



**basic education**  
Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**THUTO**



## NEWSLETTER

# Minister Motshekga calls upon Government and the private sector to accelerate the pace of ICT in education



The acceleration of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in education has become an important mission aimed at aligning teaching techniques with the 21st Century. Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, joined by the Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Mr Enver Surty, the MEC for Education in Gauteng, Mr Panyanza Lesufi, the MEC for Education in the Western Cape, Ms Debbie Schäfer, senior managers from the Department of Basic Education and Provincial Education Departments, as well as a delegation from McKinsey South Africa, participated in the ICT in Education Workshop held at the Premier Hotel in Midrand on 03 March 2016.

The workshop was held in response to *the National Development Plan (NDP)* goals on ICT in education, and was presented along with the Operation Phakisa ICT in Education Lab outcomes, launched by President Jacob Zuma in September 2015. This marked an overdue turning point towards the transformation of teaching and learning through the appropriate use of ICTs as envisioned by the *White Paper on e-Education, 2004*.

The Outcomes Manager from the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency, Dr Thabo Mabogoane, gave a presentation on Operation Phakisa Methodology, indicating that four Phakisa priorities, namely; the Oceans Economy, Health, Education and Mining have been rolled out already; with Agriculture identified as the next priority. Presenting the ten ICT in Education Lab Initiatives, he indicated that Government will, thereafter, monitor the implementation of these to draw lessons for future initiatives.

Click on the below link for the full article:

<http://www.education.gov.za/paceofICTineducation/tabid/973/Default.aspx>

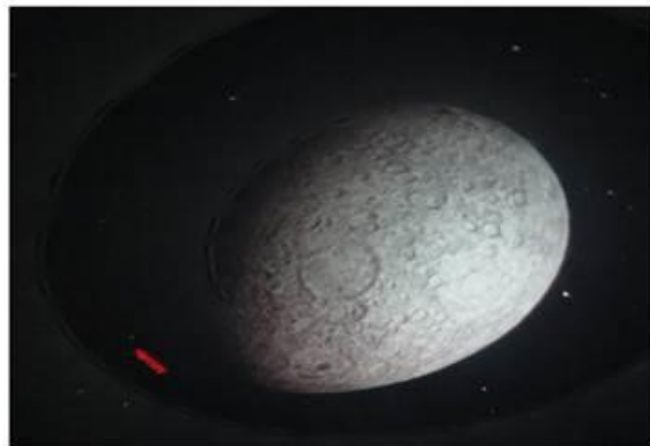


# The Republic of South Africa and the People's Republic of China officially launches planetarium and celebrates the hand-over of Chinese textbooks

Minister Angie Motshekga, the MEC for Education in Gauteng, Mr Panyaza Lesufi, the Charge d'Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Mr Li Song, Mr Gao Fan representing the President of the China Educational Instrument and Equipment Corporation (CEIEC); and the Chief Executive Officer of the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre, Mr David Kramer, officially opened the planetarium in Newtown, Johannesburg on 07 March 2016 which was donated by the CEIEC through the bilateral relations between the Republic of South Africa and the People's Republic of China. The planetarium will play a crucial role in strengthening quality learning and teaching in the field of Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST). Through this facility, learners will be able to learn about the moon, stars, planets, comets and asteroids. "The importance of learning about these is mainly how they affect our own planet and its inhabitants currently, and how they could affect it in future", said Minister Motshekga during the event.

Minister Motshekga mentioned that the SA-China co-operation has a number of deliverables over and above the launch of the planetarium and the introduction of Mandarin as an elective foreign language in schools. More than 2000 Chinese language textbooks were also donated during the launch which will be used to assist in the teaching of Mandarin in South African schools until a suitable South African textbook has been developed. The Minister highlighted that the partnership between the DBE and China is also looking at establishing e-learning classrooms for the pilot schools that are currently teaching Mandarin.

Minister Motshekga further emphasised that the partnership between the DBE and China is growing from strength to strength. Emanating from the signing of the co-operation agreement there has been a number of interactions with representatives of various institutions in China, such as the Chinese Embassy in South Africa and the Chinese Culture and International Education Exchange Centre (CCIEEC). The implementation of this agreement entails five areas of focus, i.e. Curriculum Development and Implementation; Mathematics, Science and Technology Education; Teacher Training and Development; Vocational Education and Training; and Research and Development to improve training.





## Creating a conducive environment for learners with disabilities



The DBE has made progress in creating a conducive environment to ensure learners with disabilities receive quality education. The Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mwel, updated the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education in Parliament on 08 March 2016, saying that the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy has required integrated planning at all levels, which was made possible by working jointly across multiple disciplines.

Dr Moses Simelane, the Director for Inclusive Education, said Government had allocated funding towards inclusion in schools. The money was used to buy assistive devices, provide learner transport, develop infrastructure, train professional support staff and purchase learner/teacher support material. Simelane said about 800 schools were being reconfigured into full service schools and resources were being dedicated to those schools. By February 2015, 791 full service schools had been designated. Of these, 137 (15%) had been physically upgraded for accessibility. More than R5.7 billion was allocated to special schools in 2014/15, whilst R400 million was earmarked for strengthening full service schools.

Draft funding norms have been developed to address the disparity of funding full service schools across all provinces. Seven hundred and forty district officials and 546 teachers were orientated in guidelines for full service schools in 2014/15. More than 1 880 district officials and 16 127 teachers from full service schools were trained in curriculum differentiation. More than R11.2 million worth of assistive devices were provided to full service schools. The quality of education for children with disabilities in ordinary, special and full service schools is monitored through the National Strategy on Learner Attainment (NSLA) and the Department is working on progressive training and capacity building of teachers and officials in the specialised areas of Braille, South African Sign Language (SASL), autism, and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

There is collaboration between the Departments of Social Development, Higher Education and Training and Labour to provide protected and sheltered employment for learners with disabilities to address the transition from school to work. Portfolio Committee chairperson, Ms Nomalungelo Gina, said that a lot had been done to address the plight of people with disabilities and that we need to work together to tackle the remaining challenges.

## UNESCO Chair Symposium on Cultural Policy and Development

The South African National Commission for UNESCO, in collaboration with the Tshwane University of Technology and the Department of Arts and Culture, hosted a UNESCO Chair Symposium on the Interface between Cultural Policy and Development at the DBE from 09 to 10 March 2016. The event was addressed by numerous international experts from Australia, Germany, the United States of America (USA) and Ethiopia. The UNESCO Chair programme involves over 700 institutions in 126 countries. The Tshwane University of Technology hopes to apply for a UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Development. The primary objectives of the envisaged UNESCO Chair was to enhance capacity building for cultural policy and development in South Africa and the SADC region; to encourage creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship through the growth of the cultural and creative industries; to promote resource mobilisation, academic engagement and research collaboration among the SADC member states, universities and other local and international stakeholders; and to create a platform for dialogue between policy-makers, researchers, public and private organisations and civil society on the planning, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of cultural policies, programmes and related projects.

South Africa, the SADC region, the wider African continent and the international community stand to benefit from this Symposium as it will, not only promote partnerships between universities and governments; public and private organisations; industry and civil society; but will also facilitate the establishment of mutual collaboration between symposium delegates as stakeholders on matters of cultural policy and sustainable development.





## The month of March focuses on Human Rights

This year's Human Rights Day, which is commemorated on 21 March 2016, will be dedicated to confronting racism after incidents of racism were witnessed recently in the country. Delivering his State of the Nation Address, President Zuma said Human Rights Day will be used to lay the foundation for a long-term programme of building a non-racial society. The *Constitution*, which has its foundation in the *Freedom Charter*, proclaims that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. A lot has been done to promote inclusion and a non-racial society and the journey to a non-racial society has not yet been completed.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will also be marked on 21 March 2016. "International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is an opportunity to renew our commitment to building a world of justice and equality where xenophobia and bigotry do not exist. We must learn the lessons of history and acknowledge the profound damage caused by racial discrimination," said United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon.

This year, the International Day is devoted to challenges and achievements of the *Durban Declaration and Programme of Action* – 15 years after the landmark document was adopted at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in South Africa. The *Durban Declaration and Programme of Action* is the most comprehensive framework for fighting racism and related forms of intolerance and discrimination. It represents the firm commitment of the international community to tackle these issues, and serves as a basis for advocacy efforts worldwide. This year's anniversary, following the 10-year anniversary observed in 2011, provides the opportunity to recommit to the actions outlined for all countries, individually and collectively, to intensify efforts aimed at reducing instances of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

## Provincial Round-up

### KwaZulu-Natal



The KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Provincial Education Department, has expressed concerns at expected water restrictions within the Province. KZN Provincial Department of Education spokesperson, Mr Muzi Mhlambi, said the drought was a reality and was affecting everyone, including schools. The drought has led to the level of the larger Midmar and Albert Falls dams dropping to 36% this month. The water shortage issue is a very serious one, affecting hygiene and sanitation in schools. Last year during the matric exam marking, the James Nxumalo marking centre in Ulundi had to be shut down after 450 Maths markers were without water; some fell ill and were hospitalised at the time. The school had been without running water for days.

### Eastern Cape



Treasury will be taking back 33% of its infrastructural grant from the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Education according to an announcement in the Government Gazette. Treasury said that the R530 million education grant will be divided and reallocated to the Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape provinces. This comes after the Eastern Cape was rated as the worst performing province in the 2015 Grade 12 exams, with a pass rate of 56.8%. The Province had put plans in place to confront the problems of infrastructure at schools as learners are still taught in environments that are not conducive to learning. There are over 600 schools in this province that lack water, electricity and sanitation. A target of 70% has been set for the 2016 matric class.

## Upcoming Events

- 21 March 2016: The commemoration of National Human Rights Day
- 01 April 2016: National Education Excellence Awards, including the NSNP and District Directors Awards at the Presidential Guesthouse in Pretoria