



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

Minister Motshekga officiates hand-over of 38th AVBOB Library



The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, and AVBOB Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr Frik Rademan, celebrated the hand-over of the 38th container library donated by long-time business partner of the Department of Basic Education (DBE), AVBOB, on 12 February 2017.

The DBE has, during the last two years, successfully established and revitalised over 4,000 public school libraries across South Africa through significant partnerships with both sister Government Departments and the private sector. This embraces the vision of the Department's *Read to Lead Campaign* which encourages learners and communities to cultivate a love for reading. Through this campaign, the Minister would like to inspire all South Africans to make time to *drop all and read*.

"I am not here to deliver a keynote address, I am here to, once again, give thanks to great friends of the DBE," Minister Motshekga said as she addressed the audience and learners at Amstelhof Primary School in Paarl, just outside of Cape Town. With 50 libraries provided to date and 38 officially allocated and handed over to schools, the Minister's words hit home and highlighted the fruitful Public Private Partnership that has been forged between the DBE and AVBOB.

"Helping the Department achieve its goals, including those of getting young people to read and write for school, for leisure and even in the world of work, is a critical aspect of the development of the social fabric of our country. We need to ensure that, as corporate citizens, we help the Department to ensure that South Africa becomes a reading nation," Rademan said.

Minister Motshekga believes that the role of libraries and reading in academic achievement cannot be overemphasised; and that libraries are key levers in achieving quality learning and teaching, as well as providing access to reading material and learning space. Libraries are essential to the promotion of reading and critical to the improvement of literacy.

Addressing bullying in the schooling environment



The prevalence of bullying at school level has become a serious matter that requires urgent attention. The DBE is urging various education stakeholders to unite against bullying in schools in order to create an environment that is conducive to learning. The Department has recently established a *National School Safety Framework* in order to assist in improving quality learning and teaching by providing safe school environments. This Framework requires various education stakeholders, such as parents, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), educators, learners and government officials to work as a team in ensuring that classroom activities can proceed without any interruptions.



In addressing cyber bullying, the Department has developed *E-Safety Guidelines* to educate learners about the different types of bullying that can occur on and through various different Information Communication Technology (ICT) platforms, particularly online bullying, to encourage them to remain vigilant when using e-learning programmes or ICT resources.

Director for School Safety, Mr Paseka Njobe, said: “Bullying entails the involvement of one or more persons singling out the victim and deliberately hurting him or her physically, mentally or emotionally. It involves an imbalance of power in age, status, or popularity and physical strength; bullies usually have more power than their perpetrators. The main aim is to harm the victim by hurting them physically or mentally. Learners must immediately report early warning signs and threats of bullying to their teachers or School Management Team and should keep record of recurring incidences. In the case of cyberbullying, learners should notify their parents or any trustworthy adult”.

A school’s Code of Conduct is a mechanism through which bullying is addressed in line with prescribed policies. The Department provides teachers with the necessary training to combat bullying in schools, as well as ways of disseminating the preventative measures and means of support to learners. All public schools have a confidential reporting system in place, which is linked to the South African Police Services (SAPS).

Mr Njobe added: “The Department has also developed and trained educators on guidelines for the prevention and management of bullying in schools, which includes all forms of bullying. Teachers and schools can prevent bullying by establishing and enforcing school rules, as well as the existing anti-bullying policies that clearly describe how learners are expected to treat each other. Consequences for violations of the rules should be clearly defined. Teachers must be ready to provide the necessary support to both the victims and the perpetrators of bullying. The DBE has compiled and developed a booklet with a set of guidelines for both parents and learners on how to address incidences of bullying which has since been distributed to schools. If a child has been involved in bullying someone else, acknowledgement of the situation, as well as the reprimanding of the learner might prevent the bullying from becoming a habit or a way to gain attention. Parents must teach their children to take responsibility for his/her part in bullying”.

All forms of bullying should be addressed as it affects the learner’s academic progress. “The effects of cyber bullying on an individual can result in low self-worth, sadness, anger, declining grades, inexcusable absenteeism, violence and even suicide. It is imperative that we educate our learners and school communities about bullying behaviour, as well as ways to prevent it,” Mr Njobe concluded.

Towards using a context-specific approach to improving Learner Performance in rural schools



Although Minister Motshekga congratulated the Class of 2016 for the significant improvement in the National Senior Certificate Examination (NSC) results, schools in rural communities continue to face an array of contextual challenges which tend to negatively affect efforts aimed at improving the educational outcomes in these schools. These include poor socio-economic conditions, a lack of infrastructure and poverty.

Despite these challenges, the 2016 NSC results showed some significant improvements in some of the predominantly rural provinces and districts. The Free State Province, for example, a province that is predominantly rural, outperformed all eight of its counterparts, including the more urban ones. The Province did not only become the best performing province, but also set the record for being the first to break the 90% threshold in the NSC results. It is interesting to see that the list for the six top performing districts is dominated by many rural districts, including Xhariep, Namaqua and Thabo Mofutsanyana Districts. Among these were *No Fee Schools* which improved their pass rate to between 80 and 100%. Furthermore, the number of black African learners who obtained more than 60% in Mathematics also increased - the majority of whom are in rural areas.

This opened doors for more rural learners to pursue Mathematically-oriented post-school qualifications. The message from these results is clear: schools of excellence can also be found in rural areas. The results are also a clear indication that we need to dispose of the notion that learners can only achieve good academic results in *affluent* schools. This improvement shows that the sector's pro-poor policies, interventions and programmes are beginning to yield results. This improvement is likely to continue through the recent sector response that there is a need for a context-specific approach to support rural schools. Such an approach puts the rural context at the centre and brings together education policies, school activities and contextual factors in developing programmes for rural schools. Adopting such a context-specific approach to programmes will ensure that rural schools and learners are not left behind, and that educational outcomes as indicated in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are attained.

DBE and SuperSport strengthens partnership to improve mass sport participation in schools



Basic Education Deputy Director-General for Social Mobilisation and Support Services, Dr Granville Whittle, attended a multi-purpose sport court facility hand-over ceremony in Upington on 07 February 2017.

SuperSport, in partnership with the DBE, Sport and Recreation South Africa, the Physical Education Institute of South Africa and UNICEF SA, launched the *Let's Play* Physical Education Challenge in 2015 and continued this initiative in 2016 to reinforce the instruction of curriculum-oriented Physical Education and to promote physical activity in all primary schools. In what is arguably one of the biggest school's fitness programmes in South Africa, the *Let's Play* Physical Education Challenge, aimed at 10 year olds, reached more than 600,000 learners in 651 primary schools across all nine provinces in the country. The school adjudged to be the fittest primary school in the country that participated in the Challenge during 2016, was Rosendal Intermediate School in Upington in the Northern Cape Province. As the winning school, they won the grand prize of a R1.3 million multi-purpose sport court, courtesy of The Sports Trust. The court has already been installed at the school.

SuperSport identified major challenges inhibiting the development of children through skills learned by playing, physical education and sport – all of which are imperative to the holistic development of children. “Children are faced with many negative influences due to a lack of social engagement and opportunities for play. This sports facility can make a significant difference in lifestyle and behavioural change, and provide both hope and purpose to the children of this community,” said SuperSport Regulatory Director, Mr Graham Abrahams.

“We believe that this is a meaningful way to get schools involved in physical activity, particularly as Government has highlighted the need for children to become more active,” said Mr Vaughn Bishop of *Let's Play*. The multi-purpose sport court makes provision for five sporting codes - soccer, netball, basketball, volleyball and tennis - in a bid to drive the development of sports and healthy activities in and around the surrounding communities.

Most of the learners from Rosendal Intermediate School are impoverished and the community is faced with many challenges. The learners perform moderately well academically and the school has a well-driven sport and cultural programme. Sports participation at the school includes netball, soccer (boys and girls), rugby, table tennis and indigenous games. “Winning the 2016 *Let's Play* Physical Education Challenge was truly the cherry-on-top of a very successful year for our learners”, said the school Principal, Miss Ellen Allies.

This year's *Let's Play* Physical Education Challenge will engage with more than 1,500 Primary schools, doubling the participation to that of last year. Schools are invited to enter by contacting the following two numbers: Tel: 011 849 7411 or 079 529 8862 (all hours) or to e-mail: physedchallenge@activeeducation.co.za

World Read Aloud Day



The DBE, in partnership with Nal'ibali, celebrated *World Read Aloud Day* in Durban in the KwaZulu-Natal Province on 16 February 2017 in support of the *Read to Lead Campaign*. All South Africans were requested, on the day, to share the power of stories and to bring the magic of storytelling into the lives of our children.

Nal'ibali (isiXhosa for “here’s the story”) is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark children’s potential through storytelling and reading. The campaign values the power of language and cultural relevance in literacy development. For reasons relating to empowerment, pedagogy, identity and democracy, Nal'ibali fully promotes reading and writing in mother tongue languages.

Literacy skills are a strong predictor of future academic success in all subjects, and children who regularly read and hear engaging stories, in languages they understand, are well equipped and motivated to acquire literacy and numeracy skills. Research reinforces the link between reading for pleasure and improved outcomes for children. When read in home languages, story-telling also builds the foundations that children will need to learn a second language. This is particularly vital for school children making the transition from instruction in their home language to English in Grade 4. Let’s support our communities, parents, teachers and care-givers to find ways to instil a culture of reading for us to build a nation of powerful readers and storytellers.

For tips on reading for enjoyment, visit www.nalibali.org.



Learners encouraged to read African Storybooks in their mother tongue



The DBE's Curriculum Innovation and e-Learning Directorate facilitates the development and distribution of digital content resources to support teaching and learning. The development and distribution of digital content aims to promote e-learning in schools as one of the strategic objectives of Programme 2: Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring as contained in the *Action Plan 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*.

Subsequently, 210 African Storybooks in IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Sepedi, Setswana, and English have been uploaded onto the DBE website in support of the *Read to Lead Campaign*. These storybooks have been quality assured and accommodate all the reading levels of learners. The storybooks are also accessible via the “*African Storybook Reader*” App from the Google Play (Apps Store) for reading on your mobile device anytime and anywhere.

It is a well-known fact that learners who regularly read and hear stories in their mother tongue and in languages they understand, acquire the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to succeed academically.

The African Storybooks have been made available through collaborate efforts of the DBE (ICT, LTSM and GET) and the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE).

<http://www.education.gov.za/Home/Read2Lead/AfricanStorybooks.aspx>

Regional Round-up



Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape Department of Education recently conducted an Induction Programme for 450 newly appointed GET and FET principals in all 23 districts at the Education Leadership Institute in East London, as principals are seen as vital role players in the education system. The three day induction course focussed on the professional duties of school principals, labour related issues, ethical responsibilities, leading and managing curriculum; and managing school finances. Superintendent-General, Mr Themba Kojana, addressed the principals saying, “Principals shape the direction of a school. I have full confidence in you; now I just need you to have confidence in yourself”. There are 5,000 schools, 54,000 teachers and 1,600,000 learners in the Eastern Cape Province and the effective leadership and the management of these schools is crucial to obtain improved results in the 2017 NSC Examinations.

Upcoming Events

- 20 February 2017: Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to visit the Empangeni Cluster in the KwaZulu-Natal Province as part of the Provincial Oversight visits
- 22 February 2017: Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to visit the Hoër Tegniese Skool, Middleburg in the Mpumalanga Province as part of the Provincial Oversight visits
- 23 – 24 February 2017: Minister Angie Motshekga meets with District Directors at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 27 February 2017: Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to visit the Western Cape Province as part of the Provincial Oversight visits
- 27 February 2017: Orientation workshop for the National Training Team on the pilot of the Technical Occupational Stream to be hosted at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 28 February 2017: National Schools Moot Court Competition hypothetical problem statement for 2017 to be distributed to all secondary schools
- 01 – 02 March 2017: A National School Nutrition Forum will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria
- 21 March 2017: Human Rights Day
- 07 April 2017: Minister Angie Motshekga to host the 2nd National Education Excellence Awards in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 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
- 14 April 2017: Good Friday
- 17 April 2017: Family Day
- 27 April 2017: Freedom Day
- 29 July – 19 August 2017: National Schools Moot Court Competition essays are to be submitted to the University of Pretoria/www.schoolsmoot.co.za
- 19 August – 22 September 2017: The hosting of the provincial rounds of the National Schools Moot Court Competition
- 04 – 08 October 2017: The National Schools Moot Court Competition finals to be hosted at the University of Pretoria and the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg

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.

