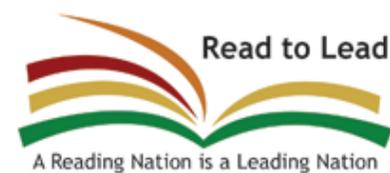




basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

DBE provides testimony before The Commission of Inquiry into Higher Education and Training



The Commission of Inquiry into Higher Education and Training (“the Fees Commission”) is currently holding public hearings into the question of whether or not it is feasible to provide fee-free higher education and training. The Commission commenced Set 6 of its public hearings on 08 February 2017, which intends to interrogate the available and/or alternative sources of funding the Post School Education and Training (PSET) Sector. The Commission will also analyse models on funding of Higher Education and Training relied on in other countries, and whether or not these are suitable in the South African context.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) was identified as a crucial stakeholder to give testimony on several significant matters affecting the schooling system, including learner retention, the Three Stream Model, as well as the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. The senior officials who represented the Department at this Commission were the Deputy Director-General for Planning, Information and Assessments, Mr Paddy Padayachee, the DBE Spokesperson, Mr Elijah Mhlanga, the Director for the Initial Teacher Education Directorate, Mr Gerrit Coetzee and Acting Director for the Research, Co-ordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate, Dr Stephen Taylor. The final report on the meeting and the way forward will be released by the Department of Higher Education and Training once all aspects of the Commission’s work has been completed.

Deputy Minister Surty delivers keynote address at the handing-over of a state-of-the-art library to Freedom Park Primary School



Deputy Minister Enver Surty delivered the keynote address at Freedom Park Primary School in Devland, Johannesburg on 31 January 2017, as part of the official hand-over of a new library that was donated to the school in support of the *Read to Lead Campaign*. The Hyundai Motor Corporation and the Imperial and Ukhamba Community Development Trust donated their 24th library at the event as part of their partnership pledge in support of the Department of Basic Education's mission to promote reading by providing school libraries.

Ms Bella Eunji from the Hyundai Motor Corporation in South Korea remarked that the library would help learners to acquire in-depth knowledge in various areas of learning. Ms Eunji also encouraged learners to use the facility regularly to boost their reading and writing skills.

Addressing the Devland community, Deputy Minister Surty said that reading is the cornerstone of improved learner performance and urged teachers to use the resources to advance their academic performance: "Learners must have access to a range of reading material which stimulates their interest. The fact that the majority of South African children come from homes with little or no reading material makes the role of school libraries extremely important in providing such access".

The Deputy Minister further added that: "The ability to read well is probably the most crucial skill that has to be taught in schools and a positive attitude to reading is one of the most important values required. How much and how well a person reads has an impact on all aspects of life: performance at school, personal development, further education and training, social empowerment and professional success. Better reading skills have a positive impact on all aspects of learning. Learners are able to understand the content of textbooks". Deputy Minister Surty concluded by thanking all the stakeholders for assisting Government in improving quality learning and teaching in the country.

DBE and ABSA launch training programme to strengthen financial management in schools

The DBE and ABSA have partnered to improve the financial management skills of thousands of education officials and members of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) at public schools across the country. The School Governing Body Financial Management Programme aims to strengthen financial management and improve accountability of schools. The initiative has already been implemented in four provinces: Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. To date more than 10,500 SGB members and 1,146 school circuit managers have completed the training. These officials represent more than 2,700 schools in 38 districts in the four provinces. The training was necessitated by the increasing number of requests to the bank from schools to provide them with overdraft facilities; and their inability to produce financial statements and budgets, in many instances, as part of their annual legislated reporting to Provincial Departments of Education.

Dr Reaan Immelman, Head of Education and Skills Citizenship at ABSA, said: "Further research revealed that a substantial number of public schools, both fee and non-fee paying, lacked proper financial management and governance practices. A key objective of this partnership with the DBE is therefore to improve this situation through institutional capacity building in order to contribute towards improving the learning environment and delivery of quality education at schools. We believe that with good governance comes better teaching and learning outcomes".

The School Governing Body Financial Management Programme was designed by facilitators from ABSA's Learning, Leadership and Talent unit and was endorsed by the DBE. The Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, said: "Although we have had other interventions with regard to financial training before, we've never had a programme as accessible as the one provided by ABSA. To partner with a financial institution that fully understands these challenges is also a first for us. In addition, whereas other programmes tend to be province-specific, this particular course has been the only one which has been rolled out on such a large scale by a single sponsor. The impact of such an intervention is already being felt. For this, we are very grateful to ABSA and proud of this association".

Click on the below link for the full media release:

<http://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/MediaRelease/tabid/347/ctl/Details/mid/5986/ItemID/4264/Default.aspx>

National Schools Moot Court Competition teaches learners constitutional values and human rights principles



Although South Africa has come a long way since the dawn of democracy; language, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic inequities and divisions are still evident. These divisions emphasise the importance for young people to become knowledgeable of their constitutional rights and values, as well as the principles of the country's Supreme Law to develop active and disciplined citizenry. The hypothetical problem statement that learners are invited to write an essay about involves matters about freedom of expression and association, the right to education, cultural rights and many more.

The DBE, in partnership with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, the Universities of Pretoria, Venda and the Western Cape, the Foundation for Human Rights and the Law Society of South Africa, hosts the National Schools Moot Court Competition on an annual basis. Since its inception in 2011, the National Schools Moot Court Competition has managed to explore various sections of *The Bill of Rights* such as Rights, Equality, Freedom of expression and Human Dignity and offers a dialogic and experiential platform for the youth to experiment with the actual application of the country's laws. The seventh National Schools Moot Court Competition will be held from 04 to 08 October 2017 at the University of Pretoria and at the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg. All secondary school learners (Grade 8 -11) are invited to enter as a team of two learners. They are to prepare an essay on a fictional Constitutional Court case, as both applicants and respondents to the case.

The Competition comprises of four stages: registration, essay workshops, essay writing and the provincial and national finals. Workshops are conducted in collaboration with the University of Pretoria, private law firms, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, the South African Legal Aid Board and Foundations for Human Rights across the various provinces. The written essays are used to identify the learners who qualify for the provincial finals. The provincial finals, in turn, provide an opportunity for the oral argument presentations which take place across the nine provinces between August and September. During the national finals, each province is represented by a delegation of eight learners (4 teams). The oral argument workshop for the national finalists takes place during October; it prepares the finalists to argue as both applicants and respondents. All 36 teams participate in oral arguments at the University of Pretoria. The best four teams are then selected to take part in the finals at the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg. The top finalists are presented with a bursary to study towards law at the University of their choice. The learners will also participate in the biennial International Schools Moot Court Competition in 2018 in The Hague in the Netherlands.

Models for Professional Teacher Development and Professional Learning Communities Colloquium



A two day Colloquium on Models for Professional Teacher Development (PTD) and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) was hosted at the DBE from 05 to 06 December 2016. The Colloquium brought together delegates from the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), the Department of Higher Education and Training, teacher unions, universities, classroom and school-based educators, and social partners such as the British Council and the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB). The aim of the colloquium was to discuss ways of improving teacher professional development practices in the country.

Deputy Minister for Basic Education, Mr Enver Surty, addressed the delegates, saying that, “The Colloquium will provide guidance and proposals on the best models for PTD and review best practices on how PLCs could be positioned and made more effective in contributing to the professional development of teachers in our schools as educators are at the centre of teaching.”

The first day’s discussions focussed on the sharing of good practice and presentations were made by Mr Ravindra Surju (Glenhaven Secondary School-KZN Province) and Ms Thuli Shungube from Buzini School (Mpumalanga Province). Dr Nick Taylor (Jet Education Services) and Prof Karin Brodie, Professor in Education and Mathematics Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, also added their input on Teacher Development Models and PLCs. It was agreed that it is important to foster a research culture as a built-in part of any programme, from initiation to completion, and to evaluate and monitor impact.

All the teacher unions also had an opportunity to share their ideas on best practice before the delegates were divided into discussion groups, which focussed on four themes: Formal Qualification Programmes, Structured Short Courses and Professional Bodies; Off-site Non School-based Workshops; DBE, PED, and District-based Programmes; and School-based Provision and Individually-driven PTD.

Key points from the discussions was that closer collaboration with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) and Higher Education Institutions is necessary, planning, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation are important to indicate which areas are receiving attention and which ones are neglected, alignment processes and standards between SACE and the Department of Higher education and Training (DHET) need to be achieved to accelerate capacity building, along with strong feedback routes through school management, provincial and district levels. Reference was also made to the partnerships with the various universities as these collaborations with Higher Education Institutions will also assist PTD. Subject Advisors and lead teachers capacity should be enhanced, strengthened and supported via Information and Communication Technology (ICTs). Online courses, the integration of ICT and open-source education resources via the Vodacom partnership, Ukufunda and the DBE Cloud will assist with the acquisition of 21st-century skills.

Long and medium term planning is necessary and three-year plans are currently being submitted by the various provinces as collaborative planning is required for the integration of the system and the elimination of silos. The DBE will also develop guidelines for provinces and districts to strengthen implementation. Documentation will be developed in collaboration with partners such as the British Council and VVOB, along with a national advocacy campaign. A report on the Colloquium will be submitted to the Council for Education Ministers (CEM) and Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) early in 2017. The target is also to report on all the targets set out in the ISPFTED by end 2017 as the second milestone point in the 15 year plan in order to strengthen the co-ordination and effective delivery of teacher development programmes across the schooling system.

The Directorate: Initial Teacher Education, recently published an Orientation Booklet for the professional development of teachers and principals. Click on the below links for more information:

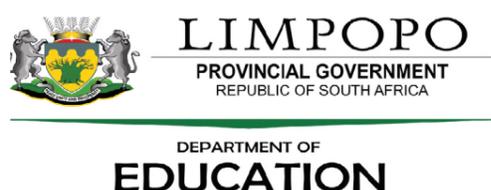
<http://www.education.gov.za/Informationfor/Teachers.aspx>

Regional Round-up



Eastern Cape Province

The Director-General for the DBE, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, met with the Eastern Cape Department of Education Senior Management Team on 08 February 2017. The meeting forms part of the Director-General's Provincial Oversight visits to lead interventions aimed at improving educational outputs in the entire basic education system and share insights from the *Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2015*. The Head of the Eastern Cape Department of Education, Mr Themba Kojana and the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) Executive Director, Dr Vijay Reddy lead discussions during the meeting.



Limpopo Province

Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, recently announced that Government will soon commence with the construction of new schools in both the Vuwani and the Malamulele areas in the Limpopo Province. These Schools were torched in the two areas during last year's community protests. Minister Motshekga added that schools in the area that suffered storm damage will also benefit from the R150 million that has been set aside for the projects.

Upcoming Events

- 10 February 2017: Deputy Minister, Enver Surty to hand-over a container library donated by AVBOV to Amstelhof Primary School in Paarl in the Western Cape Province
- 13 February 2016: The Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to visit the Free State Province as part of the Provincial Oversight visits
- 16 February 2017: World Read Aloud Day to be celebrated in Durban in the KwaZulu-Natal Province as part of the *Read to Lead Campaign*
- 16 February 2016: Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to visit Emakhazeni in the Mpumalanga Province as part of the Provincial Oversight visits
- 20 February 2016: Director-General for Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, to visit Welkom in the Free State 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
- 28 February 2017: National Schools Moot Court Competition hypothetical problem statement for 2017 to be distributed to all secondary schools
- 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.