



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

Winners of Monetary Policy Committee Schools Challenge announced



It was an emotional celebration for learners from the Albert Moroka Secondary School from the Free State Province who walked away with the night's top honours at the SA Reserve Bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) Schools Challenge on Tuesday night, 01 August 2017.

The competition was heralded as a major success as schools from seven of the country's nine provinces who had to assume the role of the Governor to set up their own MPC and to make important decisions on the repo rate based on information they received for analysis to prepare a Monetary Policy Statement.

"I must congratulate all participating schools and learners. I must stress that winning is not everything, but the effort to win is. The Challenge was conceptualised with an understanding of the immense need to improve financial and economic literacy among our young people," said Minister Angie Motshekga, who was incredibly impressed with the talent and ability of the learners who participated.

Reserve Bank Governor, Mr Lesetja Kganyago, was also extremely impressed by the calibre of learners represented. He commented in jest that he was quite convinced that one of them would replace him in the near future.

The competition winners broke down in tears of joy after it was announced that they were the ultimate winners. They walked away with prizes that included R8,000 each and Apple iPads.

However, members of the winning team will also have their names put forward to receive South African Reserve Bank bursaries. Should they go on to meet the criteria to be awarded a Reserve Bank bursary, the full costs of their undergraduate degree (up to R75,000 per year), including tuition, accommodation, books and sundries, paid for.

The MPC Challenge inspires young people to understand the role of economics in the day-to-day lives of South Africans, but will also hopefully inspire these great young minds to pursue a career in economics.

It is envisioned that this competition will continue to grow from strength to strength with all nine provinces participating in next year's Challenge.

This year's winning schools were:

Position	School	Province
1	Albert Moroka High School	Free State Province
2	Boksburg High School	Gauteng Province
3	Hoërskool Waterkloof	Gauteng Province
4	Orhovelani High School	Mpumalanga Province
5	Finetown Secondary School	Gauteng Province
6	Botleng Secondary School	Mpumalanga Province
7	Wilmary Christian Learning Centre	Limpopo Province

Congratulations to all the winners!

Hand-over of Hawston Primary School brings joy, hope and invigorated spirit to the community of Hawston



Approximately 100km outside Cape Town lies the sleepy fishing town of Hawston. Located along the famed “whale coast”, this town is situated in a low income area with a high unemployment rate, often leading to the poaching of endangered Perlemoen or Abalone. On Thursday, 10 August 2017, the town was abuzz with hundreds of community members as Basic Education Deputy Minister, Mr Enver Surty, officially handed-over Hawston Primary School to the community.

Built at a cost of R64 million, Hawston Primary School forms part of the 25 schools that have been handed-over to the Western Cape community as part of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative (ASIDI) Programme. As with all ASIDI schools, the school is provided with a Nutrition Centre, a Computer Laboratory, a Resource Centre and a Multipurpose Centre, and the school's 1,155 learners now have a school that they can be proud of.

“This school is a testimony to the commitment that Government has made to the development of South Africa's learners and to the continued improvement of the education sector and school infrastructure. This school offers the best facilities to afford the learners of the Western Cape Province an opportunity to pursue careers in Marine Biology, the Hospitality Industry, Tourism, Fisheries and many other professions. Parents, there is no reason why our children cannot attain their dreams,” Deputy Minister Surty said.

With a total of 180 schools completed to date, 445 schools provided with access to sanitation, 306 schools with electricity and a further 619 schools with fresh water, the ASIDI Programme is contributing to positive change in our communities.

Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate textbooks and learning and teaching support material



The Department of Basic Education (DBE) is responsible for the promotion of equality and the appreciation of diversity by ensuring that textbooks are free from bias in terms of race, sex, gender and other forms of discrimination. It is therefore vital that the DBE examines textbooks to ensure that appropriate values are portrayed.

The Directorate: Social Cohesion and Equity in Education, had undertaken a mini evaluation of a sample of school textbooks and Learning and Teaching Material (LTSM) which indicated that, although a screening process is conducted, textbooks still contain discriminatory content. The Department has therefore established a Ministerial Committee to evaluate a broad sample of existing textbooks and LTSM aimed at the development of a textbook policy which promotes diversity. The Committee has been selected based on their expertise and experience in the fields of education research and diversity.

The DBE gathered and collated data from all nine provinces, and thereafter, the Ministerial Committee completed the qualitative evaluation process and has compiled overview findings per subject. These findings were presented to Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, on 10 April 2017. The Committee also presented their findings to the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM), the Ministerial Management Meeting (MMM) and the Council of Education Ministers (CEM).

Summarised findings from the quantitative analysis reflect the following: Race and Gender in textbooks reflect the demographic diversity of South Africa, but there is a distinct disproportionality in the ways different groups are captured; In terms of age, there's a bigger representation of learners and adults, but older people or pensioners and babies/children are seldom featured; In terms of sexuality, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) community is rarely represented; There is dominant representation of the middle class in textbooks; and There are notable silences and omissions in terms of religion, family status and disability. The IsiZulu quantitative analysis is still underway and the findings will be available in due course.

Public consultations will be held in all nine provinces from 02 August to 04 September 2017, focusing on two venues per province. In order to ensure diversity, consultations will be held in both rural and urban areas.

DBE organises workshop for School Improvement Support Co-ordinators and Project Managers on the strengthening of data utilisation in the system



The strengthening of data utilisation in crafting performance improvement interventions is a critical component of the work of the education sector. The DBE and Provincial Departments of Education (PEDs) are currently working together to ensure the development of evidence-based interventions. This work is happening through the School Improvement Support Co-ordinators, a DBE team that is based in the various provinces, and who are led by Project Managers. The responsibilities of the team include working with district officials, especially Circuit Managers, to strengthen the utilisation of data in crafting circuit improvement plans. The intention is to enhance the strategic management of schools to ensure that performance is improved.

On 03 and 04 August 2017, the Branch: Planning and Delivery Oversight Unit (PDOU), led by Deputy Director-General, Mrs Palesa Tyobeka, organised a workshop for approximately 37 School Improvement Support Co-ordinators and five Project Managers to enhance their skills of utilising data to improve performance in the system. The two-day workshop created a platform of engagement and networking for these officials to share best practices.

Mr Jabulani Ngcobo, Deputy Director from the PDOU who oversees these officials said: “One of the main reasons we conducted this workshop was to deepen the team’s understanding of their role in this School Improvement Support initiative. The workshop was critical as a lever for ensuring that the officials have a better understanding of the role of data utilisation in the processes to improve performance in the system”. One of the issues that came out clearly during the discussions was the necessity to look beyond the headlines (such as performance in Mathematics and Physical Sciences) into other variables that constitute performance. The discussion also touched on the DBE’s inclusive basket of criteria as a mechanism to understand performance trends in the system, and the focus on the National Senior Certificate (NSC) pass rate. Another issue that surfaced during presentations was the significant number of learners who enter for, but do not write the NSC examinations across provinces.

Project Manager from the Northern Cape Province, Mr John Motseonageng, indicated that the workshop was fruitful and galvanised the team’s efforts towards dealing with underperformance in the system. “I appreciate the efforts made by the DBE in establishing this team. It will make a huge impact within the education sector, particularly on the issues of data utilisation.”

In her address Mrs Tyobeka stated that it is critical that the data is used accurately to guide the system as to the interventions to be implemented. “I have to acknowledge the co-operation that we have received from the PEDs in this performance improvement initiative. Without the support and co-operation of provinces, it would have been difficult to improve performance in the system.”

Pretoria Chinese School learners win the 2017 Chinese Bridge Chinese Proficiency Competition



Learning to speak Mandarin might seem difficult, but persistence and passion beats all the odds. It took only practice and dedication for Lebone Kgengwenyane and Tsatsi Mobakano from the Pretoria Chinese School to learn the basics of Mandarin as an additional language that was recently introduced in the South African Schooling system. The two learners won the 2017 *Chinese Bridge* Chinese Proficiency Competition which took place at the DBE in Pretoria on 05 August 2017.

The two champions were rated as the best Mandarin speaking learners after a set of Mandarin performances including a written test, prepared speeches and presentations. The national winners were awarded flight tickets to China, including accommodation and travel expenses. They will join other learners from around the globe in the Final *Chinese Bridge* International Competition, which will be taking place in Kunming, China, where they stand a chance to win a Confucius Institute Scholarship to study at various Chinese Universities.

The *Chinese Bridge* Chinese Proficiency Competition is an annual event funded by the Confucius Institute Headquarters in Hanban. This initiative is intended to encourage more students to learn the Chinese language and culture and also helps learners to improve their Chinese speaking ability by competing with their peers in a friendly and fun environment. The Competition is open to non-native Mandarin learners who are full-time students currently learning Mandarin as an additional language at any South African School. This year, the Competition involved 22 learners from schools around Gauteng and the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces.

As part of the co-operation between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa on issues concerning basic education, South Africa has taken steps to introduce Mandarin as a Second Additional Language (SAL) in schools. At present, there are 4,998 Mandarin learners in 52 South African schools which offer Mandarin SAL with the support of China.

In her address, Director for Curriculum Implementation and Quality Improvement (GET), Ms Waheeda Carvello, told the attendees that the Competition will provide learners with confidence in public speaking. Ms Carvello further thanked the Chinese Government for collaborating with South Africa on matters of basic education, adding that, "it is a huge milestone that Mandarin has been introduced in public schools. This partnership will further strengthen trade relations between the two countries in the near future".

Representative from the Chinese Embassy, Mr Song Bo, was impressed with the learners' Mandarin speaking ability: "There is huge progress being made in terms of teaching learners Mandarin in this country. We would like to work towards increasing the number of schools that teach mandarin as part of the curriculum to reach out to as many learners as possible."

Lebone Kgengwenyane indicated that one has to have a passion for a language to learn to speak it: "It has been a wonderful experience for me to participate in this Competition. I am very excited and can't wait to go to China. Hopefully, my Mandarin will have improved by the time I return to South Africa".

Countdown to the 2017 DBE Spelling Bee South Africa Championship



All nine provinces are set to participate in the 2017 Department of Basic Education (DBE) Spelling Bee South Africa Championship to be hosted at the University of South Africa on 23 September 2017. The top three provincial spellers from each province will make their way to Pretoria where the top three national spellers will be awarded prizes for their excellent spelling ability.

As in previous years, the first place winner will walk away with a Monash Scholarship to the value of R250,000, a trophy, a medal and an Oxford Dictionary. Looking at the impact of the Championship, it is evident that the efforts made by teachers in mastering early grade reading is one of the most important skills that need to be emphasised throughout the schooling system.

The Championship, which targets learners in Grade 4 to 6 (the Intermediate Phase), is aimed at improving learners' performance in languages, especially in English. More than 1,020 words have been shared with all the registered schools to prepare learners to become champion spellers.

DBE Spelling Bee Co-ordinator, Mr Potledi Ngoepe, indicated: "Apart from improving the level of literacy in the Intermediate Phase, the Spelling Bee should also be viewed as one of the key programmes that promote social cohesion in public schools. We also use this initiative to assist learners to build their self-confidence and self-esteem."

Mr Ngoepe explained the processes, procedures and rules of the Championship: "As usual, the Spelling Bee Championship consists of four rounds. In the first two rounds learners are given two chances to correctly spell a word. However, a speller can be eliminated in this round if he/she is given two chances and still fails to spell correctly. In round three, the spellers are given only one chance to spell a word correctly. During round four, which can be referred to as the elimination round, all the remaining spellers (27 spellers if none have been eliminated), compete spelling the same word. The learners remaining from the elimination round then continue to compete for a second and third place in the competition.

Click on the below link for additional information about the Championship:

<http://www.education.gov.za/Programmes/SpellingBee.aspx>

Regional Roundup



Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape PED recently held a career expo at the Willowvale Stadium, 30 kilometres from Idutywa village. This career expo forms part of a series of planned career exhibitions that will be taking place across the Province. The two day career expo saw learners from 16 local secondary schools engaging with industry specialists who advised them on, and provided them with information about career pathing. According to a study conducted by the PED, the information available to learners as to which subjects to choose when they commence with Grade 10, has a direct effect on the career path they follow. The PED has invited sister departments, universities and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges to exhibit at these career expos. Many learners do not know what career path to follow when they complete Grade 12, but teachers should encourage them to study and follow their dreams. The PED therefore believes that teachers need to be empowered to assist with career guidance. The PED intends to empower teachers to help learners to manage their career choices responsibly and pro-actively.

Upcoming Events

- 29 July – 19 August 2017: National Schools Moot Court Competition essays are to be submitted to the University of Pretoria
- 14 August 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) at Zweletemba High School in Worcester and in Cape Town, Western Cape Province
- 15 August 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) at Kimberley Teacher Centre Hall and Daniëlskuil High School, Northern Cape Province
- 16 and 17 August 2017: Release of the Early Grade Study (North West Study Findings) to take place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 18 August 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) in Gauteng Province
- 18 August 2017: Release of the SACMEQ IV and *The Skills for a Changing World* Reports during a Roundtable to be held at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 19 August – 22 September 2017: The hosting of the provincial rounds of the National Schools Moot Court Competition
- 21 August 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) at Makhazeni Boarding School and the Enhlizeni District Office in Machachodorp, Mpumalanga Province
- 24 August 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) in the Limpopo Province
- 25 August 2017: DBE's Women's Day event to be hosted in Gauteng Province
- 28 August 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) in the North West Province
- 31 August 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) in the Free State Province
- 04 September 2017: Ministerial Committee to host public consultations to evaluate Textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) in the KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 23 September 2017: The 2017 National Spelling Bee Competition to be hosted at the University of South Africa (UNISA)
- 24 September 2017: Heritage Day
- 27 September 2017: World School Milk Day will be celebrated in the Western Cape Province
- 30 September – 02 October 2017: The Inks Albert Luthuli Oral History Competition to take place in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 01 – 03 October 2017: The Transnet Rural and Farm Schools National Tournament to take place at the Germiston Stadium, Gauteng Province
- 02 – 07 October 2017: The Sanlam Kay Motsepe Schools Cup National Championships to take place in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province
- 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
- 05 October 2017: World Teachers' Day
- 09 – 15 October 2017: A National Nutrition Week Commemoration will be taking place under the theme: *"Rethink your drink – Choose Water"* in the Gauteng and North West Provinces
- 09 - 22 October 2017: A National Nutrition Week *"So Chef"* workshop will be taking place in partnership with the French Embassy in four provinces (Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape) and in five cities (Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town)
- 23 October 2017: Start of the 2017 National Senior Certificate Examinations
- 28 November 2017: End of the 2017 National Senior Certificate Examinations
- 10 – 14 December 2017: The South African School Sport National Championships (Summer Games) to take place in Cape Town, Western Cape Province
- 04 January 2018: Ministerial Announcement of the 2017 National Senior Certificate Examination Results
- 17 January 2018: Start of the 2018 Academic School Year
- 01 – 31 March 2018: School Governing Body (SGB) Elections



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.