



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

President Zuma to deliver State of the Nation Address



STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

by President Jacob Zuma

Thursday, 11 February 2016, from 19:00

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Together we move South Africa forward

President Jacob Zuma will deliver the State of the Nation Address (SoNA) in the National Assembly to a joint sitting of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces on 11 February 2016 at 19:00 in Parliament, Cape Town. The President will use the 2016 SoNA to outline key government priorities for the year ahead and also provide an update on the implementation of Government's Programme of Action (PoA).

As part of the SoNA, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) will be hosting over 30 live-viewing events in various communities countywide. These platforms offer South Africans from all walks of life an opportunity to access the President's speech. Local elected representatives such as MECs, mayors and councillors will also be at hand to unpack these announcements to communities. The SoNA will be followed by cluster media briefings from 16 February 2016, led by various Ministers. The briefings are expected to highlight key achievements in the implementation of the PoA; provide Government with an opportunity to inform the public about the PoA; and support and reinforce the announcements made by the President in the SoNA. A full list of the public-viewing areas will be available on the GCIS website, www.gcis.gov.za, from 10 February 2016.

Minister celebrates excellence at Ekurhuleni North District Awards

Minister Angie Motshekga honoured top learners and educators from the Ekurhuleni North District, by awarding top performers with trophies and ICT equipment at an awards ceremony held at Emperor's Palace on 29 January 2016. The Ekurhuleni North Grade 12 District Awards are the most prestigious awards in the Gauteng City Region. There were fourteen categories this year, including District Top Ten Learners and their Feeder Primary Schools, Most Improved Public Schools, Schools maintaining a 100% pass rate from 2012; as well as an Overall Top Learner Award 2015.

The event was sponsored by the OR Tambo International Airport and the Airports Company of South Africa, who acknowledged and rewarded top learners, educators and schools in the development of a culture of excellence. The Ekurhuleni North District was awarded fourth place out of the 81 education districts countrywide. The Minister acknowledged the extraordinary efforts of schools in the District, often achieved under very difficult conditions, as well as their commitment to serve the learners, many of whom come from poor communities.

The Minister went on to emphasize that education is a societal issue; and that by working together the outcomes of the National Development Plan can be achieved. Minister Motshekga also encouraged everyone present to become ambassadors for the Department's reading campaign. The *Read to Lead Campaign* is a four year programme of reading which aims to inspire and develop an interest in reading amongst learners, parents, teachers and business communities. The Campaign also aims to improve learner competence in Literacy and will create opportunities to motivate communities to read for enjoyment and personal development, as well as educational development.



Call for comments on proposed 2018 School Calendar



Minister Angie Motshekga has, after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers and in terms of Section 3(4)(k) of the *National Education Policy Act, 1996*, published the Proposed 2018 School Calendar for comment. All interested parties, including School Governing Bodies and members of the public, are invited to comment on the Proposed 2018 School Calendar by making submissions addressed for the Attention of Mr Sihle Mlambo, fax: 012 328 3532 or e-mail: mlambo.s@dbe.gov.za, and copy manaka.l@dbe.gov.za.

Submissions should be clearly articulated and submitted in writing, accompanied by the name, fax number and/or e-mail address of the person or organisation submitting the comments. All comments should reach the Department no later than 08 March 2016. For more information and to view a copy of the proposed 2018 School Calendar, kindly visit www.education.gov.za or contact Lindiwe Manaka on (Tel no.: 012 357 3449).

Launch of the 2016 Schools Physical Education Challenge

The DBE, in partnership with Supersport's *LetsPlay* initiative, launched the inaugural Schools Physical Education Challenge in 2016. Around 500 primary schools participated in the initiative last year. The challenge requires primary schools to have Grade 4 learners (boys and girls) to complete an obstacle course in a 45 minute period and the winner being the school that gets the largest number of learners to complete the course within that time period.

Last year, the winning school was Riverview Primary School in Worcester, Western Cape. The school won a state of the art multi-purpose court to the value of R1.3m sponsored by the Sports Trust. Hitachi Construction generously constructed the court free of charge. The court was handed over to the school on 29 January 2016 by Dr Granville Whittle, Deputy Director-General: Social Mobilisation and Support Services. Dr Whittle also officially opened the challenge to all primary schools for the 2016 school year. "Increased levels of physical activity is critical in ensuring that children remain healthy, which enables them to attend school on a regular basis. Healthy children have better concentration levels, and generally do better in school than their inactive peers," Dr Whittle said in his key note address. He also encouraged all schools to enter the Schools Physical Education Challenge this year.



Education stakeholders strengthen evidence-based research for policy makers

The DBE, in partnership with the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) in the Presidency, and the University of Stellenbosch, through Research on Socio-Economic Policy (ReSEP), hosted an Introduction to Evidence-Based Research (data analysis) for Policy Makers capacity building workshop at the DBE Conference Centre in Pretoria from 01 to 04 February 2016. The aim of the workshop was to provide an introductory mapping of available quantitative research and existing educational data sets in South Africa and to focus on the required data analysis skills for presenting and interpreting research findings and quantitative evidence. The primary objective of the capacity building workshop was to use available education information and to exploit both older and new datasets to expand the evidence-base on the major impediments to quality education for the poor. The workshop took the form of a series of lectures and facilitated sessions by technical specialists from the DBE and the broader sector, as well as exposure to a number of data sets used in the education system.

In her opening remarks, the Chief Director for the Strategic Planning, Research and Co-ordination, Ms Carol Nuga Deliwe, said that "Quality data helps education authorities to map the current situation, specify targets and monitor progress. The collection and use of high-quality, timely data are essential for evidence-based planning, management and policy-making". Nuga Deliwe further added that "Understanding and being able to complete statistical data analysis are key tools to observe trends, measure disparities and estimate inequalities in educational development. Insight into the relationship between various factors affecting system performance provides the basis for sound decision-making". The workshop was aimed at both national and provincial level policy makers at middle and senior manager levels; and is intended to contribute to better policy development and efficiency in delivering quality education.

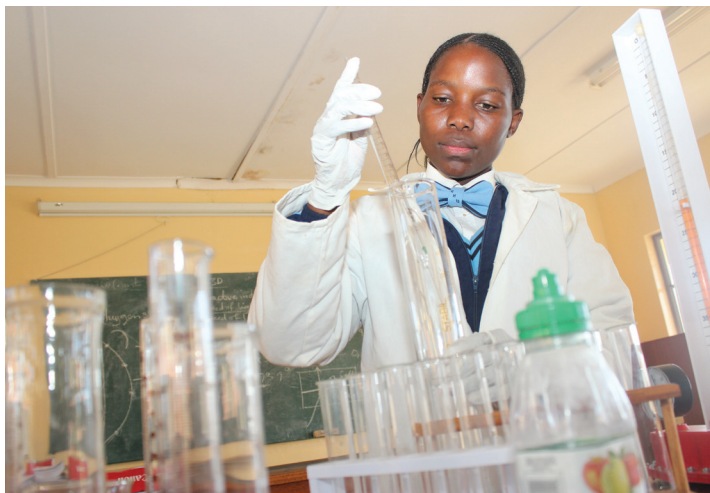
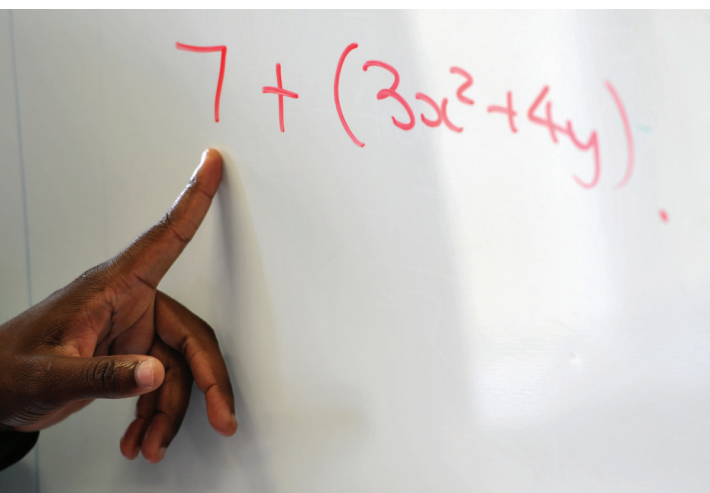


Strengthening Maths, Science and Technology education in 2016

The DBE aims to strengthen basic education sectoral performance through the improvement of learner performance in Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST). There is a need to produce learners who are proficient, innovative and capable of competing nationally and internationally. The performance in Mathematics and Physical Science, which are gateway subjects, continue to show an increase in the number of passes, although the pass percentage in these subjects has decreased. The number of learners passing Mathematics has increased from 120,523 in 2014 to 129,481 in 2015; while the number of learners passing Physical Sciences has increased from 103,348 in 2014 to 113,121 in 2015.

The Department is committed to strengthening MST education by employing strategies to achieve increased learner participation and improved performance in Maths and Science; improve teacher demand, supply, utilisation, development and support; improve provisioning of resources through the MST conditional grant; improve partnerships and collaborations; and introduce continuous qualitative and quantitative research as part of monitoring and evaluation. As part of its priorities, the Department is committed to strengthening Technical and Vocational Education in order to improve the economic participation of a number of its citizens, which is in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) and its call for radical transformation of the skills development areas within the education sector. This radical transformation calls for an unprecedented increase in the number of artisans produced by the country in 2030.

The Department is therefore focusing on providing a meaningful contribution to the targets set by the NDP. This will be achieved through an introduction of the new Three Stream Model in the basic education sector, which consists of Academic, Technical and Vocational or Occupational pathways. It is widely recognised that intensive and strategic investment in MST education is critical to the country and its economic future.



CAPS for South African Sign Language training underway

The implementation of the CAPS for South African Sign Language (SASL) commenced in January 2015 in the Foundation Phase and Grade 9; and will be gradually phased into other grades. This year, the implementation will be extended to the Intermediate Phase and Grade 10. The follow-up SASL CAPS training session for the Intermediate Phase, Grades 9 to 10 teachers and Deaf Teaching Assistants will take place from 15 to 19 February 2016 at the Lakes Hotel and Conference Centre in Benoni. Supporting material for the implementation of the SASL CAPS will be made available for stakeholders. Five (5) DVDs and supporting documentation for the programme on the SASL CAPS training session, conducted in November 2015, will be uploaded on the DBE website.



ASIDI update

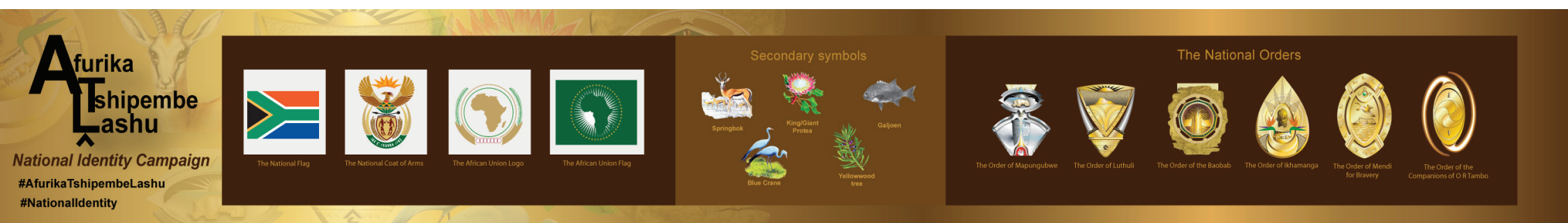


The objective of the Accelerated School Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) is to eradicate the Basic Safety Norms backlog in schools without water, sanitation and electricity; and to replace schools constructed from inappropriate material, to contribute towards levels of optimum learning and teaching.

The number of completed ASIDI schools has risen to 135 with the completion of Pele-Ya-Pele Secondary School in Limpopo. Pele-Ya-Pele Secondary School was built at an approximate cost of R30 million and has 29 classrooms, including a fully functional administration block. As with all ASIDI schools, it also boasts multipurpose and media centres, science and computer

laboratories and school nutrition programme facilities. 171 jobs were created during the construction of the school. The next school to be officially handed-over to the community will be Heukile Primary School in the Eastern Cape, which will be officially opened in the Cofimvaba District on 05 February 2016.

Our national identity, our pride



The newly launched National Identity Campaign forms part of Government's nation-building and social cohesion campaign. The theme of the Campaign is: *Afurika Tshipembe lashu* (meaning Our South Africa). Specific events of the campaign include promoting the singing of the National Anthem, hoisting of the national flag and reciting of the Preamble of the *Constitution* in public schools. Through strong partnerships, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) envisages to reach all public schools, business and all public formations in an effort to strengthen relations amongst fellow South Africans towards a common identity. Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, has called on South Africans to work with Government to resolve the country's challenges, which threaten the advancement of democracy and stability. Recently the country witnessed incidents of racism on social media, political tensions on the subject of statues and place names, as well as incidents of racial tensions or conflict in institutions of higher learning and on farms.

Using the *Constitution* as a guide, citizens must work towards eradicating the divisions and injustices of the past, and do more to build a more inclusive society and economy. We must strive for the recognition of shared symbols and values, and promote a countrywide conscious sense of being proudly South African. To this effect, Government calls on all South Africans to unite and break down the artificial barriers based on race, class and cultural differences. Let us all promote and build a common national identity. Together we must build a new society that caters for all and break down the barriers that divide us.

Provincial Round-up

Western Cape



MEC for the Western Cape Department of Education, Debbie Schäfer, recently cautioned against the operating of illegal schools after it was brought to her attention that there are a number of institutions that are claiming to operate as independent schools and that have been enrolling learners for the 2016 academic year. The *South African Schools Act* states that no person may establish or maintain an independent school unless it is registered by the Head of Department; and that a Member of the Executive Council must, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, determine the grounds on which the registration of an independent school may be granted or withdrawn by the Head of Department. All independent schools have to operate within the confines of the *Constitution* and national and provincial legislation. Parents are advised to ensure that the school that they enrol their children at has a registration certificate. They are also urged to contact the WCED if they are suspicious of a school which cannot present a registration certificate, or if they suspect that the school is operating illegally.

Gauteng



The Gauteng MEC for Education, Panyaza Lesufi, recently launched the first special school for Autism in Orlando West, Soweto. Thulasizwe School for Autism is the first of its kind in Gauteng to bring specialised support to learners with Autism within reach to parents who are financially and otherwise challenged. The learners will have access to a professional nurse, who will be stationed at the school. The school has been specially customised to cater for these learners. Each District in Gauteng has one school for Autism to ensure that learners with Autism are attending school and are not excluded due to a lack of financial support, and other challenges.

Upcoming Events

- 05 February 2016: Heukile Primary School in the Eastern Cape will be officially opened as part of the ASIDI programme in the Cofimvaba District
- 12 February 2016: President Jacob Zuma's State of the Nation (SoNA) address in Parliament, Cape Town
- 15 to 19 February 2016: Follow-up SASL CAPS training for the Intermediate Phase and Grades 9 to 10 at the Lakes Hotel and Conference Centre in Benoni
- 16 February 2016: Ministerial Launch of the Deworming Programme in Cape Town
- 24 February 2016: Development Partner's Forum at the DBE in Pretoria
- 27 February 2016: National Teaching Awards (NTAs)
- 08 March 2016: Closing date for the call for comment on the proposed 2018 School Calendar
- 14 March 2016: Minister's Excellence in Schools and Districts Awards at the Presidential Guesthouse in Pretoria