

## NEWSLETTER

# Deputy President joins Ministry and Department of Basic Education in witnessing the start of the 2017 public school academic year

The first day of the 2017 public school academic year saw the Deputy President of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga and the Free State MEC for Education, Mr Tate Makgoe, visit Phehellang Secondary School in Parys located in the Free State Province, on 11 January 2017 as part of the Department of Basic Education's (DBE's) School Readiness Back-To-School oversight and monitoring visits.

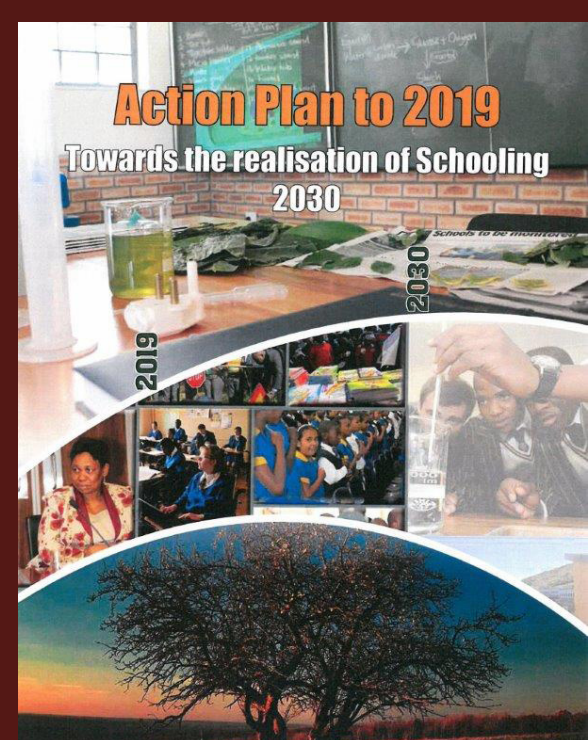
The Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Mr Enver Surty, travelled to the North West Province to witness the first day of school at Ramokoka Primary, Manamakgotha Commercial High and Kwena Tlase Secondary Schools to see to it that learning and teaching was taking place from day one on the academic calendar. The Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mweli, visited Jacobsdal Full Service School in the Gariep Education District of the Free State Province.

The readiness of schools is assessed at the beginning of the academic calendar in order to determine whether preparation plans for the start of the new school year have been implemented and whether any contingency plans have to be made in order to minimise any disruption to learning and teaching during the 201 school days for 2017. The DBE's oversight and monitoring visits focus on, amongst other aspects, the delivery of Learner and Teacher Support Material (LTSM) and adherence to the policy that teaching and learning must take place from the first day of school. These visits also include meetings with the various school management teams to assess challenges and to entrench school improvement programmes.





# Director-General's New Year Message



Welcome to 2017! With the 2016 National Senior Certificate (NSC) results showing an improvement in the national pass rate; and the country's improvement in the 2015 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) IV results, we can say with confidence and strong conviction that our interventions are yielding the return on investment which sees the Basic Education System on the rise.

In thanking all officials for their dedication in working towards achieving the goals of the *National Development Plan (NDP)* and the Department of Basic Education's (DBE's) *Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*, may I remind all that we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. There is much more to accomplish to ensure greater improvement at all levels of the schooling system.

In thinking of the year ahead, an agricultural image of a ploughman at work comes to mind. If the ploughman has to do his work effectively, he has to look ahead without being distracted, work with intense concentration and precision to accomplish his set goals. I encourage you in 2017 to approach your responsibilities with this kind of dedication and focus to achieve success in both your professional and personal lives.

In 2017, I wish to see a major breakthrough in two areas:

Firstly, that all staff members of all categories familiarise themselves with the programmes and interventions of the DBE that align to the NDP and Action Plan. The advocacy and marketing of Departmental activities and programmes is every employee's work and responsibility. Awareness and knowledge of our programmes will assist to empower us and enable us to become good ambassadors for the Department. Collectively we make up Team DBE so let's work together as a team, so that our individual and combined contributions improve the work of one another. A deep understanding of our responsibilities and camaraderie is the essence of a successful team.

Secondly, that more staff members take responsibility for their professional and personal growth. One way of growing professionally is by engaging in research; and writing and sharing opinion pieces. We need to keep abreast of trends in our sphere of work to enable us to be relevant in our support to provinces, districts and schools. During 2016, the Lunchbox Lekgotla was started where staff members meet once a month to discuss research and other articles over lunch in a friendly and non-threatening setting. This is one activity that could assist staff in equipping themselves personally and professionally. I encourage you to participate in this initiative where you will be part of your own learning as well as the learning of other colleagues.

Onward, forward Team DBE, let's make a difference to the children of our country.



# Education opens doors and can change lives

Learners across the country reported for the start of the new school year on 11 January 2017. The DBE remains committed to every learner receiving the best possible education. All public schools and educators are ready to start learning and teaching from day one.

The DBE's interventions have led to continuous improvements in the basic education system as reflected in the steady increase in the overall matric pass rate. Moreover, almost half of the children aged 4 and below are now attending Early Childhood Development (ECD) facilities. The Gender Parity Index shows that at primary school level there are marginally fewer girls than boys. The performance of our learners in Science and Mathematics are showing an upward trajectory.

The DBE's work in education is directed by the *National Development Plan (NDP)* which sets targets for a higher pass rate in matric with a greater focus on subjects such as Mathematics and Science. Building on the start of the new school year, government will host a *NDP 2030 Back to School Imbizo Week* at the end of February 2017. The week will be held in partnership with various government departments and agencies, community leaders and civic organisations.

Over the coming year, learners will require support from their parents and educators in order to excel. Therefore the DBE calls on all families and community structures to assist learners by providing stable support systems; it is essential that we encourage learners and instil in them the importance of education.





**The Second Chance Matric Support Programme - assisting you  
in preparing for your second chance at success**

# SECOND CHANCE

## MATRIC SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The DBE is calling on all learners who did not pass the 2016 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations, to try again through the support of the specially designed Second Chance Matric Support Programme. The Second Chance Matric Support Programme aims to provide learning support to learners who have not been able to meet the requirements of the NSC or the extended Senior Certificate (SC), thereby meeting the goals of the NDP and the sector in terms of increasing learner retention.

The programme aims to support those learners who do not formally attend school and have registered for the 2016 NSC Supplementary Examinations, the 2017 Amended Senior Certificate Examinations or the 2017 NSC Examinations, in a number of innovative ways to assist them in adequately preparing to write these examinations. These learners can receive learning support through Face-to-Face Classes; Multimedia Broadcasting Solutions; Digital Online Courses; printed resources such as the Mind the Gap Study Guide in 8 of the 11 subjects; past question papers; study tips; and Physical Science and Mathematics textbooks that are also available for use. The DBE encourages learners who have not managed to pass Grade 12, to take advantage of this opportunity for a second chance at a brighter future.

Learners who would like to make use of this opportunity to complete their school leaving qualification should contact their nearest Provincial Education District office before 19 January 2017 to register for the 2016 NSC Supplementary Examinations or before 15 March 2017 to register to write the November 2017 NSC Examinations and 29 September 2017 to register to write the 2018 amended SC Examinations. Information about access to the support from district offices is available by clicking on the below link:

[http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalSeniorCertificate\(NSC\)Examinations/SecondChanceProgramme/tabid/956/Default.aspx](http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalSeniorCertificate(NSC)Examinations/SecondChanceProgramme/tabid/956/Default.aspx)



# Strengthening the Teaching of Reading in Primary Schools

The DBE, in collaboration with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), hosted an English First Additional Language (EFAL) workshop for 256 Foundation Phase subject advisors to prepare them for the training of 10,000 Grades 1 to 3 teachers in teaching EFAL effectively. Teacher Union representatives also attended the workshop, which was held at the Saint George Hotel in Pretoria from 29 November to 02 December 2016.

The EFAL professional development programme is a component of the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme (PSRIP) developed by the NECT. A total of 10,000 teachers from 1,670 schools and 256 subject advisors across provinces are targeted for this programme. Subject advisors are critical to the success of this programme as they will form part of the training teams, and will provide ongoing support to teachers. The aim of the training session was therefore to capacitate them to fulfil these roles.

The workshop was the first of a series to follow, which have been organised according to phases. Phase 1 comprises of content meant to cover the first semester of teaching, whilst the second semester's content will be covered in Phase 2. The training of the teachers in the various provinces for Phase 1 will commence in January 2017, with logistical arrangements for these already in place. An EFAL toolkit has been developed as a resource pack for both subject advisors and teachers. It consists of scripted lesson plans and teachers' guides, posters and readers for Grades 1 to 3; as well as Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) toolkits, including teacher guides and learner booklets.

The DBE is grateful to the ETDP SETA who has provided the financial support required to carry out a programme of this magnitude. The DBE, together with the NECT, will provide support and monitoring to the provinces during the training of teachers.



# Paving a bright future for aspiring teachers through the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme



The Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme remains dedicated to recruiting young teachers to boost quality learning and teaching in the gateway subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Science, Accounting and Business Studies. The Funza Lushaka bursary is a merit bursary and the programme aims to fund 25% of students enrolled at public Higher Education Institutions for recognised initial teacher education programmes, namely the Bachelors in Education (BEd) or the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The bursary is not a financial aid programme for students. The DBE and the Basic Education Sector uses the programme to address critical teacher shortages in specified subject areas and school phases.

National Treasury has allocated R1,043,611 for the 2016/17 financial year to accelerate the recruitment of vibrant teachers in the country. Thousands of youth from all nine provinces already benefited from the bursary. A total of 14,342 candidates were funded for the 2016 academic year, which increased from 13,980 candidates in 2015. The Director for the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme Programme, Mr Gerrit Coetzee, highlights that other areas that need special attention is the recruitment of Foundation Phase teachers who are able to teach in an indigenous African Language, as well as teachers for Technical Schools to teach subject areas such as Engineering, Graphics and Design; and Mechanical and Electrical Technology.

During 2016, more than 66,000 applications for Funza Lushaka bursaries were captured online. Applications for 2017 will close on 13 January 2017. The Department is also working towards making bursaries available from 2018 for learning support specialisations such as Guidance, Counselling and Specialised Learning Support; and School Librarianship.

Click on the below link to read the comments from some of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme beneficiaries:

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

# Call for public comment on Draft Policy for the Provision of Quality Education and Support to Children with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability

Since 2011, the DBE has been collaborating with relevant sister government departments, including the Departments of Health, Social Development, Transport, Public Works, Co-Operative Governance and Traditional Affairs; and the Western Cape Provincial Government to develop a *Draft Policy for the Provision of Quality Education and Support to Children with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability* (SPID). Together with the Draft Policy, a Learning Programme has also been developed to guide caregivers on how to provide stimulation to children so as to maximise their development and learning. All relevant stakeholder bodies and members of the public are invited to submit comments to both draft documents by 31 January 2017.

In terms of the *Constitution*, access to basic education is a fundamental right without limitations and no child of compulsory school-going age should be discriminated against on the basis of disability. However, to date the majority of these children have not had access to public funded education and support. The purpose of this policy is therefore to provide a framework for inclusive, quality and developmental education of children with severe to profound intellectual disability who function at the lowest levels of development, and who attend special or ordinary schools, special care centres, Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres and home education.

The policy includes a learning programme for children with SPID that outlines early intervention for children from birth to four years within ECD programmes as well as within the compulsory educational age range from chronological age of five to 18 years. The programme also includes guidelines for early intervention, transition to supported employment and adult life. The learning programme takes into account critical cross field skills, the Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Values of the learning environment as well as HIV and AIDS awareness.

Comments must be submitted on the template that is provided and addressed to Mrs Marie Schoeman at Schoeman.m@dbe.gov.za or at 012 357 4084. For any further enquiries, please contact Dr Moses Simelane at 012 357 4082 or Ms Monyane Chaane at 012 357 4105. Comments may also be faxed to 012 323 7749.

Click on the below link to view the draft policy:

<http://www.education.gov.za/Resources/Legislation/CallforComments/DraftPolicyfortheProvisionofQualityEducationandSupporttoChildrenwithDisability.aspx>



# KwaZulu-Natal Province wins the South African Schools National Championships



The DBE, together with Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA), hosted the South African Schools National Championships at the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Johannesburg from 10 to 13 December 2016. In its 5<sup>th</sup> year, the prestigious event has been used to promote social cohesion and condemn cultural intolerance in South African society, particularly amongst the youth.

The Minister of Sport and Recreation, Mr Fikile Mbalula, officially closed the 2016 Championships at the University of Johannesburg in Soweto on 14 December 2016. KwaZulu-Natal Province walked away with several medals after having outperformed the other eight provinces that participated in the Championships. Mpumalanga Province was in second place followed by the Western Cape Province in third place.

Nine provincial boys and girls teams participated in nine different sporting codes in the under 13 up to under 19 age groups, including learners with disabilities. The following sporting codes formed part of the Championships: basketball, cricket, gymnastics, goalball, table tennis, rugby sevens, softball and two Indigenous sporting codes, namely kgati and morabaraba.

Mr Bongani Zondi from the DBE said that the 2016 Championships was a great success. “Learner participation in this year’s Championships was incredible. The partnership between the DBE and SRSA plays an integral role in ensuring that learners lead a healthy lifestyle”. He added that the Championships reached a contingent of 468 technical officials and 3,904 learner athletes who participated during the event.

Bethuel Mogale from Christiana School for the Blind, mentioned that the Championships allow learners with special needs to showcase their sporting talents. “This initiative should be sustained to inspire and help professional sportsmen and women to advance. Apart from showcasing a variety of talents, the event taught me discipline, time management and listening skills,” Mogale concluded.



# Upcoming Events

- 12 – 13 January 2017: Minister Motshekga visits various schools in the Gauteng Province as part of the DBE school readiness programme
- 15 January to 22 January 2017: The National Adjudication of the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual NTA will be taking place in the Gauteng Province
- 16 January 2017: Deputy Minister Enver Surty visits schools in the Mpumalanga Province as part of the DBE school readiness programme
- 16 January 2017: The Director-General for Basic Education visits schools in Lusikisiki, Eastern Cape Province, as part of the provincial school readiness programme
- 17 January 2017: Deputy Minister Enver Surty visits schools in the Western Cape Province as part of the DBE school readiness programme
- 19 January 2017: Closing day for applications for 2016 NSC Examination paper/s re-mark/re-check
- 19 January 2017: Closing day for applications for NSC Supplementary Examinations
- 31 January 2017: Closing date for the submission of public comment to the draft policy on the *Provision of Quality Education and Support and the Learning Programme for Children with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability*
- 07 April 2017: Closing date for the submission of the 2017 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secondary Schools Essay Competition entries to the Provincial Education Departments



## 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.

