



## EDUCATION FACT SHEET - SOUTH AFRICA

<p><b>In Brief</b></p>	<p><b>Population:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 60.4 million</li> </ul> <p><b>South Africa Size:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1,219 090 sq km/470,693 sq mi</li> </ul> <p><b>Literacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 94.4%</li> </ul> <p><b>Youth Literacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 98.96%</li> </ul> <p><b>Female Youth Literacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 99.23%</li> </ul> <p><b>Years of Public School: 12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Primary: 7</li> <li>● Junior Secondary: 2</li> <li>● (Optional) Senior Secondary: 3</li> </ul> <p><b>Language of Instruction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● English from grade 1 on</li> </ul> <p><b>National Curriculum:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> </ul> <p><b>High School Leaving Exams:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> </ul> <p><b>Date of Exams:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● October-December</li> </ul>
<p><b>Education Overview</b></p>	<p><b>Formal Education in South Africa falls into three categories:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>General Education and Training</b> – incorporating a preparatory year and students up through grade 9.</li> <li>2. <b>Further Education and Training</b> – covering grades 10-12 for regularly enrolled youth, out-of-school students, adult learners, youth and adults enrolled in technical, youth, and community colleges, industry-based Education and training initiatives, and other non-formal instructional programs.</li> <li>3. <b>Higher Education</b> – includes a broad range of educational institutions and programs leading to certificates, diplomas, and degrees.</li> </ol> <p><b>Cost of Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pre-primary Education for children up to age six is optional in South Africa. Twelve years of government-paid, compulsory basic Education is provided to students between the ages of 6-15, where seven grades of primary schooling are offered to students generally between the ages of 6 and 12 (though many older students also are enrolled at this</li> </ul>

level), followed by two grades of junior secondary Education for children between the ages of 12 and 15.

- Though there are no primary school fees, families must pay for uniforms and supplies.
- Senior secondary schools provide either academic training or vocational and technical Education and training. They accommodate students between 16 and 20 (though many older students attend), with general education programs generally lasting three years and vocational and technical training programs staying 2 to 4 years.

#### **No-Fee Schools**

- No-fee schools were introduced in 2007 and are being expanded to include the poorest 60% of schools. Schools have been ranked into five categories. The schools in the lowest 40% (quintiles 1 and 2) were deemed poor and allowed learners to enroll without paying fees. In return, the government funds expenses that were previously covered by fees.
- The No-Fee Schools policy abolishes school fees in the poorest 40% of schools nationally for learners from Grade R to Grade 9. Schools that do not charge fees will be allocated a larger amount of funding from the national budget per learner to make up for the fees that would have been charged. Children in high schools will not benefit from the no-fee policy.
- The No-Fee policy ranks schools according to the poverty level in the surrounding area, meaning poor children who go to school and are not rated amongst the poorest will attend fee-paying schools.

#### **Scholars Abroad**

- According to the French government's Campus France agency Note, La Mobilité des Étudiants d'Afrique Sub-Saharienne et du Maghreb, in 2013, 57,321 (15%) of South Africans sought higher Education outside of their country. The report also notes that between 2006 and 2010, there was a fall of 1% in the number of African students enrolled in France but a 28.8% increase in those choosing to study in South Africa.
- The Note reports that as well as wanting to "widen their cultural and intellectual horizon, or find knowledge and skills to give them a competitive advantage in the job market," African students typically leave their countries because the universities there have insufficient resources or do not offer the required Education.
- South Africa has also developed massive online open courses (MOOCs), and distance education programs represent 40% of Education dispensed by its universities.

#### **Education Expenditure**

- 6.6047 % of GDP, 42<sup>nd</sup> globally (2021)

#### **Teacher: Pupil Ratio**

- Public: 1:29 (2015), Private 1:15 (2016)
- Primary: 1:36, Secondary: 1:37 (2020)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There are currently no legislated norms and standards for learner-to-educator ratio in public schools,” Motshekga said in a recent reply to written parliamentary questions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Official Languages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English, Afrikaans, Swati, Zulu, Sotho, Tsonga, Tswana, Ndebele, Xhosa, Venda, Isipedi</li> </ul>
<p><b>School System</b></p>	<p><b>National Curriculum</b></p> <p>The South African curriculum is called the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). It is a comprehensive, concise policy document that replaced the Subject and Learning Area Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines, and Subject Assessment Guidelines for all subjects in 2011. South Africa's education system has different bands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Education and Training (GET)</li> <li>• Foundation Phase: Grade R (Reception)-3</li> <li>• Intermediate Phase: Grades 4-6</li> <li>• Senior Phase: Grade 7-9</li> <li>• Further Education and Training (FET) Band: Grade 10-12</li> <li>• Higher Education and Training (HET): the highest recognized qualification</li> </ul> <p>Each province in South Africa has its own Department of Education. These departments are responsible for ensuring the quality of education is up to standard in each public school across the province. Additionally, they make sure inspections are conducted and nothing unconventional occurs at the schools.</p> <p><b>Annual National Assessment (ANA)</b></p> <p>The Department of Basic Education (DBE) annually administers the Annual National Assessments (ANA) in Home Language and Mathematics. These standardized tests help the DBE verify that every school's child is developing the language and mathematics skills appropriate for the grade.</p> <p>The (ANA) are standardized national assessments in the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• senior phase (grades 7 - 9),</li> <li>• intermediate phase (grades 4 – 6), and</li> <li>• literacy and numeracy for the foundation phase (grades 1 – 3).</li> </ul> <p>The question papers and marking memoranda (exemplars) are supplied by the national (DBE), and the schools conduct, monitor, and mark the assessments.</p> <p><b>High School Leaving Exam</b></p> <p>The National Senior Certificate (NSC) is a high school diploma and is the main school-leaving certificate in South Africa. Examinations are conducted from October to December of each year. All public schools in South Africa offer NSC.</p> <p>The International Examinations Board (IEB) is the preferred curriculum for private schools.</p> <p><b>Higher Education</b></p>

	<p>Currently, there are 20 traditional universities, 40 general private institutions, 14 private business institutions, 18 private creative arts and design institutions, four private education institutions, nine private medicine, health, fitness, and beauty institutions, four private hospitality institutions, two private information technology institutions, three private music and production institutions, and 17 private theology institutions across South Africa.</p>
<p><b>Issues with the Education System</b></p>	<p><b>Standard of Education in South Africa</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● South Africa has a high-cost, low-performance education system that does not compare favorably with education systems in other African countries or similar developing economies. The most widely known problems include a shortage of teachers, underqualified teachers, and poor teacher performance. In the classroom, this results in poor learner standards and results and a lack of classroom discipline, exacerbated by insufficient resources and inadequate infrastructure.</li> <li>● On a government level, difficulties arise due to the failure of appropriate inspection and monitoring and confusion caused by changing curricula without proper communication and training. As a result, massive demoralization and disillusionment have spread among teachers and a worsening perception of the teaching profession among the public. With strong teachers' unions, letting go of poor-performing teachers is difficult, so there is little incentive to improve.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lack of Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Due to a lack of financial support, smaller schools in rural areas have to close, and a lack of sufficiently educated and motivated teachers and facilities places a huge strain on the system. The financial burden to the local governments and the pupils' families, who often belong to the previously disadvantaged population, is high. Most pupils still live in the poorest conditions in rural areas or the growing townships of the major cities. However, the standard of education in South Africa varies from region to region and school to school.</li> </ul> <p><b>Unqualified Teachers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are, According to a 2016 statistical study released by the education department, about 435,000 teachers across the country. The Democratic Alliance (DA), the national education department, recently admitted that 5,139 teachers, the vast majority of which are in rural KwaZulu-Natal, are either unqualified or under-qualified. The subjects most affected include mathematics, sciences, technology at all levels, and African language teaching, particularly at the foundation phase. In response to the DA, the department revealed that, in 2016: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ KZN had 2,875 unqualified or under-qualified teachers last year, 57% of the total number of such teachers nationwide.</li> <li>○ The Northern Cape had the second most, with 400 teachers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p>The Department of Basic Education releases the academic calendar for all nine provinces annually. A typical public high school would have four terms:</p>

<b>Academic Calendar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● First Term: January to March —12 weeks and two public holidays.</li> <li>● Second Term: April to June —11 weeks and four public holidays</li> <li>● Third Term: July-September — 10 weeks and two public holidays</li> <li>● Fourth Term: October-December</li> </ul> <p>The national exam (NSC) is administered from October to late November - 9 weeks and no public holidays.</p>
<b>SAT Test Centers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● African Leadership Academy</li> <li>● African Union International School</li> <li>● American International School</li> <li>● Cape Town and Johannesburg</li> <li>● Bohmer Secondary School</li> <li>● Herschel Girls School</li> <li>● Hilton College</li> <li>● International School of South Africa</li> <li>● St. Henry’s Marist College</li> <li>● Witwatersrand University</li> <li>● St. Benedict’s,</li> <li>● The University of Cape Town.</li> </ul>
<b>ACT Test Centers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● American International School of Johannesburg</li> <li>● African Leadership Academy</li> <li>● Witwatersrand University.</li> </ul>
<b>IELTS/TOEFL</b>	<p>The British Council of South Africa offers IELTS tests in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Cape Town, and Port Elizabeth on various dates throughout the year. Registrations occur online and are processed centrally at the British Council office in Johannesburg.</p>
<b>Best Time to Visit Schools</b>	<p>The best time to visit schools is typically during the first and early second term (late January-end of April).</p> <p>During this time, teachers are attending, and students are busy learning the material on the exam.</p> <p>During the latter part of the second and third term, students will be preparing for exams and are only sometimes in class.</p>
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