate. However I am confident that the schools identified for the study were all a representative sample of the entire population of the Bojanala District.

One of the limitations resulted from the fact that the study concentrated on schools around Madibeng Area which is just a part of Bojanala District of North West Province of which does not necessarily represents the whole of South Africa. The study was focused on that area rather.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

This research revealed that there are a number of factors that lead to low parental involvement in education by parents in Madibeng Area schools. Even though the majority of principals seemed to have a correct knowledge of what parent involvement in education was, the majority of teachers and parents seem not to know what it was. Furthermore, it was also discovered that low parental involvement will have some negative effect on learners' performance, learners' discipline, cleaning campaign, fundraising, teachers moral, functionality of School Governing bodies and the effectiveness of the Quality of learning and teaching Campaign.

Eventually, all stakeholders concerned were encouraged to take part in all activities that would ensure that there is effective parent involvement in schools in Madibeng Area. In a nutshell the study has shown that parent involvement is one of the pillars for successful schooling in South Africa. For the school to achieve maximum performance parental involvement should play a significant role.

It will be of paramount imperative for the management of Madibeng Educational Area under Bojanala Educational District to reflect on the findings and recommendations of the study to support them in their future plans.

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# ANNEXURE A

# Letter of requesting to conduct research

Enquiries: 0824911929

House No. 7568
489 Tamarind Street
Lotus Gardens
0008
18 June 2013

North West department of Education
The Area Manager
Madibeng Area Office
Private Bag X5082
Brits
0250

Dear Sir,

Subject: Permission to Conduct a Research

I am a registered student with UNISA for a degree of Masters in Education Management. I am doing Research with the following topic: Factors that lead to low parental involvement in farm schools in Madibeng Area office.

May, I therefor request a permission to conduct research in a few farm schools around Madibeng Area office in Bojanala District of the North West Province.

The interviews will be conducted with the Principals, teachers and Parents of the selected schools in the months of July and August 2013.

I am aware of the fact that teaching time must be protected; hence I am assuring you that all the interviews will be conducted outside the teaching time.
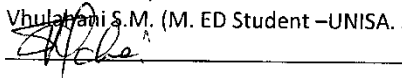
Let me also assure you that the issue of ethical conduct which includes confidentiality and anonymity in this research is highly observed. The names of the schools, peoples' names or any other name or information will not be released.

For any further information you may contact me on my number above.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours Sincerely
Vhulahani S.M. (M. ED Student –UNISA. Student No. 30968631)

# ANNEXURE B

# Letter of Approval

**education**

Lefapha la Thuto la Bokone Bophirima
Noord-Wes Departement van Onderwys
North West Department of Education
**NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

6 Pendoring Stree'
Brits, 025
Private Bag X508
Brits, 025
Tel.: (012) 250-191
Fax.: (012) 250-190
e-mail: zboikhutso@nwpg.gov.z

## OFFICE OF THE AREA MANAGER: MADIBENG AREA OFFICE

| | |
|---|---|
| *Enquiries* | : *Thema N.M* |
| *Tel* | : *012 250 1910* |
| *Email* | : *mosst@webmail.co.za* |

| | |
|---|---|
| To | : All school |
| From | : Thema N.M |
| Date | : 16 July 2013 |

**Subject** : DATA COLLECTION

Mr. Vhulahani S.M is a candidate at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and he is at a stage where he needs to collect data. His research topic is, factors that lead to low parental involvement in farm schools in Madibeng Area.

This communique serves to request the Principals of the affected Schools to allow him to gain entrance to the site and collect the needed data. The candidate promises to observe the research ethics as stipulated in the university policies.

Your assistance in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thema N.M
ACTING AREA MANAGER

**ANNEXURE C**

**Research questions**

What are the factors that lead to low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

**ANNEXURE D**

**Interview schedule for principals**

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- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

**ANNEXURE E**

**Interview schedule for teachers**

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

**ANNEXURE F**

**Interview schedule for parents**

- What do you think is parental involvement in schools?
- Why is parental involvement so important in schools?
- What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?
- What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?
- What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

## ANNEXURE G
## Interview transcript

**Interviewer:** What do you think is parental involvement in schools?

**Principal:** Parent involvement means participation by parents in the learners' work, communication with educators, ensuring that there is conducive environment for learning and teaching and also ensuring that learners are safe at school.

**Interviewer:** Why is parental involvement so important in schools?

**Principal:** Because learning does not only take place at school but it also take place at home, hence parents need to be involved.

**Interviewer:** What are the causes of low parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

**Principal:** One of the reasons is that majority of parents are not educated, they do not see the necessity of a learner attending school and they do not see any need why they must be involved. One of the factors that lead to low parental involvement is the distance from home to school and vice versa.

**Interviewer:** What are the effects of low parental involvement in education of rural and farm schools in Madibeng Area.?

**Principal:** I think low parental involvement will affect the performance of learners negatively because parents will not be supporting teachers in anyway. It will also lead to high level of ill-discipline among learners because they will know that even if they misbehave at school teachers will not know whom to contact. As the school we will not be able complete some of the tasks such as policy development. Activities such as fundraising will also suffer. Parents will not have knowledge of what will be happening at school. It will also lead to dysfunctional School Governing bodies, high level of absenteeism, activities such as cleaning campaign, fundraising, Quality of learning teaching Campaign (QLTC) will suffer without the involvement of parents.

**Interviewer:** What do you think must be done to enhance parental involvement in rural and farm schools in the Madibeng area?

**Principal:** I think we must encourage parents to attend ABET centres to in order to improve the level of literacy, because the experience taught us that those few parents who are attending ABET centre are beginning to show interest of schooling. We may also organize workshops through NGO, social workers, clinics, rape-wise people, and breast cancer for women

## ANNEXURE H
## Consent statement

I agree to participate in the research project. I understand that by agreeing to participate means that I am willing to be interviewed by the researcher. I allow the interview to be audio taped and I will also make myself available for a further interview should that be required.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed to any other party and also no identifiable personal data will be published. I understand that I may be given a transcript of data concerning me for my approval before it is included in the final research essay if I so require. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may pull out at any time, without giving reason and without consequences.

The purpose of the research was explained to me and I have understood the explanation very well.

I hereby agree to take part in this study.


_____     _____     _____

Name of participant           Signature                    Date

## ANNEXURE I

## Sections of South African Schools' Act


**SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT NO. 84 0F 1996**[View Regulation]

[ASSENTED TO 6 NOVEMBER, 1996]

[DATE OF COMMENCEMENT: 1 JANUARY, 1997]

(Unless otherwise indicated)

*(English text signed by the President)*

This Act has been updated to *Government Gazette* 34620 dated 19 September, 2011.

**as amended by**

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 100 of 1997

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 48 of 1999

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 53 of 2000

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 57 of 2001

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 50 of 2002

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 1 of 2004

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 24 of 2005

Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 31 of 2007

Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 15 of 2011


**ACT**

**To provide for a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools; to amend and repeal certain laws relating to schools; and to provide for matters connected therewith.**


**Preamble.**—WHEREAS the achievement of democracy in South Africa has consigned to history the past system of education which was based on racial inequality and segregation; and

WHEREAS this country requires a new national system for *schools* which will redress past

injustices in educational provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all *learners* and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities,

advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic wellbeing

of society, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all *learners*, *parents* and *educators*, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of *schools* in partnership with the State; and

WHEREAS it is necessary to set uniform norms and standards for the education of *learners* at *schools* and the organisation, governance and funding of *schools* throughout the Republic of South Africa;

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

organisation

CHAPTER 1

DEFINITIONS AND APPLICATION OF ACT

**1. Definitions.**—(1) In *this Act*, unless the context indicates otherwise—

**"Constitution"** means the *Constitution* of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996);

[Definition of "*Constitution*" substituted by s. 1 (*b*) of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

Wording of Sections

**"Council of Education Ministers"** means the *Council of Education Ministers* established by the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996);

**"dangerous object"** means—

(*a*)

any explosive material or device;

(*b*)

any firearm or gas weapon;

(*c*)

any article, object or instrument that may be employed to cause bodily harm to a person or damage to property, or to render a person temporarily paralysed or unconscious; or

(*d*)

any object that the *Minister* may, by notice in the *Gazette*, declare to be a dangerous object for the purpose of this Act;

[Definition of "dangerous object" inserted by s. 4 (*a*) of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

**"education department"** means the department established by section 7 (2) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994), which is responsible for education in a *province*;

**"educator"** means any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at a *school*;

[Definition of "*educator*" substituted by s. 6 (*a*) of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

Wording of Sections

**"*governing body*"** means a *governing body* contemplated in section 16 (1);

**"*grade*"** means that part of an educational programme which a *learner* may complete in one *school* year, or any other education programme which the *Member of the Executive Council* may deem to be equivalent thereto;

**"*Head of Department*"** means the head of an *education department*;

**"illegal drug"** means—

(*a*)

any unlawful substance that has a psychological or physiological effect; or

(*b*)

any substance having such effect that is possessed unlawfully;

[Definition of "illegal drug" inserted by s. 4 (*b*) of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

**"*independent school*"** means a *school* registered or deemed to be registered in terms of section 46;

**"*learner*"** means any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of this Act;

**"*loan*"** means any financial obligation based on agreement, which obligation renders a *school* liable for making payment, in one or more instalments, in favour of any person, but does not include the payment of staff appointed by the *governing body* in terms of section 20 (4) or (5);

[Definition of "*loan*" inserted by s. 4 (*a*) of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

**"*member of staff*"** means a person employed at a *school*;

**"*Member of the Executive Council*"** means the *Member of the Executive Council* of a *province* who is responsible for education in that *province*?

**"*Minister*"** means the *Minister* of Basic Education;

[Definition of "*Minister*" substituted by s. 4 (*b*) of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

Wording of Sections

**"*no fee threshold*"** means the level of funding per *learner* contemplated in the *norms and standards* for *school* funding applicable to a *public school* which enables the *Minister* to declare a *school* a no fee *school* in terms of *this Act*;

[Definition of "*no fee threshold*" inserted by s. 1 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

**"*norms and standards for school funding*"** means the national norms and standards for the funding of *schools* determined by the *Minister* in terms of section 35;

[Definition of "*norms and standards for school funding*" inserted by s. 1 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

**"*officer*"** means an employee of an *education department* appointed in terms of the *Educators* Employment Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 138 of 1994), or the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994);

**"*parent*"** means—

(*a*)

the biological or adoptive *parent* or legal guardian of a *learner*;

[Para. (*a*) substituted by s. 4 (*c*) of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

Wording of Sections

(*b*)

the person legally entitled to custody of a *learner*; or

(*c*)

the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraphs (*a*) and (*b*) towards the *learner's* education at *school*;

**"principal"** means an *educator* appointed or acting as the head of a *school*;

**"province"** means a *province* established by section 124 of the *Constitution*;

**"provincial legislature"** means a *provincial legislature* contemplated in section 125 of the *Constitution*;

**"public school"** means a *school* contemplated in Chapter 3;

**"Registrar of deeds"** means the *registrar of deeds* referred to in section 2 of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937 (Act No. 47 of 1937);

[Definition of "Registrar of deeds" inserted by s. 1 (*a*) of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

**"school"** means a *public school* or an independent *school* which enrols *learners* in one or more *grades* from *grade* R (Reception) to *grade* twelve;

[Definition of "*school*" substituted by s. 1 (*c*) of Act No. 100 of 1997 and by s. 6 (*b*) of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

Wording of Sections

**"school activity"** means any official educational, cultural, recreational or social activity of the *school* within or outside the *school* premises;

[Definition of "school activity" inserted by s. 4 (*c*) of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

**"school fees"** means *school fees* contemplated in section 39 and includes any form of contribution of a monetary nature made or paid by a person or body in relation to the attendance or participation by a *learner* in any programme of a *public school*;

[Definition of "*school fees*" inserted by s. 1 (*b*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

**"this Act"** means *this Act* and all regulations promulgated under *this Act*.

[Sub-s. (1), previously s. 1, amended by s. 1 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

Wording of Sections

(2) Footnotes appearing in *this Act* must not be used in the interpretation of any provision of *this Act*.

[Sub-s. (2) added by s. 1 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

**Wording of Sections**

def: Constitution of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 100 of 1997

**Wording of Sections**

def: educator of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 48 of 1999

**Wording of Sections**

def: Minister of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 15 of 2011**Repealed Act**

P 138 of 1994 has been repealed by s 137(1) of Act 76 of 1998

**Wording of Sections**

def: parent par (a) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 15 of 2011

**Wording of Sections**

def: school of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 100 of 1997

def: school of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 48 of 1999

**Wording of Sections**

s 1(1), s 1 of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 50 of 2002

**2. Application of Act.**—(1) *This Act* applies to *school* education in the Republic of South Africa.

(2) A *Member of the Executive Council* and a *Head of Department* must exercise any power

conferred upon them by or under *this Act*, after taking full account of the applicable policy determined

in terms of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996).

(3) Nothing in *this Act* prevents a *provincial legislature* from enacting legislation for *school*

education in a *province* in accordance with the *Constitution* and *this Act*.

[Sub-s. (3) amended by s. 2 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

Wording of Sections

CHAPTER 2

LEARNERS

**Wording of Sections**

s 2(3) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 100 of 1997

**3. Compulsory attendance.**—(1) Subject to *this Act* and any applicable provincial law, every

*parent* must cause every *learner* for whom he or she is responsible to attend a *school* from the first

*school* day of the year in which such *learner* reaches the age of seven years until the last *school* day of

the year, in which such *learner* reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth *grade*, whichever occurs? first.

(2) The *Minister* must, by notice in the Government Gazette, determine the ages of compulsory

attendance at *school* for *learners* with special education needs.

(3) Every *Member of the Executive Council* must ensure that there are enough *school* places so

that every child who lives in his or her *province* can attend *school* as required by subsections (1) and

(2).

(4) If a *Member of the Executive Council* cannot comply with subsection (3) because of a lack

of capacity existing at the date of commencement of this Act, he or she must take steps to remedy

any such lack of capacity as soon as possible and must make an annual report to the *Minister* on the

progress achieved in doing so.

(5) If a *learner* who is subject to compulsory attendance in terms of subsection (1) is not

enrolled at or fails to attend a *school*, the *Head of Department* may—

(*a*)

investigate the circumstances of the *learner's* absence from *school*;

(*b*)

take appropriate measures to remedy the situation; and

(*c*)

failing such a remedy, issue a written notice to the *parent* of the *learner* requiring

compliance with subsection (1).

(6) Subject to *this Act* and any other applicable law—

(*a*)

any *parent* who, without just cause and after a written notice from the *Head of*

*Department*, fails to comply with subsection (1), is guilty of an offence and liable on

conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months; or

(*b*)

any other person who, without just cause, prevents a *learner* who is subject to compulsory attendance from attending a *school*, is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

**4. Exemption from compulsory attendance.**—(1) A *Head of Department* may exempt a *learner* entirely, partially or conditionally from compulsory *school* attendance if it is in the best interests of the *learner*.

(2) Every *Head of Department* must maintain a register of all *learner*s exempted from compulsory *school* attendance.

**5. Admission to public schools.**—(1) A *public school* must admit *learners* and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way.

(2) The *governing body* of a *public school* may not administer any test related to the admission of a *learner* to a *public school*, or direct or authorise the *principal* of the *school* or any other person to

administer such test.

(3) No *learner* may be refused admission to a *public school* on the grounds that his or her *parent*—

(*a*)

is unable to pay or has not paid the *school* fees determined by the *governing body* under section 39;

(*b*)

does not subscribe to the mission statement of the *school*; or

(*c*)

has refused to enter into a contract in terms of which the *parent* waives any claim for damages arising out of the education of the *learner*.

(4) (*a*) The admission age of a *learner* to a *public school* to—

(i)

*grade* R is age four turning five by 30 June in the year of admission;

(ii)

*grade* 1 is age five turning six by 30 June in the year of admission.

(*b*) Subject to the availability of suitable *school* places and other educational resources, the *Head of Department* may admit a *learner* who—

(i)

is under the age contemplated in paragraph (*a*) if good cause is shown; and

(ii)

complies with the criteria contemplated in paragraph (*c*).

(*c*) The *Minister* may, by regulation, prescribe—

(i)

criteria for the admission to a *public school*, at an age lower than the admission age, of an underage *learner* who complies with the criteria$_1$;

(ii)

age requirements for different *grades* at a public school.

(*d*) For the purpose of paragraph (*b*) (i), good cause shown means that—

(i)

it can be shown that exceptional circumstances exist which necessitate the admission of an underage *learner* because admission would be in his or her best interest; and

(ii)

the refusal to admit that *learner* would be severely detrimental to his or her development.

[Sub-s. (4) substituted by s. 2 of Act No. 50 of 2002 with effect from 1 January, 2004.]

Wording of Sections

(5) Subject to *this Act* and any applicable provincial law, the admission policy of a *public school* is determined by the *governing body* of such *school*.

(6) In determining the placement of a *learner* with special education needs, the *Head of Department* and *principal* must take into account the rights and wishes of the *parents* of such *learner*.

(7) An application for the admission of a *learner* to a *public school* must be made to the *education department* in a manner determined by the *Head of Department*.

(8) If an application in terms of subsection (7) is refused, the *Head of Department* must inform the *parent* in writing of such refusal and the reason therefor.

(9) Any *learner* or *parent* of a *learner* who has been refused admission to a *public school* may appeal against the decision to the *Member of the Executive Council*.

**Footnotes**

1

It is acknowledged that criteria for admission of an underage learner are complex and take some considerable time to develop. The criteria must be reliable and effective and their proper implementation will require the training of evaluators. The criteria must be based on an educationally sound basis in order to ensure that—

(*a*) learners are admitted on an equitable basis;

(*b*) there is no unfair discrimination to learners;

(*c*) the admission is fair to the individual learner as well as other learners in the classroom;

(*d*) recognition is given to the diversity of language, culture and economic background;

(*e*) notice is taken of the differences between urban and rural environments; and

(*f*) the physical, psychological and mental development of the child is taken into account.

**5A. Norms and standards for basic infrastructure and capacity in public schools.**—

(1) The *Minister* may, after consultation with the Minister of Finance and the *Council of Education Ministers*, by regulation prescribe minimum uniform norms and standards for—

(*a*)

*school* infrastructure;

(*b*)

capacity of a *school* in respect of the number of *learners* a *school* can admit; and

(*c*)

the provision of learning and teaching support material.

[Sub-s. (1) amended by s. 5 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

Wording of Sections

(2) The norms and standards contemplated in subsection (1) must provide for, but not be limited to, the following:

(*a*)

In respect of *school* infrastructure, the availability of—

(i)

classrooms;

(ii)

electricity;

(iii)

water;

(iv)

sanitation;

(v)

a library;

(vi)

laboratories for science, technology, mathematics and life sciences;

(vii)

sport and recreational facilities;

(viii)

electronic connectivity at a *school;* and

(ix)

perimeter security;

(*b*)

in respect of the capacity of a *school*—

(i)

the number of teachers and the class size;

(ii)

quality of performance of a school;

(iii)

curriculum and extra-curricular choices;

(iv)

classroom size; and

(v)

utilisation of available classrooms of a school;

(*c*)

in respect of provision of learning and teaching support material, the availability of—

(i)

stationery and supplies;

(ii)

learning material;

(iii)

teaching material and equipment;

(iv)

science, technology, mathematics and life sciences apparatus;

(v)

electronic equipment; and

(vi)

school furniture and other school equipment.

(3) When determining policy in terms of sections 5 (5) and 6 (2) a *governing body* must comply with the norms and standards contemplated in subsection (1).

(4) A *governing body* must, within a period of 12 months after the *Minister* has prescribed the norms and standards contemplated in subsection (1), review any policy that it has determined in terms of sections 5 (5) and 6 (2) to ensure that such policy complies with the norms and standards.

[S. 5A inserted by s. 5 of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

**Wording of Sections**

s 5A (1) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 15 of 2011

**6. Language policy of public schools.**—(1) Subject to the *Constitution* and *this Act*, the *Minister* may, by notice in the Government Gazette, after consultation with the *Council of Education Ministers*, determine norms and standards for language policy in *public schools*.

(2) The *governing body* of a *public school* may determine the language policy of the *school* subject to the *Constitution*, *this Act* and any applicable provincial law.

(3) No form of racial discrimination may be practised in implementing policy determined under this section.

(4) A recognised Sign Language has the status of an official language for purposes of learning at a *public school*.

**6A. Curriculum and assessment.**—(1) The *Minister* must, by notice in the Government Gazette, determine—

(*a*)

a national curriculum statement indicating the minimum outcomes or standards; and

(*b*)

a national process and procedures for the assessment of *learner* achievement.

(2) The curriculum and the process for the assessment of *learner* achievement contemplated in subsection (1) must be applicable to *public* and *independent schools*.

[S. 6A inserted by s. 3 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

**6B. Non-discrimination in respect of official languages.**—The *governing body* of a *public school* must ensure that—

(*a*)

there is no unfair discrimination in respect of any official languages that are offered as subject options contemplated in section 21 (1) (*b*); and

(*b*)

the first additional language and any other official language offered, as provided for in the curriculum, are offered on the same level.

[S. 6B inserted by s. 6 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

**7. Freedom of conscience and religion at public schools.**—Subject to the *Constitution* and any applicable provincial law, religious observances may be conducted at a *public school* under rules issued by the *governing body* if such observances are conducted on an equitable basis and attendance

at them by *learner*s and *members* of *staff* is free and voluntary.

**8. Code of conduct.**—(1) Subject to any applicable provincial law, a *governing body* of a *public school* must adopt a code of conduct for the *learners* after consultation with the *learners*, *parent*s and

*educators* of the *school*.

(2) A code of conduct referred to in subsection (1) must be aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful *school* environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of

the learning process.

(3) The *Minister* may, after consultation with the *Council of Education Ministers*, determine guidelines for the consideration of *governing bodies* in adopting a code of conduct for *learners*.

(4) Nothing contained in *this Act* exempts a *learner* from the obligation to comply with the code of conduct of the *school* attended by such *learner*.

(5) (*a*) A code of conduct must contain provisions of due process safe-guarding the interests of the *learner* and any other party involved in disciplinary proceedings.

(*b*) The code of conduct must also provide for support measures or structures for counselling a *learner* involved in disciplinary proceedings.

[Sub-s. (5) substituted by s. 6 of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

Wording of Sections

(6) A *learner* must be accompanied by his or her *parent* or a person designated by the *parent* at disciplinary proceedings, unless good cause is shown by the *governing body* for the continuation of

the proceedings in the absence of the *parent* or the person designated by the *parent.*

[Sub-s. (6) added by s. 4 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

(7) Whenever disciplinary proceedings are pending before any *governing body*, and it appears to such *governing body* that it would expose a witness under the age of 18 years to undue mental stress or suffering if he or she testifies at such proceedings, the *governing body* may, if practicable, appoint a competent person as an intermediary in order to enable such witness to give his or her evidence through that intermediary.

[Sub-s. (7) added by s. 4 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

(8) (*a*) An examination, cross-examination or re-examination of a witness in respect of whom a *governing body* has appointed an intermediary under subsection (7), except examination by the *governing body* must not take place in any manner other than through that intermediary.

(*b*) Such intermediary may, unless the *governing body* directs otherwise, convey the general purport of any question to the relevant witness.

[Sub-s. (8) added by s. 4 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

(9) If a *governing body* appoints an intermediary under subsection (7), the *governing body* may direct that the relevant witness must give his or her evidence at any place which—

(*a*)

is informally arranged to put that witness at ease;

(*b*)

is arranged in a manner in which any person whose presence may upset that witness, is outside the sight and hearing of that witness; and

(*c*)

enables the *governing body* and any person whose presence is necessary at the relevant proceedings to hear, through the medium of any electronic or other devices, that intermediary as well as that witness during his or her testimony.

[Sub-s. (9) added by s. 4 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

**Wording of Sections**

s 8(5) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 31 of 2007

**8A. Random search and seizure and drug testing at schools.**—(1) Unless authorised by the *principal* for legitimate educational purposes, no person may bring a *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* onto *school* premises or have such object or drug in his or her possession on *school* premises or

during any *school activity*.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the *principal* or his or her delegate may, at random, search any group of *learners*, or the property of a group of *learners*, for any *dangerous object* or *illegal drug*, if a

fair and reasonable suspicion has been established—

(*a*)

that a *dangerous object* or an *illegal drug* may be found on *school* premises or during a *school activity*; or

(*b*)

that one or more *learners* on *school* premises or during a *school activity* are in possession of *dangerous objects* or *illegal drugs*.

(3) (*a*) A search contemplated in subsection (2) may only be conducted after taking into account all relevant factors, including—

(i)

the best interest of the *learners* in question or of any other *learner* at the *school*;

(ii)

the safety and health of the *learners* in question or of any other *learner* at the *school*;

(iii)

reasonable evidence of illegal activity; and

(iv)

all relevant evidence received.

(*b*) When conducting a search contemplated in subsection (2), the *principal* or his or her delegate must do so in a manner that is reasonable and proportional to the suspected illegal activity.

(4) Where a search contemplated in subsection (2) entails a body search of the learners in question, such search may only—

(*a*)

be conducted by—

(i)

the *principal*, if he or she is of the same gender as the *learner*; or

(ii)

by the *principal's* delegate, who must be of the same gender as the *learner*?

(*b*)

be done in a private area, and not in view of another *learner*;

(*c*)

be done if one adult witness, of the same gender as the learner, is present; and

(*d*)

be done if it does not extend to a search of a body cavity of the learner.

(5) Any *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* that has been seized must be—

(*a*)

clearly and correctly labelled with full particulars, including—

(i)

the name of *learner* in whose possession it was found;

(ii)

the time and date of search and seizure;

(iii)

an incident reference number;

(iv)

the name of person who searched the *learner*;

(v)

the name of the witness; and

(vi)

any other details that may be necessary to identify the item and incident;

(*b*)

recorded in the school record book; and

(*c*)

handed over to the police immediately to dispose of it in terms of section 31 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977).

(6) If the police cannot collect the *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* from the *school* immediately, the *principal* or his or her delegate must—

(*a*)

take the *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* to the nearest police station; and

(*b*)

hand the *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* over to the police to dispose of it in terms of section 31 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977).

(7) The police officer who receives the *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* must issue an official receipt for it to the *principal* or to his or her delegate.

(8) The *principal* or his or her delegate may at *random* administer urine or other noninvasive test to any group of learners that is on fair and reasonable grounds suspected of using *illegal drugs*, after taking into account all relevant factors contemplated in subsection (3).

(9) A *learner* contemplated in subsection (8) may be subjected to urine or other non-invasive test for *illegal drugs* only if—

(*a*)

the test is conducted by a person of the same gender;

(*b*)

it is done in a private area and not in view of another *learner*;

(*c*)

one adult witness, of the same gender as the *learner*, is present;

(*d*)

the sample is clearly and correctly labelled with full particulars as contemplated in subsection (5), with the necessary changes; and

(*e*)

a device contemplated in subsection (11) is used.

(10) The *principal* or his or her delegate must—

(*a*)

within one working day, if practicable, inform the *parent* that a random test or search and seizure was done in respect of his or her child; and

(*b*)

inform the *learner* and his or her *parent* of the result of the test immediately after it becomes available.

(11) The *Minister* must—

(*a*)

identify the device with which the test contemplated in subsection (8) is to be done and the procedure to be followed; and

(*b*)

publish the name of this device, and any other relevant information about it, in the *Gazette*.

(12) A *learner* may be subjected to disciplinary proceedings if—

(*a*)

a *dangerous object* or *illegal drug* is found in his or her possession; or

(*b*)

his or her sample tested positive for an *illegal drug*.

(13) Any disciplinary proceedings in respect of a *learner* must be conducted in terms of the code of conduct contemplated in section 8.

(14) No criminal proceedings may be instituted by the *school* against a *learner* in respect of whom—

(*a*)

a search contemplated in subsection (2) was conducted and a *dangerous object* or

*illegal drug* was found; or

(*b*)

a test contemplated in subsection (8) was conducted, which proved to be positive.

[S. 8A inserted by s. 7 of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

**9. Suspension and expulsion from public school.**—(1) The *governing body* may, on reasonable grounds and as a precautionary measure, suspend a *learner* who is suspected of serious misconduct from attending *school*, but may only enforce such suspension after the *learner* has been granted a reasonable opportunity to make representations to it in relation to such suspension.

[Sub-s. (1) amended by s. 7 of Act No. 48 of 1999 and substituted by s. 2 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

Wording of Sections

(1A) A *governing body* must conduct disciplinary proceedings in the manner contemplated in section 8 against a *learner* within seven *school* days after the suspension of such *learner*.

[Sub-s. (1A) inserted by s. 2 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(1B) If disciplinary proceedings are not conducted within seven *school* days after the suspension of a *learner*, the *governing body* must obtain the approval of the *Head of Department* for

the continuation of the suspension of such *learner*.

[Sub-s. (1B) inserted by s. 2 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(1C) A *governing body* may, if a *learner* is found guilty of serious misconduct during the disciplinary proceedings contemplated in section 8—

(*a*)

impose the suspension of such *learner* for a period not longer than seven *school* days

or any other sanction contemplated in the code of conduct of the *public school*; or

(*b*)

make a recommendation to the *Head of Department* to expel such *learner* from the

*public school*.

[Sub-s. (1C) inserted by s. 2 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(1D) A *Head of Department* must consider the recommendation by the *governing body* referred to in subsection (1C) (*b*) and must decide whether or not to expel a *learner* within 14 days of receiving such recommendation.

[Sub-s. (1D) inserted by s. 2 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(1E) A *governing body* may suspend or extend the suspension of a *learner* for a period not longer than 14 days pending the decision by the *Head of Department* whether or not to expel such *learner* from the *public school*.

[Sub-s. (1E) inserted by s. 2 (*a*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(2) A *learner* at a *public school* may be expelled only—

(*a*)

by the *Head of Department*; and

(*b*)

if found guilty of serious misconduct after disciplinary proceedings contemplated in section 8 was conducted.

[Sub-s. 2 substituted by s. 2 (*b*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(3) The *Member of the Executive Council* must determine by notice in the Provincial Gazette—

(*a*)

the behaviour by a *learner* at a *public school* which may constitute serious misconduct;

(*b*)

disciplinary proceedings to be followed in such cases;

(*c*)

provisions of due process safe-guarding the interests of the *learner* and any other party involved in disciplinary proceedings.

(4) A *learner* or the *parent* of a *learner* who has been expelled from a *public school* may appeal against the decision of the *Head of Department* to the *Member of the Executive Council* within 14 days

of receiving the notice of expulsion.

[Sub-s. 4 substituted by s. 2 (*c*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(5) If a *learner* who is subject to compulsory attendance in terms of section 3 (1) is expelled from a *public school*, the *Head of Department* must make an alternative arrangement for his or her placement at a *public school*.

(6) A *learner* who has appealed in the manner contemplated in subsection (4) must, pending the outcome of the appeal, be given access to education in the manner determined by the *Head of Department.*

[Sub-s. 6 added by s. 2 (*d*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(7) The *Head of Department*, in determining the manner of attendance contemplated in subsection (6)—

(*a*)

must take reasonable measures to protect the rights of other *learners* at the *public school*; and

(*b*)

may consider an alternative method of providing education to the *learner* contemplated in subsection (6).

[Sub-s. 7 added by s. 2 (*d*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(8) If the *Head of Department* decides not to expel a *learner* as contemplated in subsection (2), the *Head of Department* may, after consultation with the *governing body*, impose a suitable sanction on the *learner.*

[Sub-s. 8 added by s. 2 (*d*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(9) If the *Head of Department* decides not to impose a sanction on the *learner*, the *Head of Department* must refer the matter back to the *governing body* for an alternative sanction in terms of

the code of conduct contemplated in section 8, other than expulsion.

[Sub-s. 9 added by s. 2 (*d*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(10) The *governing body* must implement the sanction contemplated in subsection (8).

[Sub-s. 10 added by s. 2 (*d*) of Act No. 24 of 2005.]

(11) (*a*) If an appeal in terms of subsection (4) by a *learner* who has been expelled from a *public school* is upheld by the *Member of the Executive Council*, the *Member of the Executive Council* must ensure that a suitable sanction is then imposed on the *learner* within 14 days of the date on which the appeal was upheld.

(*b*) For the purposes of the imposition of a suitable sanction contemplated in paragraph (*a*), the provisions of subsections (8) and (9) apply with the changes required by the context.

[Sub-s. (11) added by s. 7 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

**Wording of Sections**

s 9(1) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 48 of 1999

s 9(1) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 24 of 2005

**10. Prohibition of corporal punishment.**—(1) No person may administer corporal punishment at a *school* to a *learner*.

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault.

**10A. Prohibition of initiation practices.**—(1) A person may not conduct or participate in any initiation practices against a *learner* at a *school* or in a hostel accommodating *learners* of a *school.*

(2) (*a*) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of misconduct and disciplinary action must be instituted against such a person in accordance with the applicable code of conduct, prescribed in sections 8 and 18A of *this Act* and Schedule 2 to the Employment of Educators Act, 1998

(Act No. 76 of 1998).

(*b*) In addition to paragraph (*a*), a *learner* may institute civil action against a person or a group who manipulated and forced that *learner* to conduct or participate in any initiation practices.

(3) For the purposes of *this Act*, **"initiation practices"** means any act which in the process of initiation, admission into, or affiliation with, or as condition for continued membership of, a *school*, a

group, intramural or extramural activities, interschools sports team, or organisation—

(*a*)

endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person;

(*b*)

undermines the intrinsic worth of human beings by treating some as inferior to others;

(*c*)

subjects individuals to humiliating or violent acts which undermine the constitutional guarantee to dignity in the Bill of Rights;

(*d*)

undermines the fundamental rights and values that underpin the *Constitution*;

(*e*)

impedes the development of a true democratic culture that entitles an individual to be treated as worthy of respect and concern; or

(*f)*

destroys public or private property.

(4) In considering whether the conduct or participation of a person in any initiation practices

falls within the definition of subsection (3), the relevant disciplinary authority referred to in

subsection

(2) (*a*) must take into account the right of the *learner* not to be subjected to such practices.

[S. 10A inserted by s. 5 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

**11. Representative council of learners.**—(1) A representative council of *learners* at the

*school* must be established at every *public school* enrolling *learners* in the eighth *grade* or higher,

and

such council is the only recognised and legitimate representative *learner* body at the *school*.

[Sub-s. (1) substituted by s. 3 of Act No. 100 of 1997 and by s. 1 (*a*) of Act No. 57 of 2001.]

Wording of Sections

(2) Subject to policy made in terms of section 3 (4) (*g*) of the National Education Policy Act,

1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), the Member of the Executive Council must, by notice in the Provincial

Gazette; determine the functions and the procedures for the establishment and election of

representative councils of *learners*.

[Sub-s. (2) substituted by s. 1 (*b*) of Act No. 57 of 2001.]

Wording of Sections

(3) The *Member of the Executive Council* may, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, exempt a

*public school* for *learners* with special education needs from complying with subsection (1) if it is not

practically possible for a representative council of *learner*s to be established at the *school*.

CHAPTER 3

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Wording of Sections**

s 11(1) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 100 of 1997

s 11(1) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 57 of 2001

**Wording of Sections**

s 11(2) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 57 of 2001

**12. Provision of public schools.**—(1) The *Member of the Executive Council* must provide

*public schools* for the education of *learners* out of funds appropriated for this purpose by the

*provincial*

*legislature*.

(2) The provision of *public schools* referred to in subsection (1) may include the provision of

hostels for the residential accommodation of *learners*.

(3) (*a*) A *public school* may be—

(i)

an ordinary *public school*;

(ii)

a *public school* for *learners* with special education needs; or

(iii)

a *public school* that provides education with a specialised focus on talent, including

sport, performing arts or creative arts.

(*b*) Subject to the relevant provisions of *this Act*, the *Minister* must determine *norms and*

*standards for school funding* and norms and standards for governance and educator provisioning for *public schools* contemplated in paragraph (*a*) (iii).

[Sub-s. (3) substituted by s. 8 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

Wording of Sections

(4) The *Member of the Executive Council* must, where reasonably practicable, provide education for *learners* with special education needs at ordinary *public schools* and provide relevant educational support services for such *learners*.

(5) The *Member of the Executive Council* must take all reasonable measures to ensure that the physical facilities at *public schools* are accessible to disabled persons.

(6) Nothing in this Act prohibits the provision of gender-specific *public schools*.

**Wording of Sections**

s 12(3) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 15 of 2011

**12A. Merger of public schools.**—(1) Subject to subsection (2), the *Member of the Executive Council* may, by notice in the *Provincial Gazette*, merge two or more *public schools* into a single *school*.

(2) Before merging two or more *public schools* the *Member of the Executive Council* must—

(*a*)

give written notice to the *schools* in question of the intention to merge them;

(*b*)

publish a notice giving the reasons for the proposed merger in one or more newspapers circulating in the area where the *schools* in question are situated;

(*c*)

give the *governing bodies* of the *schools* in question and any other interested persons an opportunity to make representations within a period of not less than 90 days from the date of the notice referred to in paragraph (*b*);

(*d*)

consider such representations; and

(*e*)

be satisfied that the employers of staff at the *public schools* have complied with their obligations in terms of the applicable labour law.

(3) If one or more of the *schools* that are to be merged in terms of subsection (1) are *public schools* on private property, the *Member of the Executive Council* must also—

(*a*)

notify the owner of the private property of his or her intention to merge the *schools* in question;

(*b*)

consider his or her contractual obligations in terms of the agreement contemplated in section 14;

(*c*)

renegotiate his or her obligations in terms of the existing agreement if necessary; and

(*d*)

negotiate a new agreement in terms of section 14 if the single *school* contemplated in subsection (1) is to be situated on private property.

(4) The single *school* contemplated in subsection (1) must be regarded as a *public school*.

(5) All assets, liabilities, rights and obligations of the *schools* that are merged, must, subject to the conditions of any donation, bequest or trust contemplated in section 37 (4), vest in the single *school*.

(6) (*a*) The *governing bodies* of the *schools* that are merged must have a meeting before the merger to constitute a single interim *governing body* comprising of all the members of the *governing bodies* concerned.

(*b*) The interim *governing body* must decide on the budget and differences in codes of conduct and school fees, as well as any issue that is relevant to the merger or which is prescribed, until a new *governing body* is constituted in terms of sections 23 and 28.

(7) The *governing body* of a *public school* to be merged, may appeal to the *Minister* against the decision as contemplated in subsection (1).

[S. 12A inserted by s. 8 of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

**13. Public schools on State property.**—(1) In this section, immovable property owned by the State includes immovable property held in trust on behalf of a tribe by a trust created by statute.

(2) Subject to section 20 (1) (*k*), a *public school* which occupies immovable property owned by the State has the right, for the duration of the *school's* existence, to occupy and use the immovable property for the benefit of the *school* for educational purposes at or in connection with the *school*.

(3) The right referred to in subsection (2) may only be restricted—

(*a*)

by the *Member of the Executive Council*; and

(*b*)

if the immovable property is not utilised by the *school* in the interests of education.

(4) The *Member of the Executive Council* may not act under subsection (3) unless he or she has—

(*a*)

informed the *governing body* of the *school* of his or her intention so to act and the reasons therefor;

(*b*)

granted the *governing body* of the *school* a reasonable opportunity to make representations to him or her in relation to such action;

(*c*)

duly considered any such representations received.

(5) The right contemplated in subsection (2) is enforceable against any successor in title to the owner of the immovable property in question.

(6) No immovable property owned by the State and occupied by a *public school* may be alienated unless an agreement contemplated in section 14 has been concluded between the *Member of the Executive Council* and the prospective owner of the immovable property.

(7) The *Registrar of deeds* may not execute, attest to or register a transfer deed in respect of the immovable property in question unless the owner has provided the *Registrar of deeds* with proof of the agreement contemplated in subsection (6).

[Sub-s. (7) substituted by s. 4 (*a*) of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

Wording of Sections

(8) The provisions of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937 (Act No. 47 of 1937), do not apply to the right contemplated in subsection (2).

(9) On application by the owner and on production of the owner's copy of the title deed, the *Registrar of deeds* must endorse on the title deed and in his or her records the fact that a *public school* has been established on the land in terms of *this Act*.

[Sub-s. (9) added by s. 4 (*c*) of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

**Wording of Sections**

s 13(7) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 100 of 1997

**14. Public schools on private property.**—(1) Subject to the *Constitution* and an expropriation in terms of section 58 of land or a real right to use the property on which the *public school* is situated, a *public school* may be provided on private property only in terms of an agreement between the *Member of the Executive Council* and the owner of the private property.

[Sub-s. (1) substituted by s. 2 of Act No. 53 of 2000.]

Wording of Sections

(2) An agreement contemplated in subsection (1) must be consistent with *this Act* and in particular must provide for—

(*a*)

the provision of education and the performance of the normal functions of a *public school*;

(*b*)

governance of the *school*, including the relationship between the *governing body* of the *school* and the owner;

(*c*)

access by all interested parties to the property on which the *school* stands;

(*d*)

security of occupation and use of the property by the *school*;

(*e*)

maintenance and improvement of the *school* buildings and the property on which the *school* stands and the supply of necessary services;

(f*)

protection of the owner's rights in respect of the property occupied, affected or used by the *school*.

(3) The provisions of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937 (Act No. 47 of 1937), do not apply to a real right, excluding ownership, acquired by the State, a *public school* or another party in terms of an

agreement contemplated in this section.

(4) The right contemplated in subsection (3) is enforceable against any successor in title to the owner of the immovable property in question.

(5) Despite subsection (3), a Registrar of deeds must endorse on the title deed of the affected property that the property is subject to an agreement contemplated in this section, if the *Registrar of*

*deeds* receives—

(*a*)

an application for such endorsement by the owner of the property, or the *Member of the Executive Council* or any other holder of a right contemplated in subsection (3), together with the title deed of the property; and

(*b*)

affidavits by the owner of the property and the *Member of the Executive Council* stating that an agreement contemplated in this section has been concluded.

[Sub-s. (5) amended by s. 5 (*a*) of Act No. 100 of 1997 (English only).]

Wording of Sections

(6) The *Minister* must, after consultation with the *Council of Education Ministers*, make regulations regarding the minimum requirements of an agreement contemplated in this section.

(7) The *Registrar of deeds* may cancel any endorsement made in accordance with subsection (5) if the owner of the property submits an affidavit from the *Member of the Executive Council* of the province in which the *public school* is situated to the effect that such *public school* has been closed in terms of section 33.

[Sub-s. (7) inserted by s. 5 (*b*) of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(8) Any transfer duty, stamp duty, fees or costs payable in respect of the registration of a right in terms of subsection (3) may be paid in full or in part from funds appropriated by the *provincial legislature* for that purpose, but the *public school* contemplated in subsection (1) is not responsible for such duties, fees or costs.

[Sub-s. (8), previously sub-s. (7), renumbered by s. 5 (*b*) of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

Wording of Sections

**Wording of Sections**

s 14(1) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 53 of 2000

**Wording of Sections**

s 14(5) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 100 of 1997

**Wording of Sections**

s 14(8), (7) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 100 of 1997

**15. Status of public schools.**—Every *public school* is a juristic person, with legal capacity to perform its functions in terms of *this Act*.

**16. Governance and professional management of public schools.**—(1) Subject to this Act, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body and it may perform only such functions and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the Act.

[Sub-s. (1) substituted by s. 2 of Act No. 57 of 2001.]

Wording of Sections

(2) A *governing body* stands in a position of trust towards the *school*.

(3) Subject to *this Act* and any applicable provincial law, the professional management of a *public school* must be undertaken by the *principal* under the authority of the *Head of Department*.

(4) The *Head of Department* may close a *public school* temporarily in the case of an emergency if he or she believes on reasonable grounds that the lives of *learners* and staff are endangered or that

there is a real danger of bodily injury to them or of damage to property.

[Sub-s. (4) added by s. 9 of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

(5) When the *Head of Department* decides that the *school* should be re-opened, he or she must inform the *governing body* and the *principal* of the date on which the *school* must reopen.

[Sub-s. (5) added by s. 9 of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

(6) The *principal* or a person designated by the *Head of Department* must inform the *educators* and *parents* of the date contemplated in subsection (5).

[Sub-s. (6) added by s. 9 of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

(7) If a new *public school* is provided in terms of section 12, the governance of that *school* vests in the *Head of Department* until a *governing body* has been constituted in terms of *this Act*.

[Sub-s. (7) added by s. 3 of Act No. 53 of 2000.]

**16A. Functions and responsibilities of principal of public school.**—(1) (*a*) The *principal* of a *public school* represents the *Head of Department* in the *governing body* when acting in an official capacity as contemplated in sections 23 (1) (*b*) and 24 (1) (*j*).

(*b*) The *principal* must prepare and submit to the *Head of Department* an annual report in respect of—

(i)

the academic performance of that *school* in relation to minimum outcomes and standards and procedures for assessment determined by the *Minister* in terms of section 6A; and

(ii)

the effective use of available resources.

(*c*) (i) The *principal* of a *public school* identified by the *Head of Department* in terms of section 58B must annually, at the beginning of the year, prepare a plan setting out how academic performance at the *school* will be improved.

(ii) The academic performance improvement plan must be—

(*aa*)

presented to the *Head of Department* on a date determined by him or her; and

(*bb*)

tabled at a *governing body* meeting.

(iii) The *Head of Department* may approve the academic performance improvement plan or return it to the *principal* with such recommendations as may be necessary in the circumstances.

(iv) If the *Head of Department* approves the academic performance improvement plan the principal must, by 30 June, report to the *Head of Department* and the *governing* body on progress made in implementing that plan.

(v) The *Head of Department* may extend the date contemplated subparagraph (iv) on good cause shown.

(2) The *principal* must—

(*a*)

in undertaking the professional management of a *public school* as contemplated in section 16 (3), carry out duties which include, but are not limited to—

(i)

the implementation of all the educational programmes and curriculum activities;

(ii)

the management of all educators and support staff;

(iii)

the management of the use of learning support material and other equipment;

(iv)

the performance of functions delegated to him or her by the Head of Department in terms of this Act;

(v)

the safekeeping of all school records; and

(vi)

the implementation of policy and legislation;

(*b*)

attend and participate in all meetings of the *governing body*;

(*c*)

provide the *governing body* with a report about the professional management relating to the *public school*;

(*d*)

assist the *governing body* in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to *learners*;

(*e*)

assist the *Head of Department* in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to *educators* and support staff employed by the *Head of Department*;

(f*)*

inform the *governing body* about policy and legislation;

[Para. (f*)* amended by s. 9 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

Wording of Sections

(*g*)

provide accurate data to the *Head of Department* when requested to do so; and;

[Para. (*g*) amended by s. 9 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

Wording of Sections

(*h*)

assist the *governing body* with the management of the *school*'s funds, which assistance must include—

(i)

the provision of information relating to any conditions imposed or directions issued by the *Minister*, the *Member of the Executive Council* or the *Head of Department* in respect of all financial matters of the *school* contemplated in Chapter 4; and

(ii)

the giving of advice to the *governing body* on the financial implications of decisions relating to the financial matters of the *school*;

[Para. (*h*) added by s. 9 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

(*h*)

take all reasonable steps to prevent any financial maladministration or mismanagement by any staff member or by the *governing body* of the *school*;

[Para. (*i*) added by s. 9 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

(j)

be a member of a finance committee or delegation of the *governing body* in order to manage any matter that has financial implications for the *school*; and

[Para. (j) added by s. 9 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

(*k*)

report any maladministration or mismanagement of financial matters to the *governing body* of the *school* and to the *Head of Department.*

[Para. (*k*) added by s. 9 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

**Wording of Sections**

s 16A (2) (f) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 15 of 2011

**Wording of Sections**

s 16A (2) (g) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 15 of 2011

**17. Governing body serving two or more schools.**—(1) The *Member of the Executive Council* may determine that the governance of two or more *public schools* must vest in a single *governing body* if it is in the best interests of education at the *schools* in question.

(2) The *Member of the Executive Council* may not act under subsection (1) unless he or she has—

(*a*)

given notice in the Provincial Gazette of his or her intention so to act;

(*b*)

given interested parties an opportunity to make written submissions within a period of not less than 30 days; and

(*c*)

considered all such submissions.

**18. Constitution of governing body.**—(1) Subject to *this Act* and any applicable provincial law, the *governing body* of a *public school* must function in terms of a constitution which complies with

minimum requirements determined by the *Member of the Executive Council* by notice in the Provincial

Gazette.

(2) A constitution contemplated in subsection (1) must provide for—

(*a*)

a meeting of the *governing body* at least once every *school* term;

(*b*)

meetings of the *governing body* with *parents*, *learner*s, *educator*s and other staff at the *school*, respectively, at least once a year;

(*c*)

recording and keeping of minutes of *governing body* meetings;

(*d*)

making available such minutes for inspection by the *Head of Department*; and

(*e*)

rendering a report on its activities to *parents*, *learners*, *educators* and other staff of the *school* at least once a year.

(3) The *governing body* must submit a copy of its constitution to the *Head of Department* within 90 days of its election.

**18A. Code of conduct of governing body.**—(1) The *Member of the Executive Council* must, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, determine a code of conduct for the members of the *governing body* of a *public school* after consultation with associations of *governing bodies* in that province, if applicable.

(2) The code of conduct referred to in subsection (1) must be aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful *school* environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of a quality governance structure at a *public school.*

(3) All members of a *governing body* must adhere to the code of conduct.

(4) The code of conduct must contain provisions of due process, safeguarding the interests of the members of the *governing body* in disciplinary proceedings.

(5) The Head of Department may suspend or terminate the membership of a *governing body* member for a breach of the code of conduct after due process.

(6) A member of the *governing body* may appeal to the *Member of the Executive Council* against a decision of a *Head of Department* regarding the suspension or termination of his or her membership as a *governing body* member.

[S. 18A inserted by s. 6 of Act No. 50 of 2002.]

**19. Enhancement of capacity of governing bodies.**—(1) Out of funds appropriated for this purpose by the *provincial legislature*, the *Head of Department* must establish a programme to—

(*a*)

provide introductory training for newly elected *governing bodies* to enable them to perform their functions; and

(*b*)

provide continuing training to *governing bodies* to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them to assume additional functions.

(2) The *Head of Department* must ensure those principals and other officers of the *education department* render all necessary assistance to *governing bodies* in the performance of their functions in terms of *this Act*.

(3) The *norms and standards for school funding* must include—

(*a*)

criteria for authorising a *governing body* association to perform the functions contemplated in subsection (4);

(*b*)

criteria relating to any financial implications that would be incurred or costs that would have to be paid by the *Head of Department* in relation to the performance of the functions contemplated in subsection (4);

(*c*)

guidelines relating to the nature, content, extent and duration of the functions

contemplated in subsection (4); and

(*d*)

criteria for granting a *governing body* an allocation for contribution towards
membership of a recognised *governing body* association.

[Sub s. (3) added by s. 10 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

(4) (*a*) The *Head of Department* may request a recognised *governing body* association or
other appropriate training authority to train members of a *governing body* of a particular *school* or
group of *schools* and to build the capacity contemplated in section 25 (4).

(*b*) For the purposes of paragraph (*a*), the *Head of Department*—

(i)

must enter into an agreement with the *governing body* association;

(ii)

must specify the nature, content, extent, duration and financial implications of the
training in the agreement contemplated in subparagraph (i); and

(iii)

may include a request for the training of members of a *governing body* of a *school* that
is not a member of the *governing body* association requested to conduct the training in
the agreement contemplated in subparagraph (ii).

[Sub s. (4) added by s. 10 of Act No. 15 of 2011.]

**20. Functions of all governing bodies.**—(1) Subject to *this Act*, the *governing body* of a
*public school* must—

(*a*)

promote the best interests of the *school* and strive to ensure its development through
the provision of quality education for all *learners* at the *school*;

(*b*)

adopt a constitution;

(*c*)

develop the mission statement of the *school*;

(*d*)

adopt a code of conduct for *learners* at the *school*;

(*e*)

support the *principal*, *educators* and other staff of the *school* in the performance of
their professional functions;

(*e*A)

adhere to any actions taken by the Head of Department in terms of section 16 of the
Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998), to address the incapacity of
a *principal* or *educator* to carry out his or her duties effectively;

[Para. (*e*A) inserted by s. 9 (*a*) of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

( *f* )

determine times of the *school* day consistent with any applicable conditions of
employment of staff at the *school*;

(*g*)

administer and control the *school's* property, and buildings and grounds occupied by

the *school*, including *school* hostels, but the exercise of this power must not in any manner interfere with or otherwise hamper the implementation of a decision made by the *Member of the Executive Council* or *Head of Department* in terms of any law or policy;

[Para. (*g*) substituted by s. 9 (*b*) of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

Wording of Sections

(*h*)

encourage *parents*, *learners*, *educators* and other staff at the *school* to render voluntary services to the *school*;

(*i*)

recommend to the *Head of Department* the appointment of *educators* at the *school*, subject to the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998), and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);

[Para. (*i*) substituted by s. 3 of Act No. 57 of 2001.]

Wording of Sections

( *j*)

recommend to the *Head of Department* the appointment of non-educator staff at the *school*, subject to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994), and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);

(*j*A)

make the recommendation contemplated in paragraph ( *j*) within the time frames contemplated in section 6 (3) (*l*) of the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998).

[Para. (*j*A) inserted by s. 9 (*c*) of Act No. 31 of 2007.]

(*k*)

at the request of the *Head of Department*, allow the reasonable use under fair conditions determined by the *Head of Department* of the facilities of the *school* for educational programmes not conducted by the *school*;

[Para. (*k*) substituted by s. 4 of Act No. 53 of 2000.]

Wording of Sections

(*l*)

discharge all other functions imposed upon the *governing body* by or under *this Act*; and

(*m*)

discharge other functions consistent with *this Act* as determined by the *Minister* by notice in the Government Gazette, or by the *Member of the Executive Council* by notice in the Provincial Gazette.

(2) The *governing body* may allow the reasonable use of the facilities of the *school* for community, social and *school* fund-raising purposes, subject to such reasonable and equitable conditions as the *governing body* may determine, which may include the charging of a fee or tariff which accrues to the *school*?

(3) The *governing body* may join a voluntary association representing *governing bodies* of *public schools*.

(4) Subject to *this Act*, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995), and any other applicable law, a *public school* may establish posts for *educators* and employ *educators* additional to

the establishment determined by the *Member of the Executive Council* in terms of section 3 (1) of the

Educators' Employment Act, 1994.

[Sub-s. (4) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(5) Subject to *this Act*, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995), and any other applicable law, a *public school* may establish posts for non-educators and employ non-educator staff additional to the establishment determined in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No.

103 of 1994).

[Sub-s. (5) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(6) An *educator* and a non-*educator* employed in a post established in terms of subsection (4) or (5) must comply with the requirements set for employment in *public schools* in terms of *this Act*, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995), and any other applicable law.

[Sub-s. (6) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(7) A *public school* may only employ an *educator* in a post established in terms of subsection (4) if such *educator* is registered as an *educator* with the South African Council of Educators.

[Sub-s. (7) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(8) The staff contemplated in subsections (4) and (5) must be employed in compliance with the basic values and principles referred to in section 195 of the Constitution, and the factors to be taken into account when making appointments include, but are not limited to—

(*a*)

the ability of the candidate;

(*b*)

the principle of equity;

(*c*)

the need to redress past injustices; and

(*d*)

the need for representivity.

[Sub-s. (8) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(9) When presenting the annual budget contemplated in section 38, the *governing body* of a *public school* must provide sufficient details of any posts envisaged in terms of subsections (4) and (5), including the estimated costs relating to the employment of staff in such posts and the manner in

which it is proposed that such costs will be met.

[Sub-s. (9) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(10) Despite section 60, the State is not liable for any act or omission by the *public school* relating to its contractual responsibility as the employer in respect of staff employed in terms of subsections (4) and (5).

[Sub-s. (10) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(11) After consultation as contemplated in section 5 of the National Education Policy Act,

1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), the *Minister* may determine norms and standards by notice in the *Gazette* regarding the funds used for the employment of staff referred to in subsections (4) and (5), but such norms and standards may not be interpreted so as to make the State a joint employer of such staff.

[Sub-s. (11) added by s. 6 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

**Wording of Sections**

s 20(1)(g) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 31 of 2007

**Wording of Sections**

s 20(1)(i) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 57 of 2001

**Wording of Sections**

s 20(1)(k) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 53 of 2000

**21. Allocated functions of governing bodies.**—(1) Subject to *this Act*, a *governing body* may apply to the *Head of Department* in writing to be allocated any of the following functions:

(*a*)

To maintain and improve the *school's* property, and buildings and grounds occupied by the *school*, including *school* hostels, if applicable;

(*b*)

to determine the extra-mural curriculum of the *school* and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy;

(*c*)

to purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the *school*;

(*d*)

to pay for services to the *school*;

(*d*A)

to provide an adult basic education and training class or centre subject to any applicable law; or

[Para. (*d*A) inserted by s. 10 (*b*) of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

(*e*)

other functions consistent with *this Act* and any applicable provincial law.

(2) The *Head of Department* may refuse an application contemplated in subsection (1) only if the *governing body* concerned does not have the capacity to perform such function effectively.

(3) The *Head of Department* may approve such application unconditionally or subject to conditions.

(4) The decision of the *Head of Department* on such application must be conveyed in writing to the *governing body* concerned, giving reasons.

(5) Any person aggrieved by a decision of the *Head of Department* in terms of this section may appeal to the *Member of the Executive Council*.

(6) The *Member of the Executive Council* may, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, determine that some governing bodies may exercise one or more functions without making an application contemplated in subsection (1), if—

(*a*)

he or she is satisfied that the governing bodies concerned have the capacity to perform such function effectively; and

(*b*)

there is a reasonable and equitable basis for doing so.

**22. Withdrawal of functions from governing bodies.**—(1) The *Head of Department* may, on reasonable grounds, withdraw a function of a *governing body*.

(2) The *Head of Department* may not take action under subsection (1) unless he or she has—

(*a*)

informed the *governing body* of his or her intention so to act and the reasons therefor;

(*b*)

granted the *governing body* a reasonable opportunity to make representations to him or her relating to such intention; and

(*c*)

given due consideration to any such representations received.

(3) In cases of urgency, the *Head of Department* may act in terms of subsection (1) without prior communication to such *governing body*, if the *Head of Department* thereafter—

(*a*)

furnishes the *governing body* with reasons for his or her actions;

(*b*)

gives the *governing body* a reasonable opportunity to make representations relating to such actions; and

(*c*)

duly considers any such representations received.

(4) The *Head of Department* may for sufficient reasons reverse or suspend his or her action in terms of subsection (3).

(5) Any person aggrieved by a decision of the *Head of Department* in terms of this section may appeal against the decision to the *Member of the Executive Council*.

**23. Membership of governing body of ordinary public school.**—(1) Subject to *this Act*, the membership of the *governing body* of an ordinary *public school* comprises—

(*a*)

elected members;

(*b*)

the *principal*, in his or her official capacity;

(*c*)

co-opted members.

(2) Elected members of the *governing body* shall comprise a member or members of each of the following categories:

(*a*)

*Parents* of *learners* at the *school*;

(*b*)

*educators* at the *school*;

(*c*)

members of staff at the *school* who are not *educators*; and

(*d*)

*learners* in the eighth *grade* or higher at the *school*.

(3) A *parent* who is employed at the *school* may not represent *parents* on the *governing body* in terms of subsection (2) (*a*).

(4) The representative council of *learners* referred to in section 11 (1) must elect the *learner* or *learners* referred to in subsection (2) (*d*).

(5) The *governing body* of an ordinary *public school* which provides education to *learner*s with special needs must, where practically possible, co-opt a person or persons with expertise regarding the special education needs of such *learners*.

(6) A *governing body* may co-opt a member or members of the community to assist it in discharging its functions.

(7) The *governing body* of a *public school* contemplated in section 14 may co-opt the owner of the property occupied by the *school* or the nominated representative of such owner.

(8) Subject to subsection (10), co-opted members do not have voting rights on the *governing body*.

[Sub-s. (8) substituted by s. 11 (*a*) of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

Wording of Sections

(9) The number of *parent* members must comprise one more than the combined total of other members of a *governing body* who have voting rights.

(10) If the number of *parents* at any stage is not more than the combined total of other members with voting rights, the *governing body* must temporarily co-opt *parents* with voting rights.

[Sub-s. (10) added by s. 11 (*b*) of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

(11) If a *parent* is co-opted with voting rights as contemplated in subsection (10), the cooption ceases when the vacancy has been filled through a by-election which must be held according to a procedure determined in terms of section 28 (*d*) within 90 days after the vacancy has occurred.

[Sub-s. (11) added by s. 11 (*b*) of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

(12) If a person elected as a member of a *governing body* as contemplated in subsection (2) ceases to fall within the category referred to in that subsection in respect of which he or she was elected as a member, he or she ceases to be a member of the *governing body*.

[Sub-s. (12) added by s. 11 (*b*) of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

**Wording of Sections**

s 23(8) of Act 84 of 1996 prior to amendment by Act 48 of 1999

**24. Membership of governing body of public school for learners with special education needs.**—(1) The following categories of persons must be represented on a *governing body* of a *public*

*school* for *learners* with special education needs, in each case by a member or members of the respective category:

(*a*)

*Parents* of *learners* at the *school*, if reasonably practicable;

(*b*)

*educators* at the *school*;

(*c*)

members of staff at the *school* who are not *educators*;

(*d*)

*learners* attending the eighth *grade* or higher, if reasonably practicable;

(*e*)

representatives of sponsoring bodies, if applicable;

(*f*)

representatives of organisations of *parents* of *learners* with special education needs, if

applicable;

(*g*)

representatives of organisations of disabled persons, if applicable;

(*h*)

disabled persons, if applicable; and

(*i*)

experts in appropriate fields of special needs education.

(j)

the *principal* in his or her official capacity.

[Para. (j) added by s. 7 of Act No. 100 of 1997.]

(2) Subject to *this Act*, the *Member of the Executive Council* must, by notice in the Provincial

Gazette, determine the number of members in each category referred to in subsection (1) and the

manner of election or appointment of such members at every *public school* for *learners* with special

education needs within his or her *province*.

(3) A notice contemplated in subsection (2) must give interested parties an opportunity to

make written submissions within a period of not less than 30 days.

(4) The *Member of the Executive Council* must consider all such submissions, and thereafter

may alter the notice contemplated in subsection (2).

**25. Failure by governing body to perform functions.**—(1) If the Head of Department

determines on reasonable grounds that a *governing body* has ceased to perform functions allocated

to

it in terms of *this Act* or has failed to perform one or more of such functions, he or she must appoint

sufficient persons to perform all such functions or one or more of such functions, as the case may

be,

for a period not exceeding three months.

[Sub-s. (1) substituted by s. 4 (*a*) of Act No. 57 of 2001.]

Wording of Sections

(2) The *Head of Department* may extend the period referred to in subsection (1), by further

periods not exceeding three months each, but the total period may not exceed one year.

(3) If a *governing body* has ceased to perform its functions, the *Head of Department* must

ensure that a *governing body* is elected in terms of *this Act* within a year after the appointment of

persons contemplated in subsection (1).

[Sub-s. (3) substituted by s. 4 (*b*) of Act No. 57 of 2001.]

Wording of Sections

(4) If a *governing body* fails to perform any of its functions, the persons contemplated in

subsection (1) must build the necessary capacity within the period of their appointment to ensure

that

the *governing body* performs its functions.

[Sub-s. (4) added by s. 4 (*c*) of Act No. 57 of 2001.]

**26. Recusal by members of governing body.**—A member of a *governing body* must withdraw from a meeting of the *governing body* for the duration of the discussion and decision-making

on any issue in which the member has a personal interest.

**27. Reimbursement of members of governing body.**—(1) Necessary expenses incurred by a member of a *governing body* in the performance of his or her duties may be reimbursed by the *governing body*.

(2) No member of a *governing body* may be remunerated in any way for the performance of his or her duties.

**28. Election of members of governing body.**—Subject to *this Act* and any applicable provincial law, the *Member of the Executive Council* must, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, determine—

(*a*)

the term of office of members and office-bearers of a *governing body*;

(*b*)

the designation of an officer to conduct the process for the nomination and election of members of the *governing body*;

(*c*)

the procedure for the disqualification or removal of a member of the *governing body* or the dissolution of a *governing body*, for sufficient reason in each case;

(*d*)

the procedure for the filling of a vacancy on the *governing body*;

(*e*)

guidelines for the achievement of the highest practicable level of representativity of members of the *governing body*;

(*f*)

a formula or formulae for the calculation of the number of members of the *governing body* to be elected in each of the categories referred to in section 23 (2), but such formula or formulae must provide reasonable representation for each category and must be capable of application to the different sizes and circumstances of *public schools*; and

(*g*)

any other matters necessary for the election, appointment or assumption of office of members of the *governing body*.

**29. Office-bearers of governing bodies.**—(1) A *governing body* must, from amongst its members, elect office-bearers, who must include at least a chairperson, a treasurer and a secretary.

(2) Only a *parent* member of a *governing body* who is not employed at the *public school* may serve as the chairperson of the *governing body*.

(3) In the case of a *public school* for *learners* with special education needs any member of the *governing body* elected from the categories of persons referred to in section 24 (1) (*a*), (*e*), ( *f* ), (*g*),

(*h*) and (*i*) may serve as the chairperson of that *governing body*.

[Sub-s. (3) added by s. 12 of Act No. 48 of 1999.]

**30. Committees of governing body.**—(1) A *governing body* may—

(*a*)

establish committees, including an executive committee; and

(*b*)

appoint persons who are not members of the *governing body* to such committees on grounds of expertise, but a member of the *governing body* must chair each committee.

(2) A *governing body* of an ordinary *public school* which provides education to *learner*s with special education needs must establish a committee on special education needs.

**31. Term of office of members and office-bearers of governing bodies.**—(1) The term of office of a member of a *governing body* other than a *learner* may not exceed three years.

(2) The term of office of a member of a *governing body* who is a *learner* may not exceed one year.

(3) The term of office of an office-bearer of a *governing body* may not exceed one year.

(4) A member or office-bearer of a *governing body* may be re-elected or co-opted, as the case may be, after the expiry of his or her term of office.

**32. Status of minors on governing bodies of public schools.**—(1) A member of a *governing body* who is a minor may not contract on behalf of a *public school*.

(2) A member of a *governing body* who is a minor may not vote on resolutions of a *governing body* which impose liabilities on third parties or on the *school*.

(3) A member of a *governing body* who is a minor incurs no personal liability for any consequence of his or her membership of the *governing body*.