

SCHOOL SPORT

PROPOSAL ON SPORT FOCUS SCHOOLS

FIRST DRAFT

14 March 2012

SPORTS & RECREATION

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Purpose

The aim of the Sport Focus School Model is to provide talent support that will produce athletes of national ranking who will represent South Africa in international competitions whilst providing a high quality academic and social learning program based on the national school curriculum.

Sport Focus Schools will provide opportunities for learners to develop skills and pursue careers in physical education and sport. The identified institutions will provide support to talented school going athletes to assist them in balancing their sporting and education commitments in their pursuit to achieve excellence. The specialist focus in a school is developed with the support of local and national sports federations, tertiary institutions and other key agencies.

Background

Government has made a commitment to deliver school sport through a sustainable school sport support system.

The draft school sport policy which has been gazetted and put out for public comment applies to all schools in the Republic of South Africa governed by the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*. The purpose of the policy is to regulate the delivery of school sport for all learners, irrespective of ability, across all schools in an age-appropriate and/or grade appropriate way, based on the principle of equity and access. The DBE, SRSAs, government sectors, recognised implementation agencies and relevant partners delivering school sport should adhere to this policy.

The Ministers of SRSAs and DBE signed a MoU on 13 December 2011, that commits both departments to deliver a sustainable integrated plan to provide school children the opportunity to take part in physical education and organized sport through the creation of an accessible and implementable school sport support system.

The MoU seeks to clarify the roles of each department delivering on the commitment. Amongst the responsibilities assigned to SRSAs are:

- Together with provincial governments and federations identify talent at inter-district school tournaments for further development through the academy system.
- Develop concept for sport focus schools

In parallel with these developments, SRSAs and SASCO have launched the South African Coaching Framework. Central to the Framework is the creation of a cohesive, inclusive and effective coaching system that delivers transformation and excellence within an active and winning nation.

In order to deliver such a system, the identification, training and deployment of sport specific tutors and coaches has been identified as a high priority. During the course of consultation on the Framework, the need to enhance the education and development of coaches of children and youth was highlighted, with particular emphasis on the need for a comprehensive programme of school Sport.

The inter-school sport leagues will be the base for the identification of athletes with talent. Federations will field talent scouts to conduct the talent identification process. Talented athletes will then be trained by federations and be given the opportunity to participate in federation age group competitions from district to national level.

ATHLETE SUPPORT CENTERS

The System of Athlete Support Centers is designed to provide support to all athletes with talent. The support for high performing athletes should be tiered for the different levels of athletes. Top athletes at a regional level should receive

basic support while the support should increase as the level of athlete progresses.

Top athletes at the regional level should receive support from the regional Athlete Support Centers which will be located in the 52 district hubs throughout the country. Provincial level athletes should receive support at provincial Athlete Support Centers while national level athletes should receive a higher level of support at high performance centers and Academies.

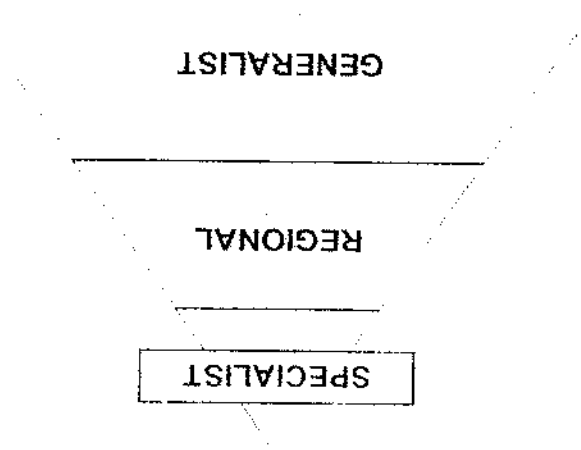
Tracking of athletes should be continuous through the different levels. A communication model between the schools, provincial departments of sport and SRSA should be developed in order for proper tracking and monitoring of talented athletes to be done.

SPORT FOCUS SCHOOLS

Athletes with talent that are still in school may be further supported through the establishment of sport focus schools that offer special sport programmes in either a specific code or in many codes in partnership with sporting federations.

The aim of the special sport programme course is to foster the holistic athletic development of talented students. The overall programme goal is to promote skills, behaviours, attitudes and knowledge that will benefit students in their performance in one or more codes of sport, academic and vocational pursuits, and personal development. Entry into these programmes has to be guided by strict criteria and a process that is agreed to by all the stakeholders responsible for the delivery of the programme.

CLASSIFICATION OF SPORT FOCUS SCHOOLS



The Sport Focus Schools may be classified into three categories:

1. Generalist Sport Schools

These schools should offer all 16 codes to learners who will be encouraged to play a multiplicity of codes. The capacity of coaches and technical officials will be generic. The schools will also have the minimum of facilities to offer the various codes of sport.

2. Regional Sport Focus Schools

Learners that display talent at the Generalist School may be referred to the Regional School.

One two Sport Focus Schools should be set up in each district or region. For learners to be offered a multiplicity of codes, these schools should have a multiplicity of facilities. It is ideal that the sport focus school to have residential facilities in order to host district tournaments.

3. Specialist Sport Focus Schools

Learners that display talent at the regional school may be referred to the Specialist school.

At least two schools per province in any of the 16 codes should be established. These may be single coded schools or offer up to two codes. The criteria for identification of these schools will include:

- Residential facilities
- Sports facilities
- Infrastructure to meet the demand

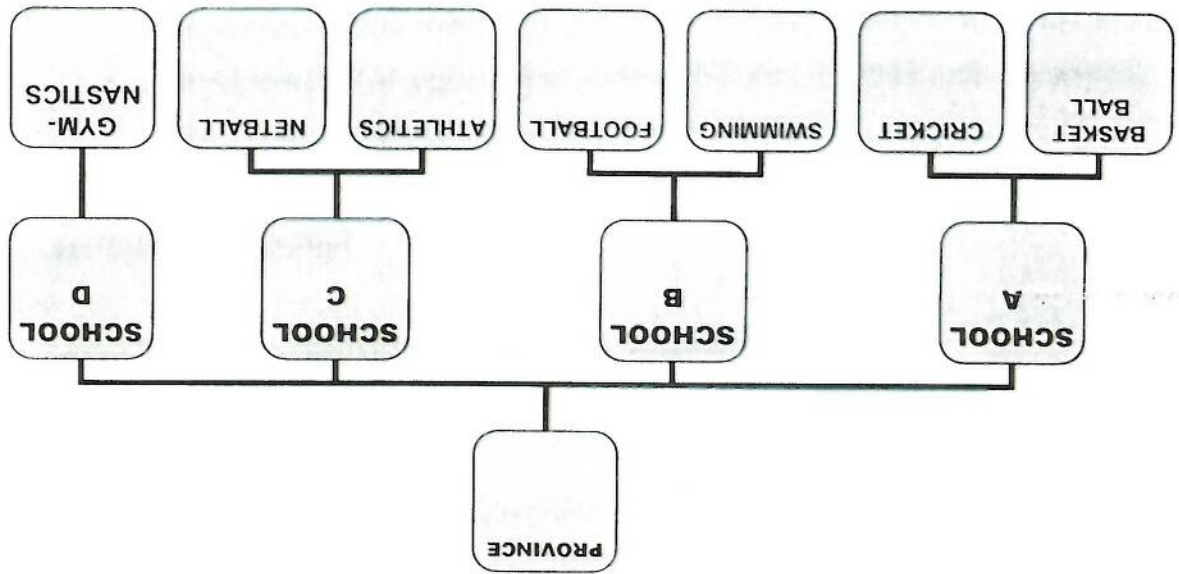
The schools will in turn be provided with specialist teachers and high level coaches. In order for sport-specific and scientific services to the athletes not to be interrupted, the athletes at the sport focus school should have access to the following:

- Accommodation
- Meals
- Coaching
- Sports science and medical services
- Tuition
- Career development and life skills
- Access to the school's facilities

Model for Specialist Sport Focus Schools

Schools within a Province may be identified to coordinate specialist programmes in 1-2 selected codes so that learners can follow their Specialist Sport through to Grade 12. Intensive training in a specific code must be conducted in conjunction

with the relevant federation. Training will be delivered by accredited coaches and trainers supported by federations. There must be a selection process for entry into these programs. All learners of the school should have the opportunity to benefit from the focus in that sport.



The Specialist Sport Focus School will provide talented athletes with the opportunity to further develop their sporting skills and knowledge in one of the prioritized sporting codes (Athletics, Basketball, Cricket, Football, Netball, Volleyball, Gymnastics, Chess, Rugby, Swimming and Tennis).

Learners should be able to gain accreditation in coaching and officiating as well as complete a number of competencies for completing Level 1 training in Sport Codes.

The specialist sport programme should be offered in Secondary schools. All learners accepted in the school should be able to participate in the program from Grade 8 to 12. Entry at other grade levels may occur through special application processes.

There are three main areas of the program.

1. Learners are involved in a structured learning programme of practical and theoretical tasks designed to develop skills, knowledge and team attitudes.
2. The other two areas of the program are training and competition. Students must be prepared to be involved out of school hours

The aim of the program is to provide a balanced education in addition to supporting learners in reaching the highest level possible.

Benefits to learners:

- The opportunity to study a specific code and other practical activities with learners who have similar interests and abilities.
- The opportunity to learn skills, knowledge and attitudes that will benefit participation in any sport, but also have a positive impact on academic and vocational pursuits.
- The opportunity to work with specialized staff, including training with coaches from federations and academies.
- Being encouraged to trial for competitions and to experience travel provincially and nationally.
- Being a part of a program that is recognized nationally for its successes.

EXAMPLE OF A SPECIALIST SPORT FOCUS SCHOOL

A school may offer a specialist sport programme in a selected code through an agreement between DBE, the school and the federation.

The focus classes at the school must be specifically established to support high performance athletes in the code. To be selected into the full-time program,

learners should be required to attend the code focus class at the school. Therefore certain procedures need to be followed.

Enrolment

Learners who show talent in the selected code may be referred to the school by the federation with a report from the existing school outlining academic achievements, learning skills and social skills. Learners must also display the ability and commitment to develop self-directed learning and evidence of being able to accept responsibility for their own behaviour.

Parents/guardians must display commitment to maintain communication with school and federation on:

- notification of absences, lateness and early departure
- regular review of progress
- emotional needs of student
- physical needs of student

The school Principal will inform the federation when a learner is enrolled. Once enrolled and training, learners will attend and participate in their curricular education at the Specialist Sports Focus School.

Continued placement in class

Continuation in a specialist focus class will be subject to fulfilling the requirements of a full time training program and completing school work satisfactorily. Athletes are expected to adhere to training programs organised by the coaches.

Funding

Learners that qualify for placement at the Regional and Specialist Sport Focus schools will qualify for a Ministerial Sport Bursary from SRSA.

Attendance and Monitoring Learner Participation

The federation will maintain a record of attendance at training every day. Coaches will use the attendance record sheet to inform the class teachers of any learners absent from training. Coaches will inform the class teachers of any issues relating to participation and any concerns or issues that may have arisen before the learners begin formal classroom lessons for the day. Longer term concerns may also be raised by the Program Manager or class teacher.

The ultimate aim of the program is to produce athletes of national ranking who will represent South Africa in international competitions whilst providing a high quality academic and social learning program based at the Sport Specialist School. The school will make provision for the specialist code for all general students and international standard training for the Specialist Focus Class with the support of the federation.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPORT FOCUS SCHOOL

Agreement must be reached with DBE on the classification of schools.