



# 2022

## BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR LEKGOTLA REPORT



*Equipping Learners with Knowledge and Skills for a  
Changing World in the Context of COVID-19*



**basic education**

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of an event of the magnitude of the 2022 Basic Education Sector Lekgotla requires the dedication and tireless efforts of many individuals. The Ministry and Department of Basic Education wishes to thank the Director General, Mr Mweli, and the Office of the Director-General organising team led by Dr Kumalo, Head of the office.

- The Planning Team: Dr Kumalo, Mr Mahada, Ms Zungu, Mr Mpanza, Mr Ntloana, Dr Chetty, Dr Poliah, Ms Weston, Ms Modiba, Mr Rabotapi, Mr Tlhabane, Mr Bottoman, Mr Njobe, Ms Manona, Ms Shabangu, Ms Mukwevho, Ms Govender, Mr Galorale, Ms Mabunda and the DBE Branch Coordinators.
- The Technical and Logistics team: Mr Kruger, Mr Mpanza, Mr (Tshepo) Nkomo, Mr Barnard, Ms Dumezulu, Ms Chiloane, Ms Nare, Ms Vinger, Ms Moagi, Ms Ndlovu, Ms Zungu and Ms Mlotshwa.
- Administration Support: Ms Carolissen, Ms Molopyane, Ms Sheeler, Ms Rose and Ms de Beer.
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- The Commission Resource Persons and Scribes.
- Communications Team: Ms Holden, Ms Moja, Mr Khala, Mr Makgoga, Mr Lerefolo and Mr Mhlanga.
- Sponsors: Ecubed and the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT).
- Nexus, Emperors Palace and EventCast.

Finally, we are indebted to the Minister, Mrs AM Motshekga, MP; the Deputy Minister, Dr MR Mhaule, MP; the provincial MECs of Education; the Heads of Education Departments; Teacher Unions; School Governing Body Associations; Education officials at national, provincial, district level and school level; Professional Organisations in the sector; Education Entities; Civil society partners; Higher Education Institutions; other government department officials; development partners (UNESCO, UNICEF, USAID, GOLA, World Bank), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); our esteemed speakers; chairpersons and facilitators; and all delegates for an enriching, stimulating and successful 2022 Hybrid Lekgotla.



# 2022 Basic Education Sector Lekgotla Report

Held at Emperors Palace, Kempton Park, Johannesburg in  
Hybrid Mode

***Equipping Learners with Knowledge and Skills for a  
Changing World in the Context of COVID-19***

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGYP	: Adolescent, Girls and Youth Women Programme
CAPS	: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CEOs	: Chief Executive Officers
CESA	: Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CPDT	: Continuing Professional Development for Teachers
CPTD	: Continuing Professional Teacher Development
CSTL	: Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
DBE	: Department of Basic Education
DHET	: Department of Higher Education and Training
ECCE	: Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	: Early Childhood Development
EDF	: Education Deans' Forum
EGRS	: Early Grade Reading Study
EHCP	: Educational HealthCare Plans
EWS	: Early Warning Systems
FAL	: First Additional Language
GEC	: General Education Certificate
GOLA	: Global Online Learning Alliance
HEIs	: Higher Education Institutions
HELA	: Hybrid Education Learning and Assessment
HIV and AIDS	: Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HoDs	: Heads of Departments
ICT	: Information and Communication Technology
ITE	: Institute of Technical Education
KNEC	: Kenya National Examinations Council
KPI	: Key Performance Indicator
KPSEA	: Kenya Primary School Education Assessment
LRP	: Learning Recovery Programme

LTSM	: Learning and Teaching Support Material
LURITS	: Learner Unit Record Information and Tracking System
MECs	: Members of the Executive Councils
MLP	: Monitoring Learner Progress
MRTEQ	: Minimum Requirements for Teacher Qualifications
NASMLA	: National Assessment for Monitoring Learner Achievement
NCS	: National Curriculum Statement
NECT	: National Education Collaboration Trust
NIDS-CRAM	: The National Income Dynamics Study – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey
NNSSF	: National Norms and Standards for School Funding
NSC	: National Senior Certificate
NSE	: Norms and Standards for Educators
NTDEC	: National Teacher Education and Development Committee
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PBL	: Project-Based Learning
PTEDC	: Provincial Teacher Education and Development Committee
PISA	: Programme for International Learners Assessment
PLSs	: Professional Learning Communities
PYEI	: Presidential Youth Employment Initiative
SAOU	: Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie
SA-SAMS	: South African School Administration and Management System
SGB	: School Governing Body
SIAS	: Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SMTs	: School Management Teams
TED	: Teacher Education Development
TUC	: Trade Union Collaboration
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VUCA Model	: Volatility, Understanding, Clarity, Adaptability and Agility

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 7<sup>th</sup> Basic Education Sector Lekgotla was convened by the Honourable Minister of Basic Education, Mrs AM Motshekga, MP and hosted by the Department of Basic Education from 26-28 January 2022.

The 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla brought together a collective drawn from Executive Authorities in education, Accounting Officers, education administrators and practitioners, academics and researchers and wide range of stakeholders ***within and outside the education sector, nationally and internationally. The theme: Equipping Learners with Knowledge and Skills for a Changing World in the Context of COVID-19***, was anchored around 10 objectives, with 10 intended outcomes. Amidst the challenges of disrupted schooling and environment, the theme was contextualised on the view of using the crisis created by the pandemic to advance inclusive recovery plan of bouncing back, taking every learner and every teacher on-board, without leaving anyone behind.

Day 1 was earmarked for reflection on critical basic education sector policies and mid-term progress on the basic education priorities for the 6th Administration. The impact and cost of COVID-19 on education and health, learning losses and drop-out, learning recovery approaches and the DBE Learning Recovery Plan was presented, as well as monitoring learning and learner assessment under COVID-19 contexts. The day ended with a panel discussion on Early Childhood Development (ECD).

On day 2, the focus was on promoting Entrepreneurship and 21st Century Skills and Social Mobilisation for Inclusive Education. Following on the presentations, five Commissions deliberated the following topics: Development and implementation of a modernised curriculum for 21st Century skills; Teacher preparation, professionalism and wellbeing; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); E-education management, distance learning and online schooling; Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL); and Foundations for Learning.

Day 3 commenced with a report back from Commissions, a penultimate presentation on Rebooting and rebuilding the education system, followed by the adoption of the Lekgotla Action Plan and the official closure of the Lekgotla.

The Lekgotla culminated in 5 (five) Commissions that came up with recommendations and Action Plan for 2022/3 financial year with specific actions, responsibility, timeframes and monitoring and reporting plans. The following are key recommendations per commission:

- **Commission 1 key recommendations:**

- ✓ In order to equip learners with 21st century skills, and facilitate a more efficient transition from school to work, the Department must embark on a curriculum strengthening process. The strengthened curriculum must explicitly state the knowledge, skills and competencies to be achieved. The curriculum must be inclusive to all and schools must be appropriately resourced to enable the teaching of 21st century skills.
- ✓ In addition, the DBE must set the minimum standards for teacher competency and ensure HEIs adopt and comply to the standards.
- ✓ The assessment regime must place greater focus on improving learning and less focus on performance (and be less examination driven) outcomes.
- ✓ Development of a South African Skill and Competency Framework.

- **Commission 2 key recommendations:**

- ✓ Psycho-social Support and comprehensive teacher wellbeing programme to be prioritised.
- ✓ Increased School-based professional Development, including Professional Learning Communities and supported by the role played by Departmental Heads.

- ✓ System prioritisation of Foundation Phase and grades with least learning time in 2020/21.
- ✓ Taking forward of the TED Summit resolutions and EDF, PTEDCs, NTEDC engagements on initial teacher education and development issues raised in this presentation.
- **Commission 3 key recommendations:**
  - ✓ The 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla plenary adopt the proposed SMART Action Plan for ICT, Digitisation, e-Education Management, Distance Learning and Online Schools, and
  - ✓ Support the proposal to mandate DBE to manage the implementation of the adopted SMART Action Plan with immediate effect – commencing with the short-term deliverables followed by medium-to-long term deliverables.
- **Commission 4 key recommendations:**
  - ✓ CSTL Conceptual Framework will be revised to incorporate contemporary realities and situate the care and support needs of educators.
  - ✓ Use of technology to increase access to health services by educators and learners to be tested through telehealth platform for the education sector.
  - ✓ Cohort of CSTL researchers, drawn from educator postgrad learners, to be established.
  - ✓ The HIV and AIDS Life Skills Conditional Grant Framework will be revised to maximise its benefit for a broader care and support agenda.
  - ✓ Other pillars, such as Infrastructure, will also be considered for revision.
  - ✓ Design and implement a relevant Adolescent Youth Programme including Young Boys and Men Programme within the same framework of operation.
  - ✓ Boys to be included in the AGYP in next phase – renamed Adolescents and Young People Learner voices and youth agency to be mainstreamed and institutionalised in schools.
  - ✓ Youth Leadership, underpinned by values of Ubuntu, to be strengthened, through the roll out of the “1 million Ubuntu Youth Leaders programme”.
  - ✓ The Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC) should be revived and supported across the system.
  - ✓ The budget for the QLTC should be set aside for ALL QLTC activities across the system.
- **Commission 5 key recommendations:**
  - ✓ A national plan on strengthening Foundations for Learning. An inclusive reference group will be set up in this regard. The reference group will be tasked with developing a plan that will look at all the cross-cutting issues in foundational learning, with a focus on the provision of access to quality learning opportunities in early years and early grades, including strengthening family support for early literacy and numeracy;
  - ✓ Implement a systems approach to strengthening foundational learning, by determining quality indicators at all levels, building capacity, and strengthening governance structures and funding arrangements.

# PART A: PLENARY REPORT



BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR LEKGOTLA

# 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> Basic Education Sector Lekgotla on 26-28 January 2022. It could not have come at the right time where debates on skills development and the full return of learners to school were intense in South Africa. By its nature, the Lekgotla mirrors an annual policy and programmes monitoring and evaluation platform that leads to planning on key matters affecting basic education.

The Basic Education Sector Lekgotla was hosted in a hybrid platform. It brought together a collective from Executive Authorities in education, Accounting Officers, education administrators and practitioners, academics and researchers and wide range of stakeholders within and outside the education sector, nationally and internationally. The 7<sup>th</sup> Lekgotla was aimed at discussing amongst others, the key matters affecting the Basic Education in pursuit of quality outcomes under the Theme: ***“Equipping Learners with Knowledge and Skills for a Changing World in the Context of COVID-19”***.

Some of the sector challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years have included significant losses in learning. The sector in general has suffered a great set-back in relation to teaching and learning, despite the 0,2 percent point increase from the matric results obtained by the class of 2021.

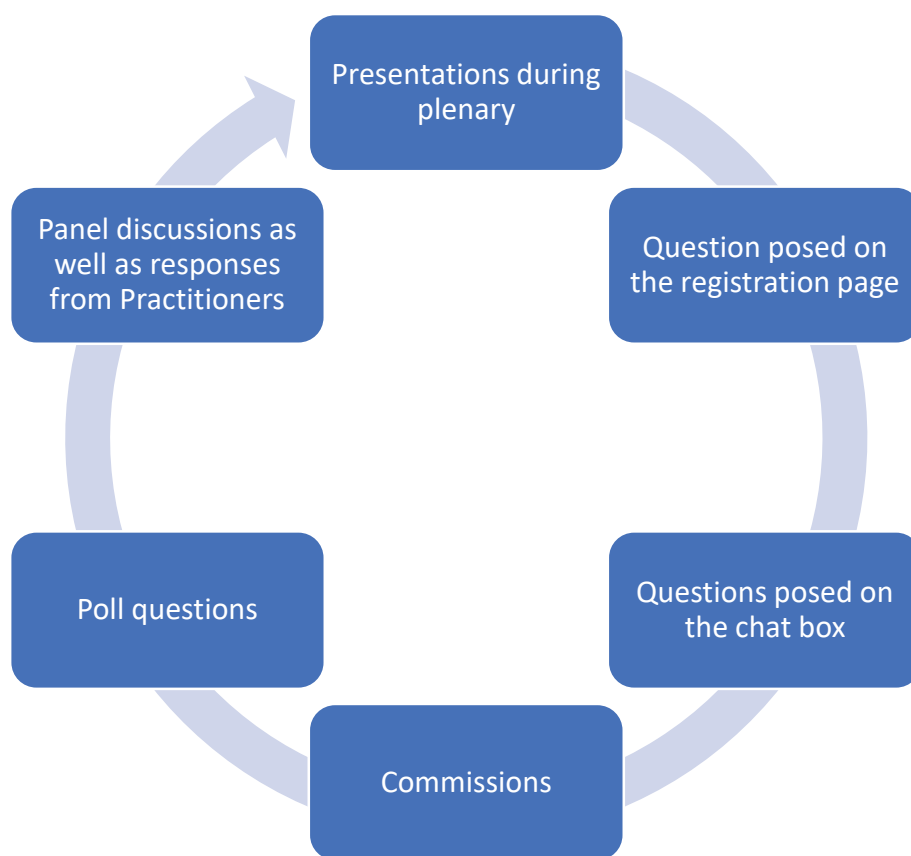
The problem was concentrated in lower grades, 54% of contact time was lost in 2020 just due to closures and time-table rotations. In the second half of 2021, 22% of contact time was lost due to rotations and regular absenteeism.

The issues above were key in discussions and deliberations during plenary sessions on Day 1 and Day 2, where different speakers made presentations on the topics outlined below in the quest to address and find solutions to the challenges at hand and make recommendations where applicable. The following topics were deliberated on in plenary sessions:

- The reflection of mid-term performance of the 6th Administration in basic education is assessed as a basis for Plans for the 2022/3 financial year and to the end of 2024;
- The impact and cost of COVID-19 on Education and Health: the care and support recovery and preparation for future pandemic in the basic education sector;
- Enrolment, Attendance and Dropout based on school practices in 2021: Understanding learning losses;
- Monitoring learning in COVID-19 contexts;
- Perspectives on learning recovery in African context;
- Framework for learning recovery for South African Education system;
- Learner assessment under COVID-19 context;
- Response from practitioners on monitoring curriculum coverage and learner assessment;
- Teachers leading change in building a resilient education system: An African perspective;
- Components of a successful education system inclusive of Early Childhood Development (ECD);
- South African perspective on the importance of ECD;
- Importance of ECD for future life outcomes; and
- Systems development for ECD.

## 2. METHODOLOGY OF THE LEKGOTLA

The 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla followed a programme that was designed to bring a variety of approaches. Details of the approaches are in the diagram below.



*Figure 1: Methods of engagement used during the Lekgotla*

Therefore, this report will cover the contributions that came from the various platforms listed above.

## 3. PARTICIPANTS AND TARGET AUDIENCE

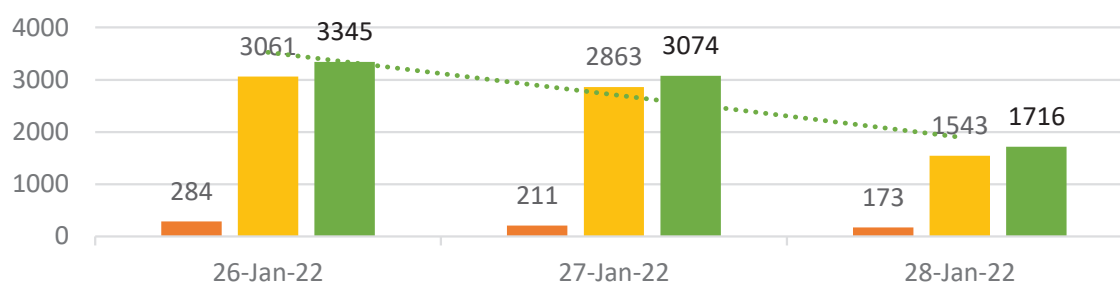
The 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla has brought together a collective of delegates that included provincial Members of the Executive Councils (MECs) for Education and Heads of Departments (HoDs) of Education, national and district officials from across the country, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of various basic education sector entities, as well as representatives of teacher unions, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), School Governing Body (SGB) Associations and civil society partners. Eminent local, continental and international speakers, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UNESCO, Accounting Officers, Education Administrators and practitioners, Academics and Researchers and DBE Senior Managers. Various stakeholders were also invited<sup>1</sup>.

The plan was to have 200 delegates to attend the Lekgotla physically at the venue while the Virtual platform was open for any number. The table below shows that on day one, 284 delegates attended physically at the venue while 3061 joined through the virtual platform. On day two, 211 attended at the venue while 2863 joined virtually. On the third day, the numbers were at 173 and 1543 respectively for physical and virtual attendees.

1

Hollard Foundation Trust- ECD Portfolio, Nobel Laureate for Economics, NECT, Employability and Education Programme, SADTU, NAPTOSA, SAOU, NATU, PEU, FEDSAS, Governing Body Foundation, National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB), United front for School Governing Bodies, COSAS, NEHAWU, PSA, SAPA, DEPASA, EMASA, EDTPSETA, EELC, National Governors Association (NAGA), UMALUSI, ELRC, PILO, DeathSA, PACSEN, AYDF, University of Venda, New Leaders Foundation, UNICEF, SAPA, Click Learning Foundation, VVOB, Next Level Learning, FESJA, CFE, SACE, WITS, Nelson Mandela Foundation, BRIDGE, Mustek, CSIR, British Council, CISCO Systems, Equal Education, University of the Free State (UFS), NSDF, SANASE, National Planning Commission, Governors Alliance, Governing Body Foundation, NAISA, Agape Youth Movement, Prakis Educational Services, Amazing Grace, IT Master, 2Enable, Sci-Bono, EDC, TREE, SapioTek, MTN, SAICA, TUT, Autism SA, DSD, DOH.

## 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla Daily Attendance



	26-Jan-22	27-Jan-22	28-Jan-22
Physical Attendance	284	211	173
Virtual Attendance	3061	2863	1543
Total	3345	3074	1716

Physical Attendance Virtual Attendance Total Linear (Total )

Figure 2: 2022 Basic Education Sector Lekgotla Daily Attendance

## 4. AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES OF THE LEKGOTLA

The basic education sector caters for all the types of schools, and the expectation was to set objectives that will ensure that all the universal critical areas are covered. Table 1 below captures the Objectives and Outcomes of the 2022 Basic Education Sector Lekgotla.

Table 1: Objectives and Outcomes of the 2022 Basic Education Sector Lekgotla

OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
Assess the mid-term performance of the 6 <sup>th</sup> Administration in basic education.	The mid-term performance of the 6 <sup>th</sup> Administration in basic education is assessed as a basis for Plans for the 2022/3 financial year and to the end of 2024.
Interrogate the impact and cost of COVID-19 on learning losses, learner drop out and basic education broadly.	The impact and cost of COVID-19 on learning losses, learner drop-out and basic education is understood.
Discuss and present a comprehensive recovery plan to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and recover the learning losses.	A comprehensive recovery plan to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and recover the learning losses is developed, which is aligned to DBE and PED plans.
Discuss the utilization of assessment data to develop strategies to improve the quality and efficiency of learning outcomes and to bolster monitoring.	The utilization of assessment data to develop strategies to improve the quality and efficiency of learning outcomes and to bolster monitoring is discussed and strengthened.
Assess progress made in the implementation of programmes/mechanisms to equip learners with knowledge and skills for a changing world.	Progress in implementation of mechanisms/ programmes to equip learners with knowledge and skills for a changing world is assessed.
Elucidate the critical elements of strengthening the foundations for learning and accountability in the system.	The critical elements of strengthening the foundations for learning and accountability in the system are elucidated.
Strengthen the use of Technology to support the delivery of curriculum.	The use of Technology to support the delivery of curriculum is strengthened.

OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES
Strengthen the package of care and support for vulnerable learners, including boys, in the COVID-19 context and future pandemics.	The package of care and support for vulnerable learners, including boys, in the COVID-19 context and future pandemics, is strengthened.
Discuss mechanisms to enable all teachers to engage in professional learning, and to ensure that they are equipped with knowledge and skills to deliver the curriculum within the context of a changing world.	Key strategies to ensure transition from professional development to professional learning are discussed. Strategies are explored on how to support teachers to deliver the curriculum within the context of a changing world.
Interrogate mechanisms for meaningful Community Mobilisation and Partnerships in education.	The mechanisms for meaningful Community Mobilisation and Partnerships in education are understood.

## 5. SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAMME

Day 1 was earmarked for reflection on critical basic education sector policies and the mid-term progress that the sector has achieved against the priorities set for the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration on matters of basic education. Importantly, the impact and cost of COVID-19 on education and health, learning losses and drop-out, learning recovery approaches and the DBE Learning Recovery Plan were presented, as well as how monitoring learning and learner assessment under COVID-19 contexts can be optimised. The day ended with a panel discussion on Early Childhood Development (ECD), an emerging priority for the sector as the ECD function shifts from Social Development to Basic Education in 2022.

On day 2, the focus was on Promoting Entrepreneurship and 21st Century Skills, as well as interrogating the critical role of Social Mobilisation for Inclusive Education (education that is inclusive of all our children, beyond disability).

Following the input presentations and plenary discussion, five Commissions deliberated on topics such as the Development and implementation of a modernised curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills; Teacher preparation, professionalism and wellbeing; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); E-education management, distance learning and online schooling; Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL); and Foundations for Learning.

Day 3 commenced with a report back from the Commissions, a penultimate presentation on Rebooting and Rebuilding the SA Education System, followed by the adoption of the Lekgotla Action Plan and the official closure of the Lekgotla by the Honourable Minister.



## 6. OPENING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION, HON DR MH MHAULE, MP



The Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Dr Reginah Mhaule, extended a special welcome to local and international experts in their respective fields who attended the Lekgotla and shared their knowledge. She also highlighted the following: “The education sector has suffered devastating, long term effects caused by the pandemic. Leaders in the education sector, teachers, support staff as well as learners were lost due to the pandemic. However, we have also learnt new ways of conducting business.

These ways include online teaching and home schooling. In addition, the pandemic has resulted in a positive development for over 500,000 youth by creating job opportunities through the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI). Although these accomplishments are a drop in the ocean as compared to the negative impact of COVID-19, they are indeed stepping stones towards a better future,” she said.

## 7. OPENING ADDRESS BY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION HON MRS AM MOTSHEKGA, MP



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, presented the opening address during the 2022 Basic Education Sector Lekgotla on 26 January 2022, saying that, “the Basic Education Sector Lekgotla is a unique planning tool that brings together MECs, Heads of Departments, education administrators, practitioners, academics and researchers under one roof as a means of engaging the sector on key policies and programmes to improve the quality of basic education. The overall focus of the Lekgotla is the recovery plan for basic education after two years of COVID-19 disruptions”.

Minister Motshekga added that, “2022 marks the third academic year since the COVID-19 outbreak that threatens to derail the gains of basic education reforms since 1994. According to research, the sector lost at least 50 percent of curriculum time due to rotational timetabling and intermittent closures. There is a need to build a coherent response on the measures to reboot and rebuild the basic education system. As a department, we must do more to support vulnerable learners, increase retention and stem the tide of dropouts.

There is a need for a new social compact in basic education and that there must be a paradigm shift in schooling communities for teachers to be held accountable for poor learner outcomes. We must see teachers displaying compassion as many of our learners come from diverse communities, child-headed households, high crime levels, unemployment, and various social ills. As a Government, we must re-impose the state’s authority against those who loot, burn and vandalise public schools”.



## 8. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICA, HIS EXCELLENCY MR MC RAMAPHOSA



Mr Mondli Gungubele, MP, Minister in the Presidency, delivered the virtual Presidential address to delegates on behalf of President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa.

He emphasised that disaster risks may be an integral part of our lives which should feature prominently in all business community models. Infrastructure should be a continuing rollout process, and highlighted that vandalism must be addressed as our schools are valued assets and all partners, including school communities, are required to take ownership in creating a conducive environment for our children's learning, working with law enforcement agencies.

The President stressed that it is only through partnerships and collaboration that we can ensure a holistic commitment to the recovery of the economy. The sector was acknowledged that the annual Basic Education Sector Lekgotla has, over the past years, been converging Government and a wide range of stakeholders from all sectors

to deliberate on the most pressing issues facing basic education in order to take stock of where we are, and where we are heading.

The Presidency eagerly awaits the Department of Education's (DBE's) submission of the comprehensive sector Recovery Plan to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to recover the loss of teaching time, manage dropout and ensure that education remains the foundation stone for the overall attainment of South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

The President congratulated the Class of 2021 on showing resilience in the face of the pandemic by achieving an provision overall pass rate of 76.4% in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. "The pandemic has altered almost every aspect of our lives, including schooling. Data indicates that in the second half of 2021, approximately one third of learners lost about 50% of their contact teaching time. UNESCO noted that COVID-19 has worsened the provision of education in Sub-Saharan Africa where children were already out of school due to various other factors. Our responsibility as Government is to offer the highest quality of Basic Education to our learners by laying strong foundations during and after the Early Childhood Development (ECD) shift on 1 April 2022", said the President.

COVID-19 has exacerbated psychosocial distress. In addition, many teachers lost their lives due to the pandemic. The Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Framework, adopted in 2008, must be at the heart of education rights for all children and teachers, including those who are most vulnerable. COVID-19 has also aggravated challenges for children with special educational needs.

The Presidency expressed its deep concern about the high rate of teenage pregnancy and instructed the DBE to continue to support these learners to complete their education, working through the Integrated School Health Programme. Schools must become inclusive centres for care and support. Care and support must foreground strategies to improve learning outcomes, improve retention rates, mitigate against learner dropouts and contribute to the nation's overall wellbeing.

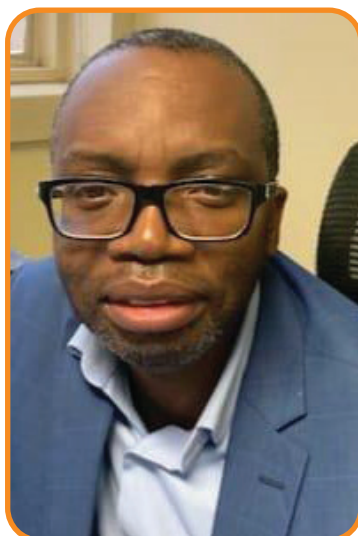
Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) as well as digital connectivity for equal access to education, must be incorporated in digital learning approaches to reach disadvantaged communities. This speaks to greater integrated development across all government departments for infrastructure roll-outs such as network connectivity for education and healthcare.

In addition, all eligible learners, teachers and School Management Teams (SMTs) were encouraged to continue to vaccinate against COVID-19 and to adhere to safety protocols to ensure that schools are safe learning environments.

## 9. PLENARY PRESENTATIONS

### 9.1. REFLECTION ON MID-TERM PROGRESS ON THE BASIC EDUCATION PRIORITIES FOR THE 6<sup>TH</sup> ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT

*Dr T Mabogoane, DPME*



#### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation:**

Reflecting on the mid-term progress of the basic education priorities for the 6th Administration, our goals for the next five years are, amongst others, to strengthen the foundations of literacy and numeracy by focusing on the migration of ECD from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Basic Education. Overall, the sector has done fairly well under the prevailing circumstances, especially the exceptional work done to help save learning and teaching during the pandemic. The sector should intensify its efforts to address challenges exposed by COVID-19, particularly regarding physical infrastructure and connectivity. We require the establishment of an accountability system to strengthen performance, as well as a strategy to increase the number of learners enrolling for Mathematics and Physical Science, as well as the pass rates in those subjects at 60% or more. Vandalism is another crisis that affects schools and communities adversely, threatening to destroy the gains we have made thus far.

#### **Key Action Points**

- The Department of Basic Education should focus on its core mandate of teaching and learning and be relieved from infrastructure issues. The matter needs to be discussed in Cabinet to find a way to work around it.
- Government should intensify its efforts to address challenges exposed by COVID-19, particularly with regard to physical infrastructure and connectivity;
- Improving the quality of ECD (post migration to DBE); and
- Addressing challenges around the placement of Funza Lushaka versus those graduates who funded themselves.

### 9.2. THE IMPACT AND COST OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION AND HEALTH: THE CARE AND SUPPORT RECOVERY AND PREPARATION FOR FUTURE PANDEMICS IN THE BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR

*Prof M Tomlinson, Stellenbosch University*



#### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation:**

Children who learn to name and regulate their emotions have a greater chance of opening up space for positive feelings, even during moments of stress. Programmes that better support cognitive and behaviour skills such as self-reliance; decision making; anxiety management; communication and assertiveness, will enable children to thrive. The pandemic, and subsequent school closures, had a secondary impact on both education and health. These include, amongst others, psychosocial distress due to emotional, physical or sexual abuse and violence with long-term impression effects, as well as health implications such as increased levels of malnutrition, stunting and hunger due to the impact of COVID-19 on school feeding programmes, growing employment and hunger. Teachers have also been affected and are often feel burnt-out, stressed and traumatised because of personal and professional challenges.

## Key Action Points

- Develop a strategy that puts children and adolescents at the centre for their needs to become a lens through which decisions are considered and made in both the short- and long-term.

### 9.3. ENROLMENT, ATTENDANCE AND DROPOUT: SCHOOL PRACTICES IN 2021: UNDERSTANDING LEARNING LOSSES

*Prof M Gustafsson and Ms N Mohohlwane, DBE*



#### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

On the impact of COVID-19 on learning losses, drop-out rates, enrolment and attendance the following were reported: enrolment in 2021 was lower than expected at approximately 50,000 (0.4%) and concentrated in the lower grades. Attendance figures indicated that 54% of contact time was lost in 2020 due to closures and rotation, and in the second half of 2021, 22% contact time was lost due to rotation and regular absenteeism. These averages hide inequalities across grades and schools.

In respect of dropout, about 45% of youth did not proceed to gain the NSC qualification, however, more learners have completed matric in 2021 which may indicate that the challenge may have been tackled faster during the pandemic. The pandemic has also taught us that we need to tighten up SASAMS and LURITS to track learners.

In historically disadvantaged schools, approximately 70% of a year's worth of learning was lost in 2020. The findings of the NIDS-CRAM survey are a valuable, yet difficult dataset to gauge attendance as questions are open to various interpretations and only about 8,000 respondents were telephonically interviewed.

For the DBE, the focus on the Early Grade Reading Study (EGRS) has been invaluable by comparing pre-COVID reading outcomes in Grade 3 to Grade 4. Learners in Grade 4 Home Language (Setswana) were found to be one and a quarter year behind. Grade 4 English First Additional Language (FAL) are half a year behind. Learning to read for meaning is arguably one of the most important skills that a child can learn in the early years of schooling. Although DBE workbooks remain a key resource for learners, learners have been doing significantly less writing. Curriculum coverage is challenged due to reduction in time, but also because teachers need to re-teach content.

The main intervention supported by parents is for learners to return to full-time schooling as increasing learning time is essential for academic progress. It is therefore agreed that meaningful education takes place in class. Teachers indicated that learners' reading ability is behind what it is supposed to be, and a recommendation is that teachers receive the correct training to equip them to cope with the learning challenges in children.

### Key Action Points:

- Ensure more access to contact schooling for meaningful learning;
- Develop detailed interventions to address the extensive learning losses;
- Teacher training to equip teachers to cope with the learner ability changes;
- Support parents for active and practical participation;
- Develop a strategy that puts children and adolescents at the centre and think about how schools, programmes, interventions, teaching and curriculum can be improved;
- Assist teachers to be more aware of where learners are and know where they can intervene with regards to schooling and education; and
- Have regular interaction between education and health and ensure that the health of citizens is improved, because if a population is not healthy and children are stunted, we cannot achieve a healthy productive society where people are able to interact and meet their full potential.

## 9.4. LEARNER DROPOUT IN SOUTH AFRICA: CONTEXT AND SOLUTIONS

*Ms M Mansfield, Zero Dropout Campaign*



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

A main reason for the South African dropout crisis is the “disengagement” by the learner brought about by poor teaching and learning; poor learning outcomes; violence; bullying; hunger; and family and community factors.

South Africa is experiencing a dropout crisis with approximately 40% of learners who start school in Grade 1, exiting the schooling system before completing Grade 12. Repetition statistics indicate that overage learners are a concern, as well as learners who are stuck in the system with bottlenecks in the FET Phase in Grades 10 and 11.

In respect of school completion by gender, boys are more likely to drop out than girls and data indicates that boys repeat at higher rates than girls across all quintiles; however, the gender gap narrows for schools with more resources. Pregnant girl learners are also more likely to drop out. As expected, the long-term disruptions of COVID-19 also

impacted on learner dropout and the impact of poverty and socio-economic challenges also play a role in learner disengagement.

### Key Action Points:

- Improve data and monitoring by expediting the SA SAMS re write, universalise and link to LURITS;
- Facilitate implementations of improved data practices and build an early warning system to identify learners at risk;
- Identify vulnerable learners and improve the provision of psycho-social support;
- Improve Curriculum Coverage and build an early warning system;
- Develop a National Psychosocial Support Strategy linked to the Early Warning Systems (EWS) to empower schools on responding to learner risk;
- Make dropout a KPI and set reduction targets;
- Institutionalize data collection at schools;
- Look at whether current policies had played a role in learners being progressed in the following year/grade 12 as part of our efforts to put the learners forward during the pandemic;
- Identify what is driving judicatories and check whether interventions on teaching and learning are being supported by psychosocial interventions; and
- Enable school spaces and provide psychosocial support to teachers so they can be able to implement and provide teaching and learning space in classrooms that are going to be heterogeneous in terms of learning needs.



## 9.5. MONITORING LEARNING IN COVID-19 CONTEXTS

*Dr S Vincent-Lancrin, OECD*



### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation:**

There was clearly a negative and disruptive impact of school closures, but families, learners and schools managed, through innovation and resilience, to reimagine education differently. The pandemic exposed, and often exacerbated pre-existing inequalities in education systems and societies, whilst disadvantaged learners missed out on learning opportunities due to access to resources.

Ten principles for effective and equitable education recovery were presented.

### **Key Action Points:**

- Keep schools open as much and as safely as possible;
- Ensure equity and align resources with needs;
- Provide a remote learning infrastructure which is designed to reach all learners;
- Support teachers in their professional lives;
- Enable teachers and parents to support learners;
- Provide targeted support to meet learners' learning and social and emotional needs;
- Co-design a robust digital learning infrastructure with teachers and stakeholders;
- Empower teachers to exercise their professionalism and benefit from professional learning opportunities and encourage a collaborative culture of innovation;
- Provide a remote learning infrastructure which is designed to reach all learners;
- Support teachers in their professional lives and enable teachers and parents to support learners;
- Provide targeted support to meet learners' learning, social and emotional needs;
- Co-design a robust digital learning infrastructure with teachers and stakeholders at the centre; and
- Encourage a collaborative culture of innovation and sharing best practice.

## 9.6. PERSPECTIVES ON LEARNING RECOVERY IN AFRICAN CONTEXTS

Mr J Glassey, GOLA



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

Post-COVID data is slow to emerge due to limited reporting mechanisms from school systems. African National Recovery Programmes were institutionalised and reviewed in, amongst others, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana and Rwanda. Immediate interventions to assist learners require targeted instruction to assess learning levels and the alignment of teacher instruction with those levels, as well as an increase in the supply of devices to schools and the training of teachers, along with an effective structured pedagogy. Future careers will require creativity; critical-thinking; problem solving; emotional intelligence; and communication skills. Children develop at different rates and the needs of vulnerable learners and marginalised learners with special educational needs should be provided for in line with the SIAS Policy.

### Key Action Points

- Develop a culture that encourages self and personal learning, lifelong learning and the utilisation of educational technologies; and
- Navigate the complexities of supporting vulnerable & special needs learners by using a compass which include the following:
  - NORTH: Needs met in the classroom. Quality first teaching. Aim for everyone to go North.
  - EAST: Educational HealthCare Plans (EHCP). Wider health support.
  - SOUTH = SEND support for learners who do not have full EHCP.
  - WEST = Watch in the classroom to identify learner needs.

## 9.7. FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING RECOVERY FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Dr R Poliah, DBE



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

The DBE presented the proposed Framework for the Learning Recovery Programme (LRP) for the South African Schooling System, focussing on curriculum recovery. The recovery period will extend over the next three years (2022 – 2024) and will be followed by the implementation of a strengthened curriculum in 2025. COVID-19 necessitated the trimming of the curriculum; a change in assessment protocol towards formative assessment rather than summative assessment; necessity of psychosocial support; a need to focus on creative and problem-solving skills; and the strengthening of teacher skills and professionalism. COVID-19 highlighted and broadened the existing economic and social inequalities and called for a rapid response.

### Key Action Points:

- Build recovery initiatives in an enabling environment to recover learning losses; develop deep thinking and future learning opportunities; address future complex needs and problems and develop teaching skills;
- Balance between progression and standards and the pedagogical approach to bring schools that are underperforming in line to improve performance. The levels of teacher intervention and accountability must increase, and Subject Advisors must support teaching and learning in the classroom;
- The recovery period to be followed by the implementation of a strengthened curriculum by preparing a strengthened curriculum will be implemented post the three years in 2025;
- The trimmed ATP that we currently have in our schools will be the curriculum to be implemented over the recovery period (there won't be a need for rotational learning);
- Develop a quick review by our curriculum specialists to be done in 2022 to make sure that it encapsulates the core and essence of what needs to be implemented during this recovery period;
- Prepare for a strengthened curriculum in 2025. Elements of that strengthened curriculum can be infused into the current implementation;
- Assessment to serve as the under gird pedagogical approach during this recovery period;
- A strengthened curriculum must be one that focuses on 21st century scales and competencies. It must lead to a reduction of the content which we are seeing already in our trimmed ATP; and
- Must focus on formative assessment, focus on vocational and occupational education which is already there which just needs to be strengthened and possibly tweak our NCS (National Curriculum Statement).

## 9.8. LEARNER ASSESSMENT UNDER COVID-19 CONTEXT

Ms A Gachoya, State Department for Early Learning and Basic Education, Kenya



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation

The prolonged closure of schools due to COVID-19 had far-reaching effects on learning assessment. Consequently, the lack of face-to-face learning and formative assessment of learning outcomes were impacted upon. The Ministry of Kenya developed the Kenya Basic Education COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan, 2020. An overarching aim was to enhance access to online and distance learning for all learners in primary and secondary schools. It was envisaged that online learning will go hand in hand with formative assessment.

Re-entry learning assessments were administered to all learners in primary schools. A total of 8, 233,334 learners from Grades 1 to 8 were assessed. Standardised assessment tools were developed and uploaded onto the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) Assessment Portal. However, challenges were experienced with inadequate internet connectivity, as well as ICT skills of teachers. In addition, there was inadequate self-learning and motivation amongst learners. Subsequently, a significant proportion of learners did not attain the minimum proficiency level in most subjects, and in Mathematics in particular. Learners with special educational needs were marginalised.

### Key Action Points:

- Conduct Monitoring Learner Assessment (MLA) form 2 Mid line study;
- Implement the initial phase of the Programme for International Learners Assessment (PISA) of 2022-2025;
- Conduct National Assessment for Monitoring Learner Achievement (NASMLA) sample based to report on SDG 4;
- Conduct Grade 3 Monitoring Learner Progress (MLP) Assessment;
- Conduct school-based assessment for 2022 class 4, and 6; and
- Conduct summative assessment at Grade 6 for Kenya Primary School Education Assessment (KPSEA) under the Competency Based Curriculum.

## 9.9. TEACHERS LEADING CHANGE IN BUILDING A RESILIENT EDUCATION SYSTEM: AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

Dr D Sinyolo, Education International



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation

The global and regional commitments of teachers (Incheon Declaration, 2015) states: *"We will ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems to lead the change in building a resilient education system"*. In addition, the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2015 – 2025 commits to revitalise the teaching profession to quality and relevance at all levels.

Recommendations on three key levers for change are to ensure life-long, life-wide and life-deep learning for teachers in the form of collaborative learning teams and peer-to-peer learning. Teachers should practice self-efficacy and should be involved in the conceptualisation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of education and



policies. Also, learning and teaching environments should be safe, healthy and well-resourced with decent salaries and working conditions to enhance teacher well-being. Teachers with high self-efficacy levels are more open to new ideas, show a greater willingness to try new and innovative teaching methods, design and organise their classes better, and are more motivated and enthusiastic about teaching.

#### **Key Action Points:**

- Ensure life-long, life-wide and life-deep learning for teachers and school leader by developing collaborative learning teams for teachers and school leaders (peer to peer learning);
- Ensure safe, healthy and well-resourced teaching and learning environments, as well as decent salaries and working conditions for teachers;
- Ensure teacher voice, self-efficacy and leadership through genuine social and policy dialogue by involving teachers in the conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education and teacher policies;
- Ensure teacher professional autonomy, initiative and leadership by ensuring safe, healthy and well-resourced teaching and learning environments, as well as decent salaries and working conditions for teachers; and
- Address teacher workload and well-being by ensuring that teachers have adequate time for preparation and critical reflection by making teaching an attractive and first choice profession.

### **9.10. COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION SYSTEM INCLUSIVE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)**

*Honourable Dr Valentin, Minister of Education, Seychelles*



#### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation**

Following introductory remarks by the Honourable Minister of Education in the Seychelles, Dr Valentin, the presentation on components of a successful education system, inclusive of ECD was given by Ms Shirley Choppy, Chief Executive Officer at the Institute of Early Childhood Development. The Constitution of Seychelles (1993) advocates ten years of compulsory education and targets all age groups and educational institutions except higher education, including adult learning and teacher education and professional development. Primary education is publicly provided and compulsory for two and a half to seven and a half year olds.

The Seychelles was designated as a Best Practice Hub for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) by the International Bureau of Education, UNESCO, during the International Biennial Conference, Seychelles, in 2017. In addition, the country was recognised as a Global Category II Centre for ECCE under the auspices of UNESCO (UNESCO General Conference, Paris, in 2019).

The country will collaborate with South Africa to promote best practice during exchange programmes, knowledge-sharing and peer learning to lay solid foundations for learners through a robust ECD system in the country.

## 9.11. SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ECD

*Ms N Ned, Hollard Foundation Trust*



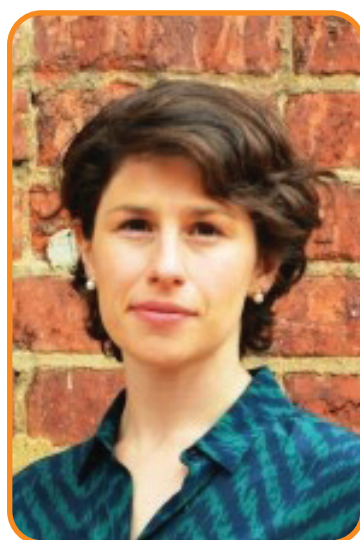
### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation**

In providing a South African perspective on the importance of ECD, it should be noted that EDC provides a window of opportunity in the development of an individual's potential. Quality ECD builds a strong foundation for school readiness; language, literacy and numeracy development; and socio-emotional skills. During the migration of ECD to the DBE, opportunities exist to build on the inequalities and inequities of the past for a system that works, whilst enabling and regulating as a commitment.

In providing a pre-COVID-19 snapshot of children, the following were noted: SA has a total of 6.5 million children aged 0-5; of these, 2.4 million children are in centres; 2.9 million children are in unregistered programmes; 800,654 are in registered centres; and 3.2 million children are not accessing any programme. The power of women as architects for accountability and coordination must not be underestimated. It is important to formalise diverse ECD delivery modalities, including home and community based and to acknowledge women in the care community. Once ECD is formalised and regulated, it will be easier to support, regulate and incentivise the sector.

## 9.12. IMPORTANCE OF ECD FOR FUTURE LIFE OUTCOMES

*Ms A Devercelli, World Bank*



### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation:**

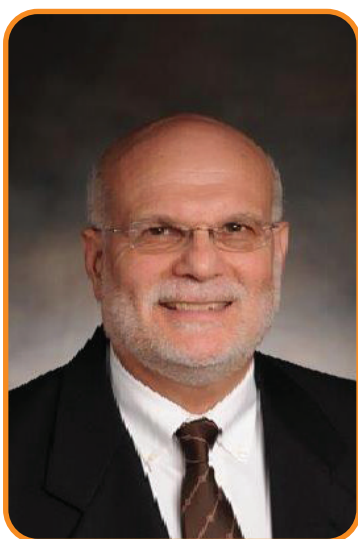
Children need to be ready for school, but schools need to be ready for children. To give children a start in life they should be healthy and well nurtured and receive early stimulation and learning opportunities. The period before pregnancy, including the first 1,000 days of brain development, through transition to primary school is critical. In addition, Vocabulary development also takes place during this period and children with access to ECD tend to have higher Reading and Mathematics scores at 15 (PISA scores) at 15 years. Adolescents who attended ECD programme/centre stay in school 0.2 to 1.8 years longer, and as adults, are employed in skilled careers. ECD and early learning programmes can be promoted across sectors such as community playgrounds; early reading campaigns; radio, TV and mobile texting programmes; however, the most vulnerable children must also be reached.

### **Key Action Points:**

- Classrooms and curricula should be designed in a manner that are child-focussed, developmentally appropriate and activity-based to promote responsive learning environments; and
- Provide investments in ECD so it can promote equity and improve educational outcomes.

### 9.13. SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT FOR ECD

*Dr L Crouch, International Development Group*



#### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation:**

Discussing systems development for ECD, reasons for weakness in general systems could be attributed to a lack of focus, effort, commitment, technical knowledge or budget; however, a lack of systems or systems-integration can cause serious implementation challenges hampering optimisation. It was agreed that what defines a system is the rules and interactions, and not only the purpose. In addition, the quality of the links “between the boxes” are a crucial factor. Feedback loops are a key form of interaction, coordination and integration of, amongst others, policy planning, resources, curriculum coverage, teacher support, assessment and funding. However, integration is also required down the decentralised structure to include facets such as health services and education, and at all levels, including national, provincial, district, circuit and school level, as well as parental participation and community involvement. To measure quality results, and not only input, accountability to hold each other to account is crucial, with room for innovation and flexibility.

### 9.14. MEASURING PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: WHERE TO FROM HERE?

*Dr M Simelane, DBE*



#### **Key message/issues identified from the presentation:**

White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education was published in 2001; however, after more than 20 years, challenges and exclusion still exist with various bottlenecks and a lack of accountability at all levels. Violence (physical and emotional) against learners have increased during the pandemic and marginalisation remains a reality. Teaching and assessment policies still encourage exclusion. COVID-19 has made inclusion implementation imperative, with accountability at all levels. Exclusive teaching practices should be unlearned to deal with injustices in the classroom for learners to be validated.

#### **Key Action Points:**

- DBE to focus on its core mandate of teaching and learning and be relieved from infrastructure issues that is not their mandate and should be discussed in cabinet and find a way to work around it.

## 9.15. PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: WHERE TO FROM HERE?

*Dr S Stofile, University of Western Cape; Prof E Walton, University of Nottingham; and Ms L le Roux, SAOU*



### Key message/issues identified from the panel presentation:

There is a need for accurate data – SA data lacks comparability across time and sources as different measures are used and therefore contradictory findings are recorded. Data is critical to support inclusion in education. It is important to recognise the interrelatedness of all elements of inclusion to address misalignments, dilemmas and conflicting pressures. The inter sectoral identities of learners and the potential for compounded exclusion must be acknowledged. There is a need to provide all learners with the necessary assisting devices, increased human resources and ICTs for learning, teaching and school management. Bullying remains a challenge in schools and trained and competent teachers with good inclusive practice are required. Resource constraints remain another challenge.

COVID-19 severely impacted on learners with disabilities who are already a vulnerable and marginalised group in comparison with other learners as they could not benefit from digital and online support. Now is the time to implement the SIAS Policy for special care and support with concessions and accommodation they deserve. Learners could not access therapy and counselling due to a shortage of support staff. Inclusive Education in mainstream ordinary schools is still a challenge and it is necessary to eradicate stigma, harassment, violence and all societal evils for these schools to become safe havens.

### Key Action Points:

- Need to look into having assisting devices, Human resources, ICT;
- Need to prioritize funding, logistics to enforce the various funding models for inclusive education;
- Need for accurate data and support;
- Meet obligation under the convention of rights of persons;
- Psychosocial support to be enforced for learners with disabilities;
- Mainstream schools need to be revamped;
- Grade R to be incorporated with mainstream;
- Ensure early intervention and support grade R needs;
- Adjustments need to be made so schools can be safe for learners with disabilities;
- Need to eradicate stigmas and harassment of special needs learners and campaigns need to be launched;
- Plead for support staff to support teachers and implement assessment for learners;
- Consider resuscitating TUC and re-train teachers to accommodate curriculum; and
- Need a well devised plan to find all the learners and get them back to school.



## 9.16. INVESTING BEYOND THE ACADEMIC STREAM: WHERE ARE WE AS SOUTH AFRICA?

Dr S Nxasana, NECT



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

It is necessary to invest beyond the Academic Stream in South Africa as up to 40 – 56% of South Africans never complete matric and only 6% of youth entering the labour market find formal employment within a year. In addition, entrepreneurial activity in SA is lower compared to the rest of Africa. We need to recognise secondary education as a pathway to work. In this line, the General Education Certificate (GEC) empowers teachers to be more learner-centred and build skills for the future.

The use of pandemic pedagogies such as online portals, online learning, new partners in education, and blended learning are part of this new social compact and entrepreneurial eco system. Teacher-centred approaches have changed to learner-centred approaches with additional roles for teachers to grow the cognitive development of learners and assist with the psychosocial needs of learners.

It is necessary to empower our teachers with competencies for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and to reimagine Continuing Professional Development for Teachers (CPDT). In addition, learning objectives, outcomes and assessments need to be reimaged to include competencies and multi-discipline teaching. We need to leverage technologies even more for Ed-Tech innovations to focus on marginalised learners and assist schools through partnerships.

### Key Action Points:

- Revisit Initial Teacher Education in relation to the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Qualifications (MRTEQ) and Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE);
- Revisit the Employment of Educators Act (1998), the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) and the Post Provisioning Model;
- Revision of National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF); and
- Re-imagine Continuing Professional Development for Teachers (CPTD) to provide in-service teachers with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.

## 9.17. LEARNING RECOVERY APPROACHES

Mr R Opertti, IBE



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

Approximately 1.6 billion learners were affected by school closures across the globe. Education innovation was evident during the COVID-19 crisis and various learning recovery approaches were institutionalised globally. A new social contract for education is required, by connecting all pieces – curriculum; pedagogy; assessment; and resources to remove all gaps. We require a community policy – inside and outside the school (a citizen policy in a global world) for the transformation of society. The transformative power of education should be viewed through a systemic lens to connect the knowledge pieces and develop competencies to address problems such as critical thinking; emotional intelligence; and creativity in the curriculum through the freedom to exercise freedom.

Innovation is a tool to transform education for a better future. Hybrid Education Learning and Assessment (HELA) seeks to support a broadening of how curriculum is understood and developed, and to emphasise greater and more democratic learning opportunities

for all learners through better integration and complementarities between face-to-face and remote education. Three resources will be critical to sustain these efforts: societal commitment to educational transformation; collective leadership; and educational innovation from the systems to community level.

### Key Action Points:

- Find ways of transitioning skills in classrooms;
- Have teachers for pastoral care;
- Allocate one subject to this work;
- Develop these skills in an integrated manner in our existing domains;
- Identify skills and competencies;
- Develop learning progressions and statements that develop those progressions;
- Identify a concept and essential content;
- There must be alignment in LTSM, DHET, Assessment, reporting and ITE;
- Encourage mental growth;
- Develop lesson plans and guides; and
- Make sure that the competency framework is clear for teachers.

## 9.18. CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES

Ms S Eadie, NECT



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

Rising automation is happening at an exponential rate and the types of career opportunities and skills required are those that necessitate flexibility and a personal touch. We require a competency-based curriculum and use Life Orientation to develop these skills and competencies or integrate them into existing subjects to infuse skills in the classroom for integrated learning. Learners should develop these competencies at school and practice in the classroom.

Social skills such as critical thinking and problem solving; active learning; resilience, flexibility; accountability; creativity; and self-efficacy are important. We require the development of a South African Skills and Competencies Framework, by identifying skills and competencies and developing learning progressions. We require curriculum analysis with the identification of core concepts and essential content; foreground and name skills; and align interactive improvement mechanisms.

It is essential to develop metacognition for learners to cement a relationship with their own learning. In addition, modelling and videos for best practice in the classroom could prove beneficial.

## 9.19. PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

Mr J Donald, Ecubed



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

Promoting Entrepreneurship and 21st Century Skills is in line with the DBE's vision of access to lifelong learning. Learners and teachers both need to be challenged and grow through an entrepreneurial mindset (Entrepreneurship, Employability and Education). On the topic of skills and competencies for a changing world, Project-Based Learning (PBL) will enhance an entrepreneurial mindset for competency-based education and employability. The contribution and resilience of teachers were evident during the pandemic. Since January 2021, E3 has supported DBE programmes to grow the *TeacherConnect* WhatsApp platform to over 150,000 active users to communicate directly with teachers and principals. The platform uses learner-centred active learning in the existing CAPS curriculum to assist teachers in preparing learners for the modern economy. E<sup>3</sup> also partners with Care for Education to provide training and educational resources to teachers in the Foundation Phase. The WhatsApp *TeacherConnect* platform provides learning and teaching content, development and support resources.

The platform can be accessed by sending a WhatsApp "Hi" to 060 060 3333 to connect to the Teacher Connect App.

### Key Action Points:

- Need to show compassion and support for teachers;
- Invest in young people; and
- Need to find ways for teachers to feel acknowledged.

## 9.20. TEACHER INVOLVEMENT IN THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

Dr R de Villiers, ECUBED



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

The goal of the E3 programme, endorsed at the 2018 DBE Lekgotla, is to equip learners with the skills for a changing world for them to engage actively and meaningfully in the economy either as entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial employees or in the form of lifelong learning. This will, in turn, also reduce SA's unemployment figures. Another aim is to ensure that teachers, through continuous learning and Professional Learning Communities (PLSs), have the skills and knowledge to deliver the CAPS curriculum within a changing world. Currently, approximately 600 schools form part of the programme, but it is envisaged that 3,600 schools will be part of the programme that endorses PBL schools by the end of 2022.

### Key Action Points:

- Equip learners with the skills for a changing world so that they will be able to meaningfully & actively engage in the economy either as entrepreneurs;
- Instil entrepreneurial employees lifelong learning; and
- Reduce unemployment.

## 9.21. THREE STREAM MODEL

Dr M Simelane, DBE



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

The DBE's Three Stream Model acknowledges the diversity of the academic, technical vocational and occupational learning pathways for the diversification of curriculum offerings in schools. The Grade 12 completion and the NSC qualification is not a guarantee for employment, but the GET (approved by Umalusi in 2021 and gazetted in 2021) can assist learners to become employable.

A target set in the National Development Plan (NDP) is for 30,000 artisans to be produced by 2030 in areas such as, Engineering Graphics; Civil Technology and Technical Mathematics and Science. Pilot programmes in the new subjects have been undertaken in Schools of Skill, Focus and Ordinary Schools and the Education for Employability (E4E) Project is being implemented with the aid of European Union (EU) funding.

The Education for Employability Budget Support Sector Reform Programme (E4E-BSSRP) is the platform for the DBE and the Departments of Higher Education and Training and Employment and Labour to work collectively towards a more inclusive and equitable education and prospects for SA youth.

The finalisation and implementation of the Master Plan is set for 2022.

### Key Action Points:

- The DBE Sector Lekgotla to consider and discuss the progress on the implementation of the Three Stream Model, towards strengthening it.



## 9.22. FOCUS SCHOOLS/TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Mr S Tlhabane, DBE



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

The aim of Focus Schools and technical education is to produce school leavers who are skilled, empowered and entrepreneurial for the world of work to join the pool of professionals as “the builders of the nation”, using their technical skills. The *Draft Norms and Standards for the Establishment of Focussed Schools* were presented to CEM in 2016, and converted into Guidelines for each province for greater autonomy. A Focus School is a public school with a specialised focus on talent, including sports, performing arts or creative arts.

Focus schools are described as public schools offering two or more subjects in a specialised field for socio-economic needs subject to offering these subjects to a reasonable number of learners, having the necessary infrastructure, resources and capacity to prepare learners with skills required for current and future needs; and having

strong links with industry to provide opportunities for learners to be exposed to a range of skills in preparation for the world of work.

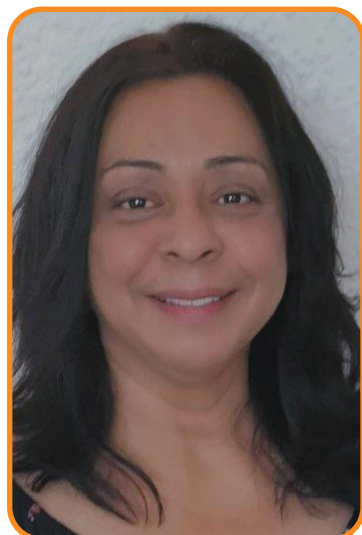
There are 11 types of focus schools for specialised education. A few examples include: Aviation; Maritime; Hospitality Sector; Arts and Culture; and Sports. In addition to the approved subject offerings, schools also offer other informal skills and / or courses approved by institutions to promote skills required by the industry and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in general. Focus schools generally commenced with offerings related to specific local needs. These also include approved and / or non-approved curriculum offered after normal school hours.

### Key Action Points:

- Curriculum Offerings: at least two approved focused subjects are offered at the school;
- Additional Curriculum Offerings: In addition to the approved subject offerings, schools also offer other informal skills and/or courses approved by other institutions to promote skills required by the industry in particular and 21st century skills in general;
- Extra Mural Activities: Focus schools generally commenced with offerings related to specific local needs. These include approved and/or non-approved curriculum offered after school hours;
- Learner Participation: a reasonable number of learners (with considerably greater percentage in some schools) choose subjects related to the focus of the school;
- Human Resource Implications: Principals, management and staff work considerably greater hours (including afternoons and weekends) to expose learners to other hard and soft skills required by the industry;
- Capacity Needs: schools generally have found alternative ways of employing technical skills including artisans, retired experts, business and technical skills to expose learners to skills which make them more marketable and sought after by industry;
- Partnership/Industry Networks: Focus schools have demonstrated the ability to forge partnerships and created strong networks with stakeholders and the industry at large both locally, nationally and in some cases internationally to market their schools to build additional infrastructure and capacity to expose learners to skills required for a changing world; and
- Funding: Management and staff of focused schools demonstrated an incredible capacity to harness additional funding (in many cases in excess of millions of Rands) to support the growing demands of resource intensive skills.

## 9.23. LESSONS FROM THE SCHOOL OF SKILLS

Ms M Fraser, SALESIAN School of Skill



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

Lessons learned from the Salesian School of Skill were shared. Being part of the Technical Vocational Stream, the focus is on PBL, aligned to the E3 programme. In establishing the school, the comfort zones of both learners and teachers were challenged. The school is conducive to differentiation and inclusivity and public exhibitions are important to develop synergies with the business community by giving the learner a voice – becoming active learners, not passive receptors. PBL heightened the understanding of CAPS, Section 1, whilst amplifying awareness of curriculum planning. Subsequently, both teachers and learners have been empowered with new skills, whilst learner cohesion at the school has been strengthened.

## 9.24. REBOOTING AND REBUILDING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM—FRAMING THE RE-ENGAGEMENT OF THE SYSTEM IN THE LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENT

Mr G Khosa, NECT



### Key message/issues identified from the presentation:

South Africa and the education sector in particular, has learned from the Global Financial and the COVID-19 crises that flexibility during unexpected times can lead to innovation and opportunities through the re-evaluation of long-term plans. This is clearly illustrated by Ghabour's VUCA Model (Volatility, Understanding, Clarity, Adaptability and Agility) and its new meaning in a post-pandemic world.

Another frame to fit the post-COVID-19 response into, the Haddon Model, is an understanding and analysis of the Pre-event status; the Impact of the event; and the Post-event rebooting of the system. This is the focus of the 2022 Basic Education Sector Lekgotla going forward: building back better through the consolidation of lessons learned and interventions put in place across all spheres, from national to provincial to district to circuit to school to classroom level.

Key educational impacts of COVID-19 include the loss of teaching and learning time; learning losses; and a loss of learning opportunity. Added to these impacts are the psychosocial impact on learners and teachers. Schools have been divided into three categories, considering the impact on education as either Category A (least impacted); B (rotational attendance system) or C (hardest hit) schools for differentiated strategies.

A total of seven priority pillars have been identified for the education sector. These are: School functionality and time on task; Learning recovery; Teacher professionalisation to drive learning recovery; Curriculum, research and review; Parent, stakeholder and civil society involvement; Resourcing for early grade reading and numeracy; and Communication and Building energy to drive the recovery.

The education sector will concentrate on low-hanging fruits by identifying 12 Quick-wins. These are: Tracking school functionality in 1,000 schools; Identifying schools in need of minor repairs and refurbishments; Enhancing national messaging and communication to 15 million South Africans; Hosting stakeholder consultations; CRI Monitoring System; Hosting Senior Management Planning Sessions; Developing of 2022 Recovery Trackers; Developing simplified planners and trackers for households; Development of new critical material; Development of a resourcing plan; Training and

placement of 22,000 reading champions; and Undertaking a Technology in Schools Survey.

The use of digital technology and online resources have proved an extremely valuable intervention strategy during the pandemic; however, connectivity and access remains a stumbling block in rural schools; broadening the digital divide. For this reason, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) need to be made available to all South African schools. The rebooting and rebuilding of the system therefore requires a collaborative effort, commitment and accountability of all stakeholders, across all spheres – from the strategic leadership to ensure policy, to the implementation thereof from national to provincial, to district, to circuit, to school and classroom level for a new commitment to build back better for the South Africa we all need to access equal opportunities to thrive and prosper.

## Closing Remarks

In her closing remarks, Minister AM Motshekga, MP, expressed her gratitude to all the participants who in one way or the other contributed to the success of the Lekgotla which proved to be a success marked with high level presentations and fruitful deliberations. The Minister provided a brief summary of some of the key issues discussed and appreciated the contributions made both by the international, regional and local speakers alike.

The Minister highlighted that South Africa was applauded in the world for its interventions to mitigate the devastating impact of COVID-19 and appreciated the sector for the manner in which it responded to the challenges posed by the pandemic.

She assured the Lekgotla delegates that as the Basic Education Sector, there was commitment to recalibrate, reboot, and reposition the Basic Education system in line with the recommendations of the 7<sup>th</sup> Basic Education Sector Lekgotla. In order for the sector to achieve the ideals of **“equipping learners with knowledge, skills and competencies of a changing world in the context of COVID-19”**, Government, the Basic Education Sector in its totality, must commit to collaborate and jointly operationalise the Lekgotla recommendations.

The Minister also provided a summary of the key recommendations made during Commissions and indicated that the DBE will factor the recommendations of this Lekgotla, in its strategic plans, programmes, and interventions. The Makgotla coordinated from the first one, have turned out to be reservoirs of wisdom, knowledge and experiences. Hence the Basic Education system has been seen as a stable system on the rise, also demonstrated by the Matric Class of 2021 through their dedication, focus and resilience. The number of qualitative and quantitative passes the Class of 2021 attained was an indisputable testament of the intervention programmes. The growth observed in the regional and international assessment studies, though not at the desired pace, was a further illustration of the system’s improvement.

In her conclusion, the Minister informed the delegates that in 2022, the sector has introduced assessment studies, which focus on assessment for and of learning, as well as the system itself. All these endeavours are intended to equip learners with knowledge, skills and competencies of a changing world.

# PART B:

# LEKGOTLA EVALUATION



BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR LEKGOTLA

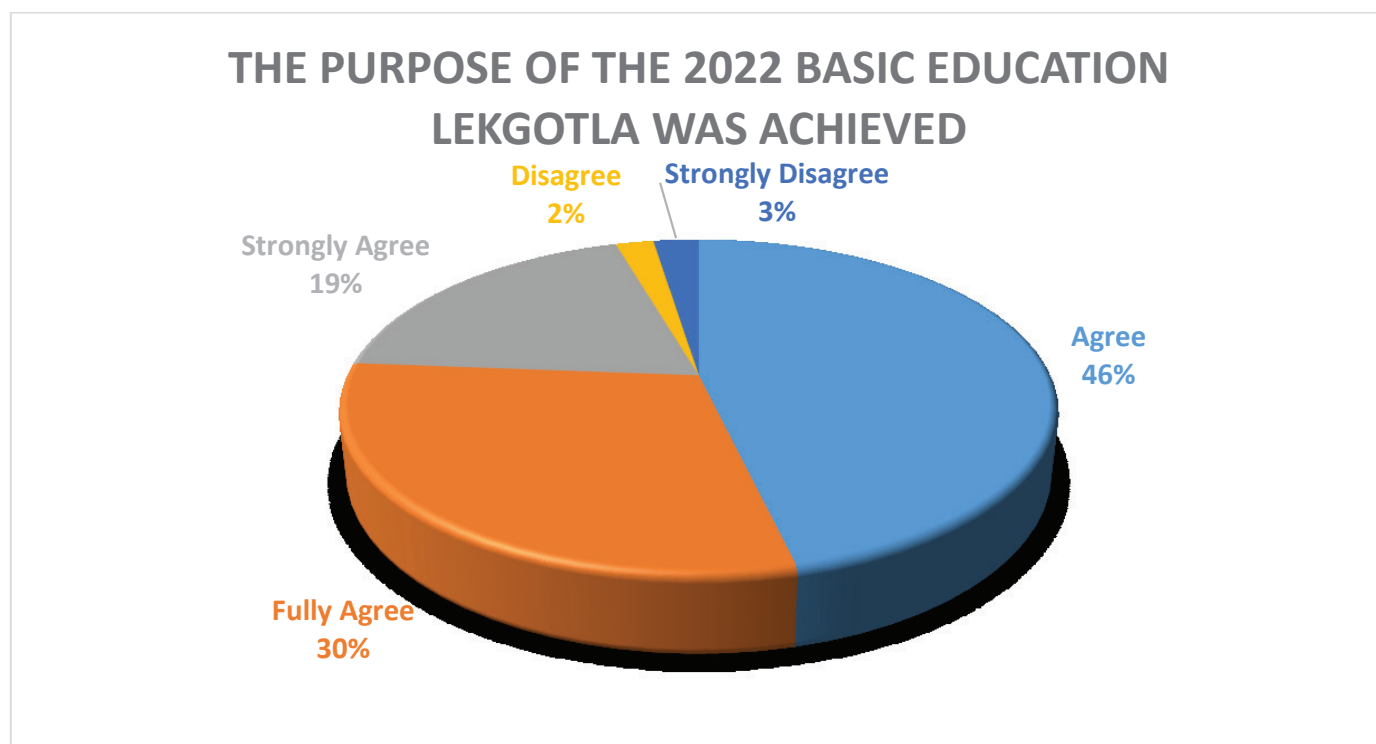
## 10. EVALUATION RESULTS

A poll was run for those that attended the 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla virtually. A response rate of between 200 and 250 was recorded.

Eight (8) questions were asked, viz:

- 1) The purpose of the 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla was achieved;
- 2) I find the Lekgotla beneficial and would want it to continue to be held yearly;
- 3) The presentations accurately provided clear messages and reflection and further provided basis for sector recovery;
- 4) It was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the plenary presentations;
- 5) It was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the panel discussions;
- 6) It was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the respondents;
- 7) I will be able to use plenary presentations to plan my work towards improving learning outcomes; and
- 8) Commissions offered sufficient opportunity to engage and provide recommendations.

Below figures indicate the results of the poll per question posed.



*Figure 3: The purpose of the 2022 Basic Education Lekgotla was achieved*

The above figure shows that a total of **95%** of respondent were of the view that the purpose of the Lekgotla was met. Only 2% and 3% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that the Lekgotla achieved its purpose, respectively. Thus, the overwhelming majority of delegates answered in the affirmative, which is a positive outcome.

## I FIND THE LEKGOTLA BENEFICIAL AND WOULD WANT IT TO CONTINUE TO BE HELD YEARLY

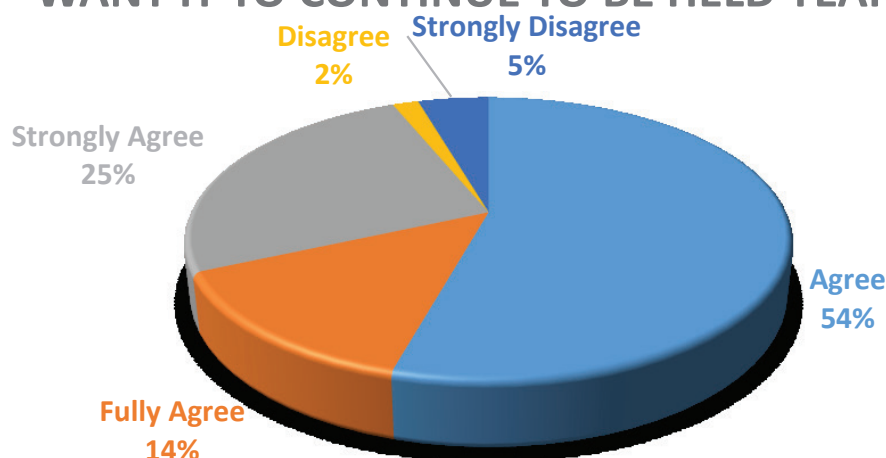


Figure 4: I find the Lekgotla beneficial and would want it to continue to be held yearly

The above figure indicates that a total of **93%** of delegates found the Lekgotla beneficial, and want it to continue to be held annually. Only a total of 7% had an opposing view, with 2% and 5% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing, respectively.

## THE PRESENTATIONS ACCURATELY PROVIDED CLEAR MESSAGES AND REFLECTION AND FURTHER PROVIDED BASIS FOR SECTOR RECOVERY

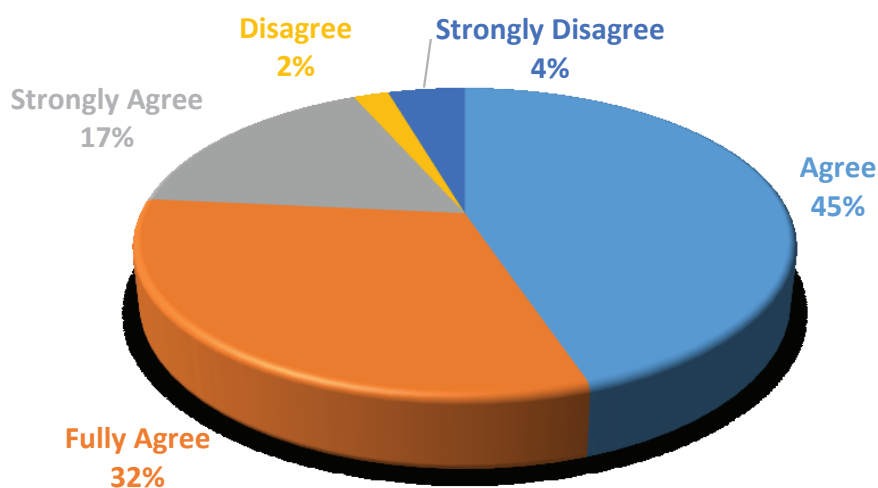


Figure 5: The presentations accurately provided clear messages and reflection and further provided basis for sector recovery

Figure 4 indicates that an overwhelming majority of **94%** answered in the affirmative, and that the presentations accurately provided clear messages and reflection and further provided a basis for sector recovery. This was countered by a total of 6% (2% and 4% respectively that disagreed and strongly disagreed).

## IT WAS EASY TO CAPTURE AND FOLLOW THE MESSAGES COMING FROM THE PLENARY PRESENTATIONS

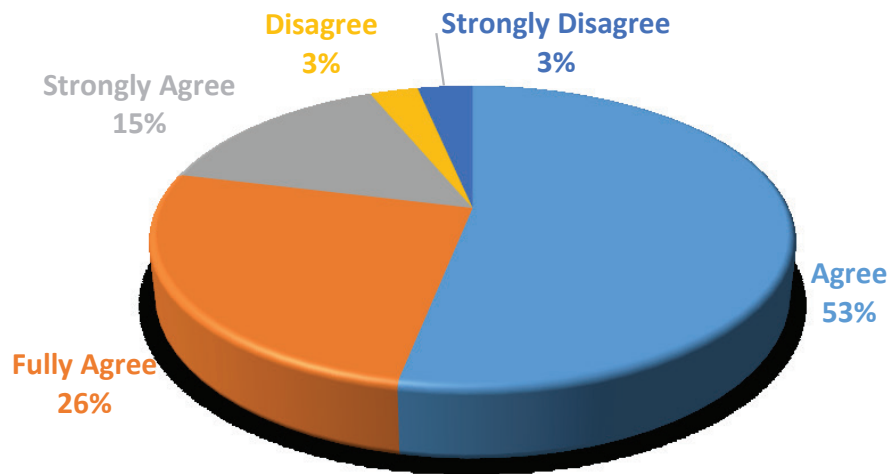


Figure 6: It was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the plenary

Considering that the Lekgotla was held both in-person and virtually, this question was testing the extent to which the event was accessible to all delegates. It is pleasing to note that **94%** of delegates responded in the affirmative (53%, 26% and 15% agreed, fully agreed and strongly agreed respectively) that it was easy to follow the messages coming from the plenary while 3% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. This bodes well for future sector events indicating that a hybrid model is a viable option for consideration.

## IT WAS EASY TO CAPTURE AND FOLLOW THE MESSAGES COMING FROM THE PANEL DISCUSSIONS

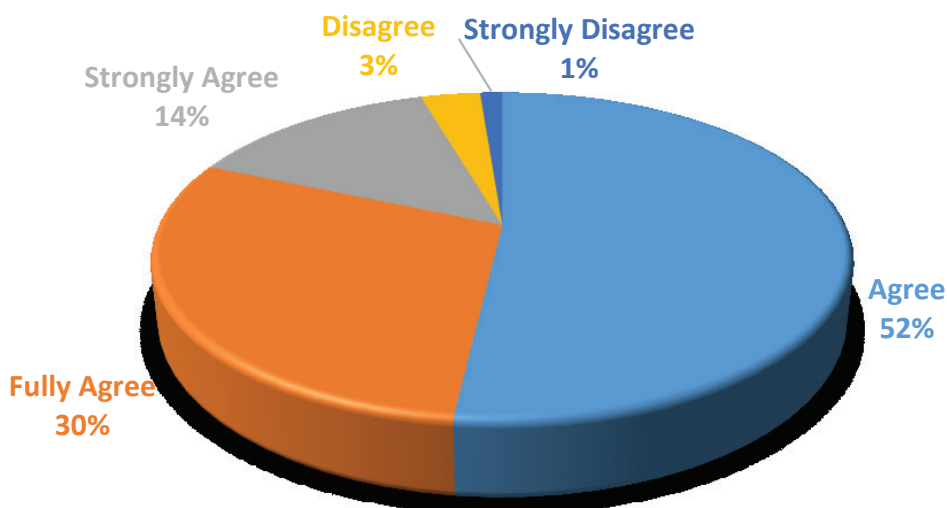


Figure 7: It was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the panel discussions

Asked if it was easy to capture and follow messages from the panel discussions, a total of 96% of delegates agreed that



it was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the panel discussion. A minority of 4% disagreed with this view (3% and 1% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively).

## IT WAS EASY TO CAPTURE AND FOLLOW THE MESSAGES COMING FROM THE RESPONDENTS

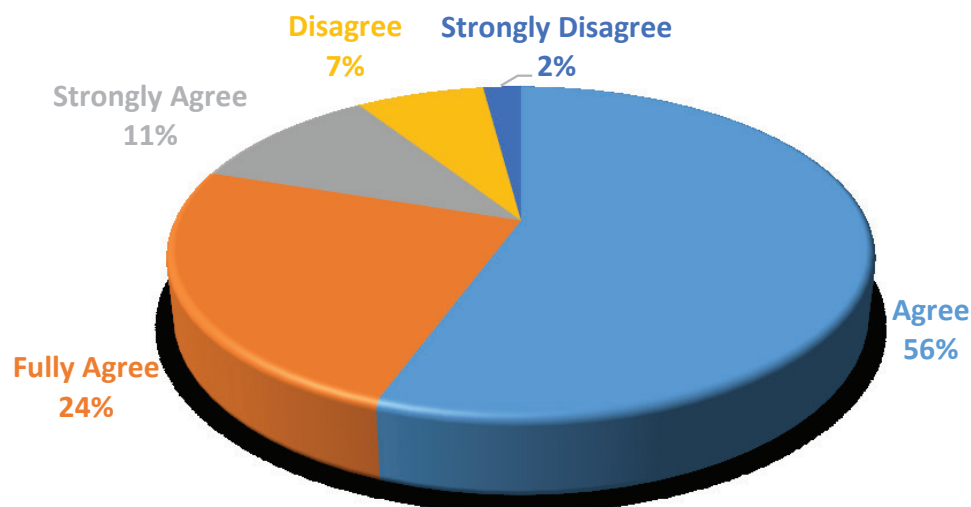


Figure 8: It was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the respondents

A total of 91% of delegates reported that it was easy to capture and follow the messages coming from the respondents, while 7% and 2% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

## I WILL BE ABLE TO USE PLENARY PRESENTATIONS TO PLAN MY WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES

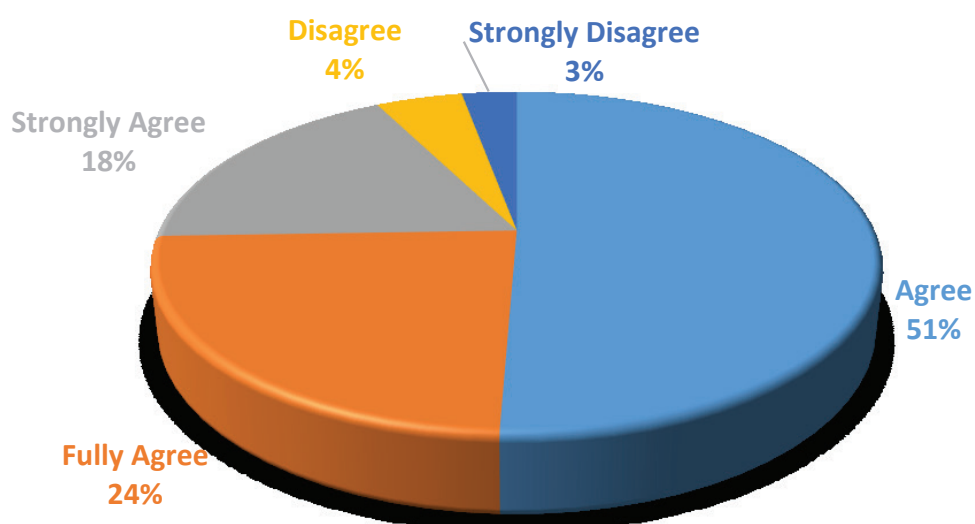


Figure 9: I will be able to use plenary presentations to plan my work towards improving learning outcomes

A large majority of respondents (93%) indicated that they will be able to use the plenary presentations to plan their work towards improving learning outcomes. Only 7% of delegates expressed a contrary view.



## COMMISSIONS OFFERED SUFFICIENT OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

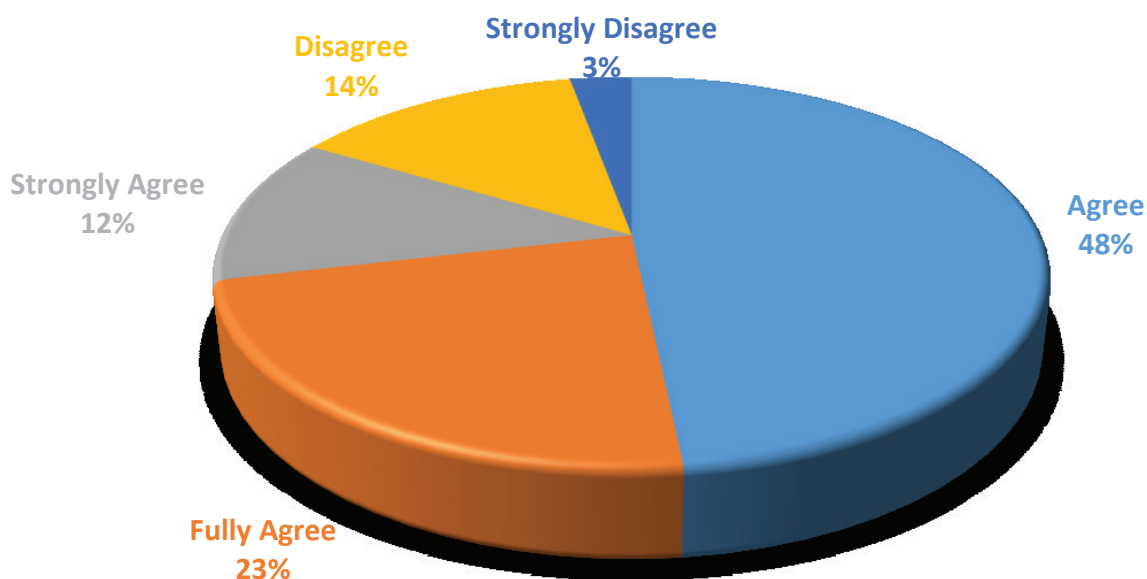


Figure 10: Commissions offered sufficient opportunity to engage and provide recommendations

Delegates were asked if commissions offered sufficient opportunity to engage and provide recommendations. This is an important aspect to gauge as the need to engage was raised in the previous virtual Legkotla, although not quantified. The planning team was mindful in structuring the programme towards providing time for interaction among delegates. A total of **83%** of respondents agreed that the commissions offered sufficient opportunity to engage and provide recommendations; a positive outcome; while 14% and 3% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively.



# **PART C:**

## **SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS BASED ON QUESTION POSED AT REGISTRATION**



## 11. SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS BASED ON QUESTION POSED AT REGISTRATION

When delegates registered online for the Lekgotla, they were asked the following question: “**What one lesson or intervention from the COVID-19 pandemic, should be implemented in the sector as a positive spin-off during this unprecedented crisis?**”

The responses have been clustered and captured in this section:

CLUSTER/THEME	SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS
CURRICULUM	No more TREPS (rotation) and allow all learners to return full time to schools in SA
	reduce the class sizes to allow teachers to pay attention to each individual
	Assisting teachers with implementing the recovery curriculum
	address learning gaps as a result of COVID-19.
	A Package of support for disadvantage and struggling schools
	New strategies and new mode of curriculum delivery were explored
	Strengthening of curriculum delivery especially in the township schools
	Allowing the school leadership to make decisions for the school regarding how the curriculum is delivered and the trimmed curriculum and reduced assessment
	<b>Non-academic Curriculum</b>
	More careful <b>use of assessment</b> to guide teaching
	Implement an Assessment for Learning approach
	Assessment for Learning
	More access to innovative pedagogies
	Rotational school attendance should be closely regulated and better managed wherever it is implemented. Research shows that its implementation in its current form results in both challenges and unintended consequences
TEACHERS	Full implementation of the 4IR to advance the teaching and learning agenda across the sector. Preparing the system is very critical in terms of resources both human and material.
	Address recruitment of school principals and subject advisors to be done based on competency and performance
	Broadening blended <b>online professional development</b> opportunities
	Employee wellness is key for a healthy organisation
	<b>Compulsory Basic IT- Skills for every Teacher</b> to be able to conduct Virtual Classes the same way they conduct physical classes, and introduction of learning programs for Grades 8 -12 on life strategies on how to adjust with the changing times without losing focus on your goal of achieving the best learning outcomes in your studies, and the ability to use the available platforms to gain knowledge
	<b>Digital support</b> , and self-organising support groups, for teachers, officials and learners like those on WhatsApp and <i>TeacherConnect</i> . Using digital resources to better tailor support to teachers
	<b>Coaching</b> for teachers.
	Teachers' integration of ICT/online tools for subject teaching
	<b>Subject advisors</b> appointed in all provinces, especially Eastern Cape and KZN
	<b>Retraining of teachers</b> with methodologies as facilitators for e-Learning
	Teacher Development to ensure uniform delivery of curriculum.

CLUSTER/THEME	SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS
ICT	Maximize zero-rated social platforms, ensuring all learners, specifically the deaf, have full access
	Priority to School Infrastructure and online learning
	Speed up education technology to enable data collection, organisation and analysis. Improve learners access to technology
	We need to be mindful of preserving our economy
	The provision of access to e-learning capability must be rolled out ASAP
	Technology should be integrated into the curriculum in such a way that no one is left behind when something of a similar nature hits again
	<b>Strengthen remote and distance learning</b> interventions
	Access to <b>technology infrastructure</b> is lacking
	To be <b>technologically savvy</b> and always be prepared for change
	The increased use of <b>online access</b> for sharing learning materials and insights
	<b>Embracing the 4IR</b> demands and making necessary resources available
	<b>Blended learning</b> - online and face to face! The use of technology in teaching and learning
	#DataMustFall for education sector
	Accelerating availability of ICT infrastructure in Schools
	Effective content for Online teaching & learning
CSTL	An <b>entrepreneurial mind-set</b> helps one to solve problems, be resilient, adaptable, and empowered to become efficient agents of change. Now, more than ever before, the Basic Education Sector needs to re-think, re-engineer and strengthen the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 to ensure that our learners, teachers and officials are empowered with all the skills required to develop an entrepreneurial mind-set for a changing world
	Better quality and improved accessibility to <b>mental health services</b> for learners
	Psychosocial and emotional support and regular counselling.
	Strengthening and easy access of Psychosocial support for learners and educators
FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING	Maximise the potential of technology to increase access to health services for teachers and learners, especially PSS
	Pay better attention to all aspects of ECD
	More personalized learning towards mastery starting in Foundation phases
	Implementation and supporting the ECD sector as the basis of a solid education
	Support for unregistered ECD service providers
	Early Childhood Development needs to be properly financed if we are to change the education trajectory for young people

CLUSTER/THEME	SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS
GENERAL	Build <b>resilience</b> in the system.
	The <b>inequalities</b> highlighted by the pandemic, needs to be addressed with great urgency
	Comprehensive, <b>Quality Career Development</b> Services for ALL
	<b>Reduction of class sizes</b> contribute to quality learning
	Strict monitoring of sector projects and programmes
	Insofar as disengagement by learners and learning losses are concerned, the sector should work with education partners to craft a multifaceted approach, leveraging as much expertise and systems to redress development deficits caused by COVID-19. The Data Driven Districts Programme provides aggregated and dis-aggregated data of over 11 million learners in the education system, which could help us start to foster a culture of evidence based decision-making while moving away from paper based systems that make it difficult to track performance trends over time. The efficacy of a data driven model has been proven, in pockets, and now could be our only chance to cast our net wide in order to see a systemic shift. After all, you cannot manage what you cannot measure
	The objectives and outcomes of the Lekgotla will be taking SA Education Sector in the right direction. <b>Resilient leadership</b> will be required to ensure that these objectives and outcomes are achieved
	A high level of commitment is required from DBE Officials at all levels, PEDs and all stakeholders to help the education system to speedily recover from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic
	Thanks for having this annual Lekgotla, it is a rare opportunity for key education stakeholders to take stock, in preparation for the new academic year. DBE is one of the few [if not the only department] to have this. Well done.

***“Thanks for having this annual Lekgotla, it is a rare opportunity for key education stakeholders to take stock, in preparation for the new academic year. DBE is one of the few [if not the only department] to have this. Well done.”,  
Lekgotla delegate.***

# PART D: ANNEXURES



BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR LEKGOTLA



## 12. ANNEXURES

- a) Lekgotla Programme
- b) Summary of plenary key discussions/considerations
- c) Consolidated Commission Recommendations and Action Plan





## NOTES

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Published by the Department of Basic Education

222 Struben Street

Private Bag X895, Pretoria, 0001

Telephone: 012 357 3000 Fax: 012 323 0601

ISBN: 978-1-4315-3534-7

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