



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

News for Kids project Launched



“If learners are encouraged to read books throughout their schooling years, our nation will have bright future leaders,” said Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, at the launch of the *News for Kids* project at Igugu Primary School in Soweto on 25 April 2017.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Deutsche Presse-Agentur (German Press Agency) have entered into a partnership to provide learners with age-appropriate newspapers twice a month. The idea is to motivate learners to read more, to broaden their horizons and their general knowledge, whilst encouraging them to think critically, to enrich their vocabulary and to improve their English literacy skills.

The acting German Ambassador, Mr Klaus Streicher, said, “Reading is a very important culture that can enable young people to understand the world around them. This project seeks to urge young people to start cultivating a culture of reading for information *and* for pleasure. At present, *News for Kids* is delivered to only 20 schools in Gauteng, twice a month. We hope to extend the project to many more schools, and to the other provinces, in the near future.”

Primary School teacher Ms Thembaletu Mazibuko congratulated the DBE and the Deutsche Presse-Agentur on having initiated this project, saying that it would improve the level of literacy in South Africa. Ms Mazibuko said, “*News for Kids* will give learners confidence to master English as a medium of instruction.”

In conclusion, Minister Motshekga expressed the Department’s sincere appreciation towards the Deutsche Presse-Agentur for the partnership. She further stated that, through this project, learners would be empowered to use the English language skilfully and added that the project would assist learners in better understanding and accurately interpreting what they read.

Copies of the Memorandum of Agreement, signed by the Director-General of Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mveli and the CEO of Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Mr Peter Kropsch, were exchanged at the launch as symbolism of the partnership. This special occasion was also further celebrated when the Igugu Primary School Choir performed a special song about *News for Kids*, thereby further displaying their gratitude for the project and partnership aimed at strengthening basic education in South Africa.

Update: Director-General's Provincial Engagements



Taking his cue from the Minister of Basic Education, that in 2017 there should be two provincial engagements with school principals, district and provincial officials, the Director-General of Basic Education, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, began the first phase of day-long meetings in February 2017. The aim of the engagements is mainly to provide detailed province-specific analysis of both the 2015 *Trends In Mathematics Science Study* (TIMSS) report and the National Curriculum Statement 2016 results. The desired outcome is that the different layers in the education system will be able to use the analysis to develop credible plans to improve educational outcomes for their respective provinces.

Twenty-seven engagements were planned to ensure that all provincial and district officials, as well as primary and secondary school principals across the nine provinces were reached. Mr Mwel is currently wrapping up the first semester of his visits in the Western Cape Province. During the next semester, August to October 2017, follow-up engagements will take place with the same audience which will then deal with the state of readiness to determine progress made in implementing improvement plans.

The importance and impact of these engagements are not to be underestimated, as they serve to provide direction, leadership, inspiration and a shared vision, geared towards improved quality education, at all levels of the system.

Click on the below link for additional information on these Provincial Engagements:

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

M-Learning Innovations in support of Basic Education goals



KNOWLEDGE-SHARING WORKSHOP ON MOBILE
LEARNING FOR SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

As part of its contribution towards reaching *Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Inclusive Quality Education For All* and promoting lifelong learning, the DBE and UNICEF are of the view that mobile technologies can enable equitable access to quality learning opportunities.

The *DBE's Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030* in taking forward South Africa's *National Development Plan 2030*, recognises m-learning as an enabler for goals to strengthen teacher subject knowledge and pedagogical skills, providing access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to learners, engaging in district support and monitoring; and building parent and community participation in school governance.

During 2014 and 2015, the DBE, through the support of UNICEF and The Reach Trust, piloted the mobile learning (m-learning) platform, *Ukufunda Virtual*

School (UVS). An independent evaluation of the UVS, conducted during 2016, has revealed important lessons for the future design and implementation of m-learning for South African schools.

This resulted in a call for *Expressions of Interest* (EOI) being issued for mobile-learning (m-learning) innovations currently underway in South African public schools to share experiences with a wider m-learning community. A total of 19 innovators from various organisations and institutions responded to the call, of which 9 have been selected and invited to attend a knowledge sharing workshop on 10 May 2017, which will be hosted by the DBE and UNICEF, at Alpine Attitude in Menlo Park, Pretoria.

Of interest to the DBE and UNICEF is the evidence-based research that the innovators may have available on their initiatives, particularly evidence on how teachers and learners are using these solutions and whether these have led to improvements in teaching practice and learner performance. Furthermore, it will be interesting to know if these models are scalable and replicable.

10 May is Physical Education Day!



Physical Education plays an integral role in dealing with various issues such as obesity, overweight, stress, as well as heart related diseases. Learners therefore need to be educated about Physical Education and become active participants to lead a healthy lifestyle.

As part of the Physical Education Month celebrations that are taking place from 06 April to 10 May 2017, the Physical Education Institute of South Africa (PEISA), with the support of the DBE and its partners, will attempt to set a new world record for *the most people star jumping simultaneously at multiple venues for two consecutive minutes*. Schools and organisations will be required to synchronise their time (at exactly 08:00 on 10 May 2017) in order to all carry out the challenge and to record themselves accordingly under appropriate supervision.

The UNESCO Quality Physical Education Co-ordinator and head of PEISA, Mr Norman Mphake, said: "South Africa's Guinness World Record target is of 24,574 participants; each participant will be representing the total number of schools in South Africa. We therefore intend to submit evidence from 492 schools from all nine provinces with a minimum of 50 participants per venue".

PEISA, with the continued support of the Department and other stakeholders, will continue to advocate for a healthy, active and physically literate South Africa, whereby all learners of all abilities in all schools, with an inclusionary approach to girls and children living with disabilities, will have increased their participation in high quality, well organised Curriculum Orientated Physical Education. Physical Education day on 10 May serves to highlight and celebrate our achievements as a country in addressing this need. The practice of Physical Education is a fundamental right for all, which is essential for the full development of our learners. The freedom to develop physical, intellectual and moral powers through Physical Education must be guaranteed, both within the educational system and in other aspects of social life.

For more information on how to participate in making history, visit <http://www.gov.za/speeches/teaching-physical-education-12-apr-2017-0000> or call Norman Mphake (PEISA) on 073 211 7197.

Deworming Initiative supports the National School Nutrition Programme



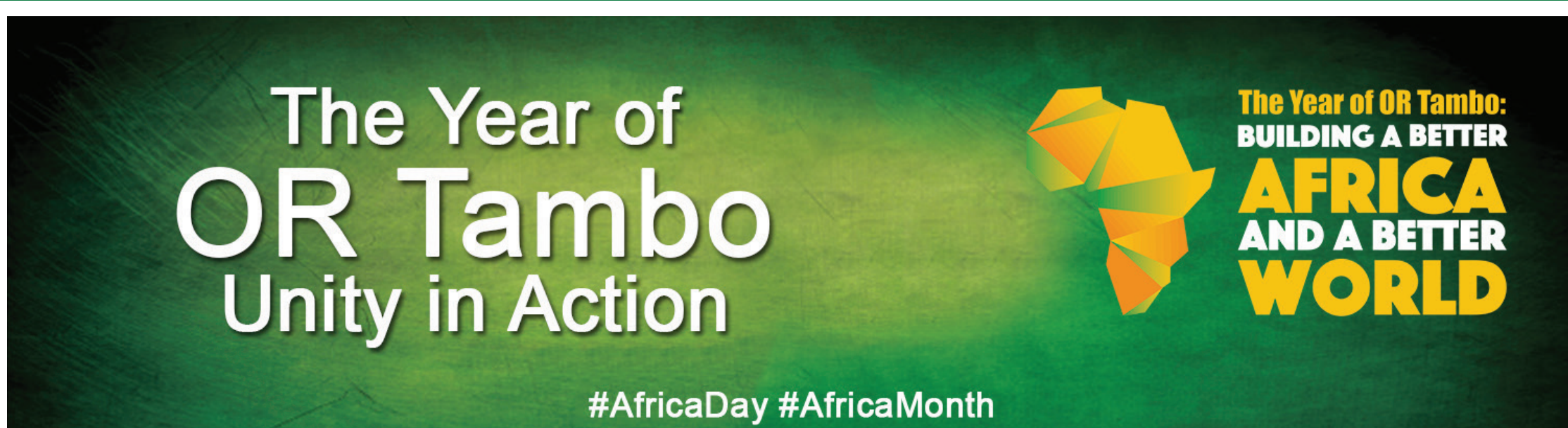
School-age children typically have the highest intensity of worm infection of any age group. Regular deworming contributes to good health and nutrition for children, which in turn leads to increased enrolment, attendance and increased educational attainment. The most disadvantaged children, such as orphans and vulnerable groups from poor communities, often suffer most from ill health and malnutrition, and gain the most benefit from deworming.

Deworming of learners is a cost effective way that provides consistent good results to improve the health of a community. For girls and boys aged 5 to 14 years in low-income countries, intestinal worms account for an estimated 11 and 12 percent contribution, respectively, of the total disease burden of this group. School-based deworming has its full impact only when good hygiene is promoted and practiced through regular hand washing; and by ensuring adequate sanitation and access to clean safe water.

The National School Deworming Programme targets primary school learners who participate in the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). Key partners in the Deworming Programme are the Department of Health (DoH), as the custodian of South African citizens' health programmes and medicine controls; the World Health Organisation (WHO), provided support in the donation of the medication (6.1 million 500mg Mebendazole tablets for this financial year) and the pharmaceutical company Johnson&Johnson is key in the distribution process. More than 5 million learners were dewormed during 2016.

The Programme is linked to a five year term to reduce worm infestation, to ensure that the health of learners is improved and that maximum benefits from nutrients provided in meals through the NSNP are obtained.

Celebrating Africa Month during May



The Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, invites all South Africans to join in the inaugural Africa Month celebrations. South Africa, as an integral part of the African continent, recognises its national interest to be intrinsically linked to continental stability, unity and prosperity. Our national interest is therefore defined by the development and upliftment of all African people. Africa Month seeks to increase appreciation and the demand for arts and culture goods and services to stimulate competitive markets for Intra-Africa trade.

Africa Month was officially launched on 03 May 2017 at Fountains Valley, Pretoria under the theme *“The Year of OR Tambo: Building a Better Africa and a Better World!”*. The Month of May is recognised as Africa Month, to celebrate the founding of the Organisation of African Unity on 25 May 1963. The 2017 Africa Month programme's key focal point will be on colloquia, creating discussion platforms for South Africans, especially local communities to engage in conversation.

In addition to the above, the Department of Arts and Culture seeks to inculcate an African identity through the popularisation of the national flag and continental flag, as well as the National Anthem and the African Union Anthem; and to engage in cultural African exchange to face our continental destiny together. This year's Africa Month programme offers activities that share knowledge on the role of Archives and their importance in preserving the history of the state and of the people. The Archives programme is further complemented by lectures and colloquia that focus on African history and the impact it has on our present and future. Specific activities are focused on youth engaging with our legacy and what they need to do to shape the future, whilst exploring the themes of *Agenda 2063*.

During Africa Month, the DBE will be hosting a special commemoration at Freedom Park in Pretoria on 27 May 2017 in honour of the late OR Tambo.



2017 ABC Motsepe Schools Eisteddfod



Recently, the National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC) for the ABC Motsepe Schools Eisteddfod, formerly known as the South African Schools Choir Eisteddfod (SASCE), converged at the DBE in Pretoria, to review the progress made by Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) and the DBE in terms of the preparatory processes for the 2017 Eisteddfod, to ensure the successful delivery of this annual flagship activity on the basic education sector calendar across all spheres of the Competition.

The NCC, which meets on a quarterly basis, constitutes representatives from the DBE, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), PED co-ordinators, Teacher Unions and the Motsepe Foundation. The responsibility of the NCC, among others, is to plan and co-ordinate all phases of the competition from circuit level to, the National Championships. Furthermore, the NCC is also responsible for co-ordinating the various development workshops that are aimed at growing the pool of quality adjudicators, conductors and data capturers for the Competition.

The ABC Motsepe Schools Eisteddfod remains one of the strongest mechanisms used to strengthen social cohesion in the country, particularly amongst learners. Government uses this competition to nurture the musical talents of these learners at school level in order to harness the potential and skill of aspiring musicians. The Competition also plays a pivotal role in supporting and enriching the curriculum and addressing social ills within communities.

Ms Tiisetso Maloba from the Sport and Enrichment in Education Directorate at the DBE indicated that, “Through this Competition, learners will also be encouraged to promote African languages through song”. Ms Maloba further highlighted that the celebration of the centenary of OR Tambo remains key in the 2017 Eisteddfod edition. “This year, the Competition will consist of 38 categories including solo renditions and mixed choirs, which accommodate up to 60 learners. The Competition is inclusive by nature to ensure that learners with special education needs are also given the opportunity to showcase their musical talents.”

Provincial Round-up



Gauteng Province

The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) reported that the online admission for Grades 1 and 8 for the 2018 academic year in Gauteng Province officially commenced on 02 May 2017 and will close at midnight on 12 June 2017. Parents can log on to www.gdeadmissions.gov.za to apply on behalf of their children to be admitted in schools for either Grade 1 or Grade 8 in 2018. Applications for re-enrolments for Grade 2 to 7 and Grade 9 to 11 commenced on 18 April 2017. The GDE confirmed that operating times at District Admission Operations centres are from 08:00 until 16:00; at public libraries from 08:00 until 12:00; and for the Call Centre is from 07:30 until 16:30 daily; and from 08:00 until 12:00 on Saturdays.

Upcoming Events

- 05 May 2017: Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to continue his Provincial Engagement Visits at the Outeniqua High School in George, Western Cape Province
- 06 May 2017: Verena Funeral in Wolvenkop, Mpumalanga Province
- 09 May 2017: Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to continue his Provincial Engagement Visits at the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI) in Kuils River, Western Cape Province
- 10 May 2017: Physical Education Day will be celebrated in all public schools
- 13 May 2017: Second Chance Matric Support Programme Roadshow in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province
- 20 May 2017: Second Chance Matric Support Programme Roadshow in Ladybrand, Free State
- 24 May 2017: Basic Education Budget Vote Debate in Parliament, Cape Town, Western Cape Province
- 25 May 2017: Africa Day
- 27 May 2017: A special Africa Day commemoration will be taking place at Freedom Park in Pretoria in honour of the late Oliver Reginald Tambo
- 13 – 15 June 2017: The DBE will be participating in the 8th South African AIDS Conference in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 29 July – 19 August 2017: National Schools Moot Court Competition essays are to be submitted to the University of Pretoria
- <http://www.education.gov.za/Programmes/SpellingBee.aspx>
- 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.

