



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NEWSLETTER

Easter Message from Minister Angie Motshekga



As our learners and teachers almost come to the end of their well-deserved Easter School Holiday we reflect on what has been a very busy 2017 academic year thus far, as we move into an opportunity of reflection provided by the upcoming Easter weekend.

This year started with the announcement of the 2016 National Senior Certificate Examinations Results, which indicated the hard work that officials, teachers, learners and parents are putting in to improve achievement at this level across various measuring points. The *Second Chance Matric Support Programme* has also been very active in providing additional support and access to revision resources on multiple accessible platforms for anyone to be able to achieve their National Senior Certificate or Amended Senior Certificate qualifications, even if they are no longer in a formal schooling environment. I am joining the team in continuing the roadshows for this programme throughout the country during the next two months to encourage everyone to make use of this opportunity of support to obtain their matric certificate and to become leaders in their communities.

It is during rest periods like these where we also have to nurture ourselves and our families through various relaxation activities. For me reading is one of the main activities that encourage revitalisation and recuperation; I would therefore like to encourage everyone to make use of this period to support the *Read to Lead* campaign and encourage your whole family to read at least one book during this period. The first term has seen numerous initiatives being undertaken for the campaign with the tremendous support of Provincial Education Departments, various sponsors and social partners. Let's keep encouraging South Africans to read, to donate books to schools and NGOs, to revitalise school libraries and to support community reading projects.

It is through the tremendous continuous support from the National Education Collaboration Trust, Social Partners, NGOs, International Co-operation Partners and Donors, Business Partners and sister Departments that we have been able to undertake numerous projects during the first three months of this year. These projects have seen the benefit of learning and teaching resources being donated to various schools across the country, the capacity building of Education District Managers, the research and analysis of the real value of the National Senior Certificate, the financial management training of School Governing Bodies and the development and use of ICT resources for teachers and learners.

We have also had the privilege to publicly thank and recognise our teachers for their continued efforts to develop and teach the future leaders of South Africa, often achieved under very difficult circumstances, during the 17th Annual National Teaching Awards. Our District Directors and School Principals were in turn recognised for their achievement in the 2016 National Senior Certificate Examinations Results during the Education Excellence Awards.

Unfortunately this period has also not gone without its trials and tribulations. It is with deep sadness that we lost Ms Priscilla Mchunu, the Acting Principal for Laduma High School in KwaZulu-Natal, who was brutally murdered in front of her learners. Our thoughts are with her family and school community during this Easter period. It is also with great concern and disappointment that we note the continued use of education as a bargaining tool during community service delivery protests where school properties and resources are burnt down, vandalised and learners and teachers are being barred from attending school or taking part in examinations in order to obtain their National Senior Certificate qualifications. I urge community members to protect their learners, teachers and schooling resources in their areas, as these are invaluable to their communities and South Africa as a whole and a required necessity for the improvement of everyone's living conditions.

As many South Africans will be travelling over the Easter Weekend and towards the end of the school holidays, I would like to encourage everyone to do so safely and to return home refreshed and renewed to take on the second term of the 2017 academic year.

I wish everyone peace and joy over this Easter period. Happy Easter!

Minister Motshekga honours hard working districts and schools through National Education Excellence Awards



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, presented the 4th Annual National Education Excellence Awards to hard working districts and schools that achieved excellent results in the 2016 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations. The Awards Ceremony was hosted at the Capital Menlyn Maine Hotel in Pretoria on 07 April 2017, to inspire other districts and schools to strive for improvement and excellence in learning outcomes. The prizes that were received by the winning districts and schools included Certificates of Excellence, accommodation vouchers, a study tour to Finland, trophies, trolley libraries, IT solutions for schools, laptops and prize money. These prizes were made available courtesy of several partners which included South African Airways, Room to Read, Sky Net, Nexus Travel, the Rotary Club of Johannesburg, Protea Marriot Hotel, AVBOB, Travel With Flair, Axiz and IT Master Information Technology Consultants.

The Awards were introduced in 2014 with a particular focus on the work being done by Districts. The South African education system continues to deliver quality education to multitudes of learners through the 24,000 schools and 81 Districts in all nine provinces. Despite the enormity of the task to provide quality public education cascaded through Districts and schools, as indicated in the *Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realization of Schooling 2030*, which is aligned to the goals set out in the *National Development Plan 2030*, the excellent work done by District Directors, School Principals and Teachers, has indeed brought about a paradigm shift within the education sector.

The sector has made huge strides in improving the pass rate from 2010 to date in the NSC examinations. For the past six years, the NSC pass rate has consistently been above the 70% threshold. With the Class of 2016 being the largest cohort the country has ever registered for the NSC examinations, there was a possibility that learner performance could have dropped. However, this did not happen owing to the dedication and commitment by District Directors and School Principals which was evident at the Awards Ceremony.

Speaking at the Awards, Deputy Director-General for the Planning and Delivery Oversight Unit, Ms Palesa Tyobeka, mentioned that “The Awards are a critical initiative to acknowledge the excellent work done by various District Officials who firmly guide schools to stick to the core business of the schooling system, which is to deliver quality learning and teaching. In the 2017 Awards, we uncovered similar academic excellence in schools serving the poorest to the most affluent communities”. Ms Tyobeka also said that the District Director’s meetings, organised on a quarterly basis by Minister Motshekga in Pretoria, has had a huge impact in the achievements of the winning Districts and schools. Through these forums, all 81 Districts are convened under one roof to share best practice. The mechanism has, over the years, assisted even struggling Districts to start rising to the top.

In her keynote address, Minister Motshekga congratulated the recipients of the Awards, saying: “The recipients of the Awards are excellent role models of how we can work together towards realising our common vision. You are a source of inspiration for other Districts and schools in the sector to sustain good results and improve service delivery. I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the support received from various stakeholders and partners who ensured that this ceremony is a success. Once again, congratulations to all the award winners!”.

<http://www.education.gov.za/ArchivedDocuments/ArchivedArticles/4thAnnualNationalEducationExcellenceAwards.aspx>



National Imbizo Focus Week



IMBIZO
**Together we move
South Africa forward**



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



The 6th National Imbizo Focus Week is planned for 17 to 23 April 2017 and will be implemented as part of the post-State of the Nation Address (SoNA) Programme. The Focus Week is aimed at galvanising government departments and civil society to actively participate in the implementation of the *National Development Plan* (NDP) as a roadmap towards radical socioeconomic transformation and social cohesion. Essentially, the purpose of the Week is to engage and apprise citizens on Government's Programme of Action as announced during the SoNA.

The Imbizo Focus Week will be guided by the Cabinet-approved National Communication Strategic Framework's five-year theme: "*Together we move South Africa forward*" which remains the rallying theme promoting partnership and transforming the country into a better place for all to live in. Implementing the NDP requires a multi-sectoral collaboration between all sections of society and effective leadership by government on national priorities. Complementary sub-themes will include the "*Life and legacy of OR Tambo*" and the Freedom Month/Day respectively. A strong focus will be on delivery nodal points aimed at igniting economic growth and creating jobs but which above all require interdepartmental or/and intergovernmental efforts in order to succeed.

Developing CAPS-aligned digital content and courseware for Hospitality Studies



The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sun International Management Limited (SIML) to improve learning outcomes in the subject, Hospitality Studies, owing to the subject's direct link and possible future employee candidate throughput to the hospitality industry.

In light of the DBE's research that shows that there is a decline in the number of Public Schools offering Hospitality Studies to Learners in Grades 10 to 12, there are currently only approximately 300 schools in South Africa which offer the subject. The decline is being attributed to a shortage of suitably qualified educators, as well as the cost of equipment and resources required for effective teaching and learning to take place in the place in the subject.

Research has also shown that the teaching and learning of Hospitality Studies can be significantly enhanced through the effective use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). SIML therefore approached the DBE in order to assist identified public schools in enhancing the offering of Hospitality Studies for the broader benefit of the school communities and the hospitality industry as a whole. through the jointly developed *Implementation of Systems Strengthening and Capacity Building Programmes for Hospitality Studies* project, which was conceptualised to turn the tide against the declining participation rate in the subject by schools across the country.

To assist the identified schools to integrate the digital content that has been developed to support the teaching and learning outcomes of the curriculum, a four-day SACE-accredited course has already been conducted in six of the eight participating provinces from 27 to 30 March 2017, and plans are at an advanced stage for the other two provincial training sessions. The course focuses on the pedagogy of effective 21st century teaching. Professional Teacher Development is one of the cornerstones of the project as this will ensure that all Hospitality Studies Teachers will gain confidence in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for effective teaching and learning in their classrooms.

The project has seen the development of CAPS-aligned supplementary digital content and courseware for Hospitality Studies; and will be implemented in phases. During phase 1, 100 out of the 300 schools will be targeted to improve pedagogy, resources and results using digital technology and will include the four days of Professional Teacher Development training. Phase 2 is expected to see the expansion of the intervention to the other 200 schools offering the subject; as well as the translation of the digital content into Afrikaans. Each of the identified schools will be provided with a laptop, a data projector, a magnetic whiteboard and a content access point with pre-loaded content for use by the teachers and learners. The rollout of hardware will continue until all the schools offering Hospitality Studies as a subject are fully equipped to implement the ICT enhanced support programme.

Finalisation of Multi-grade Toolkit Workshops to reduce teachers' workload in multi-grade classes and multi-grade schools



A team of education experts from across all nine provinces met at OR Tambo Garden Court Hotel, in the Gauteng Province from 03 to 07 April 2017, to finalise the Multi-grade Toolkit Workshop before its implementation in schools in 2018. Approximately 80 Education Specialists and Subject Advisors attended the five day workshop to complete the Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs), lesson plans, as well as formal and informal assessment that will form part of the Toolkit. During the workshop, the participants were divided into break-away sessions to explore various teaching techniques that will suit schools with multi-grade teaching. A continued consultation process with National and Provincial Education Specialists as well as Subject Advisors played a crucial role in consolidating the Toolkit. Being in its final stage of development, the Toolkit remains one of the core initiatives aimed at reducing the workload of teachers who deal with multi-grade classrooms.

Director for Rural Education at the DBE, Dr Phumzile Langa, commended the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) for having allowed the Education Specialists and Subject Advisors from the various provinces to work with the DBE in finalising the Multi-grade Toolkit. "We hope that the Toolkit will strengthen quality learning and teaching in the targeted schools. These officials have worked very hard with us to reach this point. The Toolkit will be finalised before the end of this year in order for it to be implemented during the 2018 academic year. The Toolkit is pivotal because it outlines how the relevant curriculum outcomes should be delivered in each school term. Teachers who teach in schools with multi-grade classes need to be supported to carry out their duties optimally. This Toolkit will therefore be very helpful for teachers to excel in their teaching".

Safety tips to teachers, learners, and parents during the holiday period



School holidays present learners with an opportunity to reflect on their academic progress and challenges faced during the first quarter of the school calendar. The safety of our learners remains a key concern during the holiday period. The Safety in Education Directorate shared the following safety tips to help learners to stay safe during this school holiday period:

- Stay away from alcohol and illegal substances. Illegal substances are addictive and lethal. Note that alcohol poisoning is also a common risk for learners during the holiday season;
- Social media can be a dangerous space when not used responsibly; therefore use social media carefully;
- Do not bully others or participate in bullying incidents by being a bystander;
- When travelling in a vehicle, ensure that you use a safety belt. Pedestrians should always be alert, especially when crossing the road at intersections;
- Do not use your head phones or cellphone when walking in the streets;
- Do not associate with criminals or engage in criminal activities;
- Food poisoning is another potential holiday hazard. Practice food safety by washing hands, utensils and dishes, before and after use;
- When cooking during the holiday season, be careful of burns and scalding;
- Keep pot handles turned away from the front of the stove and always keep the oven door closed when not in use;
- Be careful when using kitchen appliances like kettles, toasters and microwaves without adult supervision.
- For those who will be travelling during the holiday season, please remain vigilant to reach your destination safely. You can avoid road accidents and injuries by obeying the rules of the road;
- Make sure your children are in a safe, controlled environment while you are at work, such as an aftercare, a reputable holiday club, or in the care of a responsible caregiver or family member;
- Teach your children how to operate your alarm system. When you test your alarm, let them press the panic button to familiarise themselves with the process, so they will know exactly what to do in an emergency;
- Make sure your children keep all the doors locked and windows closed if they are going to be home alone. Always instruct them to not allow anyone to enter the property without permission;
- Child-proof your home, especially for toddlers and younger kids;
- Make sure that dangerous substances and hazardous items, medicines and cleaning agents are out of reach, and that all electrical wiring is safely covered;
- Ensure swimming pools are sealed off, especially if you have toddlers, with a SABS-approved safety fence and net. If you have older children that are skilled at swimming, make sure they understand the safety concerns and lay down ground rules;
- Caregivers or family members should always keep a close eye on any children who are swimming;
- Save important emergency contact numbers on your children's phones. Also keep a printed list of these numbers close - on your fridge or next to the landline, including those of your local SAPS station and your neighbours;
- Teach your children to memorise their details. Holidays are a great time for fun excursions or trips to the beach, but should your child get lost they need to be able to provide someone with enough information to find you; and
- Help them to memorise their name and surname, home address and contact details.

Parents should take responsibility to safeguard their children during the Easter Holidays. A parent is their child's *first* teacher and should remain their *best* teacher throughout life.

Regional Roundup



Mr Edward Mosuwe, Head of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) has published the application period for parents to commence with the online application for the 2018 academic year. The admission period has been announced as 02 May 2017 to 20 October 2017. All learners applying for admission for the 2018 academic year must be placed by 20 October 2017.

The application period will commence on 02 May 2017 and close on 12 June 2017. Parents must apply online at schools, District Offices, Teacher Centres or other identified sites for learner admission to school for 2018. The parent will be provided with a waiting list number in writing upon the successful submission of the online Admission Application Form.

Upcoming Events

- 10 - 13 April 2017: The SA Schools National Championships (Autumn Games: Swimming) will be taking place at the Polokwane swimming pool in Limpopo Province
- 14 April 2017: Good Friday
- 17 April 2017: Family Day
- 19 April 2017: Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to continue his Provincial Engagement Visits in Rustenburg, North West Province
- 20 April 2017: Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to continue his Provincial Engagement Visits at Mahikeng Convention Centre, Mahikeng, North West Province
- 21 April 2017: Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to continue his Provincial Engagement Visits at Chief Albert Luthuli School, Daveyton, Gauteng Province
- 23 April 2017: World Book Day will be celebrated in Soweto, Gauteng Province
- 24 April 2017: Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to continue his Provincial Engagement Visits at Grace Bible Church, Pimville, Soweto, Gauteng Province
- 25 April 2017: Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to continue his Provincial Engagement Visits at Soshanguve East Secondary School in Shoshanguve, Gauteng Province
- 27 April 2017: Freedom Day
- 24 May 2017: Minister Motshekga to present the 2016-2017 Budget Vote to Parliament in Cape Town, Western Cape Province
- 25 May 2017: Africa Day
- 27 May 2017: A special Africa Day commemoration will be taking place at Freedom Park in Pretoria in honour of the late Oliver Reginald Tambo
- 29 July – 19 August 2017: National Schools Moot Court Competition essays are to be submitted to the University of Pretoria / www.schoolsmoot.co.za
- 19 August – 22 September 2017: The hosting of the provincial rounds of the National Schools Moot Court Competition
- 04 – 08 October 2017: The National Schools Moot Court Competition finals to be hosted at the University of Pretoria and the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg
- 19 August – 22 September 2017: The hosting of the provincial rounds of the National Schools Moot Court Competition



OUR FUTURE - MAKE IT WORK

South Africa belongs to all its peoples. Now, in 2030, our story keeps growing as if spring is always with us.

Once, we uttered the dream of a rainbow.
Now we see it, living it. It does not curve over the sky.

It is refracted in each one of us at home, in the community,
in the city, and across the land, in an abundance of colour.

When we see it in the faces of our children, we know: there will
always be, for us, a worthy future.

