

Grade 1 and grade 8 admissions: Parents urged to research schools before accepting placements

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The MEC expressed confidence in reaching 100% placement before the end of November.

Parents have been urged to thoroughly research schools before accepting placement offers as Gauteng prepares to send admission notifications from 16 October for the 2026 academic year.

MEC for Education Matome Chiloane emphasised that parents must understand school fee structures and other details before making decisions.

He warned that changes of mind after accepting placements will not be accommodated

“It is also very important that parents should have done their homework when they choose schools. **Because the issue of fees is no longer non-negotiable,** especially from ourselves as a department,” Chiloane said.

Chiloane revealed that the province has achieved an 88.39% placement rate for grade 1 and 8 pupils.

Fee-paying schools non-negotiable

Chiloane issued a stern warning about fee-paying schools. He said parents who applied to such schools must pay the required fees.

The MEC rejected requests for exemptions or transfers based on affordability concerns discovered after placement.

He recounted a recent call from a parent who sought a transfer after discovering high school fees at their assigned school. He firmly rejected the request.

“And I was very frank with her; How am I going to do that? Now, where am I sitting? So I must go to some school, force them to remove a learner so that I can put you, your child?” Chiloane questioned.

Financial pressures across the education system make fee compliance essential. He told of instructing a teacher at a fee-paying school **who refused to pay fees, leading to their salary being garnished.**

“I told the school to take their salary. Don’t pay here. **Take your salary and pay the fees.** Because it’s not gonna work. It’s not working. **It’s collapsing some of our former model-c schools,” he said.**

He further emphasised that **parents who take children to fee-paying schools but refuse to pay are contributing to institutional collapse.**

The MEC highlighted that several no-fee schools appear among the province’s top performers, including Pumlani Secondary, Kaalfontein Secondary School, Ekurhuleni Technical High School, and Vuwani Science schools.

“So it does not matter whether it’s a no-fee or fee. **But if you’re taking a child to a fee, you’re going to have to pay.** I’ve given schools leeway to do whatever it takes to get your fees back,” Chiloane said.