



To: Teachers

Topic: Building an enabling school environment to promote learner well-being.

Message Objective(s): To build the capacity of educators to provide conducive learning environments for learners in their classrooms and schools through the provision of psycho-social support (PSS).

Message: What is PSS in schools? Psychosocial well-being is about the learner's emotional, social, mental, and spiritual needs.

Schools, and in particular educators, must focus on addressing the psychosocial barriers to learning experienced by many learners in the schooling system. Psychosocial support (PSS) is a crucial aspect of the learner well-being that really needs attention against the backdrop of the corona pandemic with which the country is battling.

The message to educators and schools is to implement the DBE policy framework for Care and Support for Teaching and learning (CSTL) to strengthen learner well-being. The cornerstone of the policy framework is the provision of psychosocial support (PSS) at schools to help learners to develop resilience needed to adjust to harsh conditions of adversity and to be able to cope. The role of the educators is to create positive school and classroom environments by believing in the learners and teaching them towards the dream as opposed to teaching against imagined deficits.

Schools that employ the PSS strategy will use the **SIAS** effectively. (**SIAS**) is the DBE's **Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support** policy to support learners with psycho-social challenges.

Research has shown that an enabling school environment with psycho-social and other forms of support where needed, will improve learners' health and well-being, thereby positively impacting on educational outcomes.

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References: Basic Psychosocial Skills: A COVID-19 Responder's Guide, Psychosocial Support: A model for South African Schools.