

Follow this guide to overcome barriers to learning and get your child the education they deserve. **Click on a step for support and resources to help you take action.**





1 Get a letter from the school(s) stating the reasons why admission has been declined

Who is this for?

Read on if you and your child have **unsuccessfully applied to the school of your choice**. If you haven't applied yet you can use our school finder (/docs/wc-school-search.html) to find a school in your area.

This step will explain how you can **get a letter with the school's reasons for rejecting your child**. If you already have that letter, move on and find out how to appeal the decision().

Key summary

-  Schools are **not allowed to discriminate** against learners during the admission process
-  A parent has the **right to choose which school** their child can attend
-  **Use this draft ()** to write a request to the school, asking them for the reasons why admission has been declined
-  This process often takes between **6 and 7 weeks**

Resources to help you

Find the contact details of the school

Use our school finder (/docs/wc-school-search.html) to get the email address and telephone number of the school you want to contact.

Writing the letter

In order to take this matter further you need to request a formal letter from the school stating why your child was denied access. We've created a draft letter () you can use as a starting point. Make sure to fill out all the relevant details and send it to the head of the school(s) your child was denied access from.

Following up with the school

The process of getting the letter often takes between 6 and 7 weeks. You can use our handy reminder service () to help you remember to follow up with the school in due course.

How can the school governing body help?

If the school principal rejected your application because the school is unable to cater for your child's special-needs, then the governing body might be able to intervene. For example, if your child needs wheelchair access, and the school does not cater for this, then they could deny access. In this case the governing body could adjust the school's budget to make accommodations for the work required to add wheelchair access.

What does the law say?

A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirement without unfairly discriminating in any way: SASA Section 5 (1) (https://www.acts.co.za/south-african-schools-act/5_admission_to_public_schools)

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: SASA Section 5 (6) (https://www.acts.co.za/south-african-schools-act/5_admission_to_public_schools)

If all schools reject your application, follow this appeal process:

2.1 Write a letter of appeal to the MEC for education

Key summary

- ✦ If you are unhappy with reasons provided for unsuccessful admission you can **appeal to the MEC**
- 🏛 MEC stands for "**Member of the Executive Council**", they are members of your province's cabinet each in charge of their own portfolio. All provinces have an MEC in charge of education
- 📄 **Use this draft (/docs/mec-draft-letter.pdf)** to write an appeal letter to the MEC. Explain the reasons for declining admission the school has given you and why you are unhappy with them

Details

Resources to help you

Writing the appeal letter

In order to appeal the school's decision, you need to send a formal appeal letter to the relevant MEC. We've created a draft letter (/docs/mec-draft-letter.pdf) you can use as a starting point. Make sure to fill out all the relevant details and send it to the your province's MEC.

Find out who your province's Education MEC is

Every province has an MEC in charge of education, you can find yours in this **list of MECs and their contact details()**.

✦ What does the law say?

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 - SASA Section 5 (9)

2.2 Alternatively, write a letter of appeal to the District Director

Key summary

- ✦ The District Director must **ensure all learners are enrolled in school** after the admission period
- 🕒 This process often takes about **30 days**

Details

Resources to help you

✦ What does the law say?

(8) Notwithstanding the provisions of any school admission policy, in the case of a learner who has not been placed at any school 30 school days after the end of the admission period, the District Director may place that learner at any school-

- (a) which has not been declared full in terms of Regulation 8, and
- (b) in respect of which there are no remaining unplaced learners on a waiting list. Regulations on admission of learners to Public Schools 2012 – Section 5 (8)

3 The MEC will launch an investigation into your case

Key summary

- ✦ The MEC is responsible for **ensuring support for Barriers to learning is accessible** for learners at ordinary public schools
- 🏛 Should it be found that the school was wrong to decline admission, the **MEC will ensure that placement is found** and that reasonable accommodations will be made for the learner

Details

Writing the appeal letter

In order to appeal the school's decision, you need to send a formal appeal letter to the relevant MEC. We've created a draft letter () you can use as a starting point. Make sure to fill out all the relevant details and send it to the your province's MEC.

Find out who your province's Education MEC is

Every province has an MEC in charge of education, you can find yours in this [list of MECs and their contact details](#) ().

What does the law say?

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 - SASA Section 5 (9)

4 A meeting will be set up to discuss your child's needs

Know something we don't?

Have you solved an issue in your area and it's not listed on this website? We would love others to learn from your experience, so why not send through () a description of the issue you experienced and the steps you took to resolve it.

Help translate guides

Are you interested in helping us translate existing guides? We aim to make this information accessible to as many people as possible and your help would be greatly appreciated. Get in touch () if you want to help us.