



basic education

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



## NEWSLETTER

# Women's Day event at Constitution Hill



Celebrating some of the most impressive women in the history of our country, Constitution Hill and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) held a Women's Day event to share the stories and lives of Ma Charlotte Maxeke and Ma Adelaide Tambo with young people.

Learners from a number of Gauteng schools were the guests of honour who were eager to learn about the struggles of women who came before them - women, who were prisoners of the former Women's Prison that now forms part of the Constitution Hill museum.

Learners were also taken on a tour of the Women's Prison and listened to the emotional stories about women who were kept in the prison and tortured, from one of the women who experienced it first hand, Ms Cecile Palmer. Palmer shared the little known story of Minister Motshekga's own time in prison during the state of emergency under the apartheid Government, when she was locked up with Palmer's own mother.

Minister Motshekga took the opportunity to praise the bold steps taken by these two colossal figures of our struggle for freedom and the emancipation of women in this country. "To them and their generation, we owe a debt of gratitude for their selfless contribution to the liberation of our country from the yoke of the apartheid pariah regime. These two women emptied themselves for the liberation of our country. With their passing, a century of struggle went with them. It is our duty to keep their memory alive. It is our moral responsibility to ensure that their legacy lives on. It is often emphasised that Comrades Tambo and Maxeke cannot be allowed to die whilst we are alive," said Minister Motshekga.

The Minister shared the motivational history of the women's struggle with learners, but more especially, the incredible story of the life of Ma Charlotte Maxeke who was ahead of her time in many respects, even leading men to take action against the oppressive *Land Act of 1913*.

Of her own time in prison the Minister told learners, "We weren't imprisoned because we killed people or because we had done anything violent. We were just making small demands pertaining to our dignity and the dignity of our people". Minister Motshekga emphasized the significance of the women's struggle and the contribution of women.

One of the major highlights of the day was an outstanding drama performance by learners from the Chief Luthuli Primary School. Their performance took the participants through a detailed history of our struggle, but particularly the women's struggle. Guests commented that it was the best dramatic school performances they had ever seen.

Representatives from the Maxeke and Tambo families shared their perspectives on the lives of these great women which gave a personal perspective on the sacrifices made by these incredible women.



# Deputy Ministers Surty and Manamela conduct Operation Phakisa visits to monitor the implementation of ICT in the Limpopo Province



Government is working around the clock to implement Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in all public schools across the country. Basic Education Deputy Minister, Mr Enver Surty and the Deputy Minister for the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr Buti Manamela, visited the Mokopane Education Multipurpose Centre (EMPC) in Limpopo on 18 August 2017, to monitor ICT implementation in the province. The visits to Tsebe Senior Secondary School and EDL Rampola Secondary School, located in the Mogalakwena District, form part of the Operation Phakisa monitoring visits to assess the utilisation and accelerated implementation of ICT in the delivery of the curriculum in order to transform the education landscape for the better.

The provinces that have been visited so far include the KwaZulu-Natal, the Northern Cape, the Eastern Cape and the North West. Both Deputy Minister Surty and Manemela were impressed with the progress made thus far; however, they emphasised that more work still needs to be done to ensure that all public schools have ICT connectivity for both academic and administrative purposes.

ICT connectivity is undoubtedly assisting teachers to manage their workload and teaching time in class. Smart Boards used for digital learning and teaching allow teachers to use digital teaching techniques to share educational material and videos during lessons.

Mr Henry Kavuma from the Directorate: Curriculum Innovation and e-Learning, indicated that, “Although there has been gradual progress made in terms of ICT implementation in this country, more intervention is necessary to assist provinces that are struggling with ICT implementation. These visits have been very fruitful because it allows Government to identify challenges experienced by various provinces, and to explore solutions and a way forward”.

Addressing education stakeholders, Deputy Minister Surty indicated that provinces will need to make tough decisions to ensure that schools have access to ICT: “We are making progress in the area of ICT implementation in schools, but we can do better. Currently, the overall ICT national coverage stands at 54%. A lot of work still needs to be done to ensure that ICT is effectively rolled out to all schools in South Africa. Government and the private sector need to collaborate to address challenges that prevent progress in the area of ICT. The aim of our visit is to monitor the state of provincial ICT implementation while identifying challenges that might need Government’s urgent intervention. Our learners deserve quality education”.

Deputy Minister Manamela indicated that ICT should be used effectively to prepare learners for the 21st Century. “Through the Operation Phakisa ICT initiative, Government will work tirelessly in ensuring that our learners are empowered to compete with other learners in the global village,” said Deputy Minister Manamela.

EDL Rampola Secondary School Grade 12 learner, Ms Regina Manaka, said that the use of technology in class is very helpful and exciting: “ICT connectivity ensures that learning is both interesting and fun because learning material is accessible online”.

## Director-General’s second round of 2017 provincial engagements





Diverting his energies to ensure the trajectory of a “system on the rise” is upheld throughout the education system, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, the Director-General of Basic Education, took to the provinces on the second round of provincial engagements in August 2017.

In his engagement with provinces, the Director-General clearly articulated his view that the purpose of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) conducting these engagements is to refocus the sector towards achieving the important goals set out in the *Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*. When asked about the impact of these engagements, Mr Mwel said with confidence that they “encourage the provincial officials to become even more accountable”. Provincial officials viewed the Director-General’s engagement as a “game-changer”, providing them with a platform to share best practice and seek collective guidance on addressing challenges.

Being a “hands-on” leader, with a perceptive understanding of the mechanics of the system, Mr Mwel was able to provide provinces with clear, unambiguous guidance on the four key deliverables that align with the four quarters of the school calendar year; which frame the tasks for each quarter.

Click on the below link for additional information on the DG’s Provincial Engagements:

<http://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/DG%20Visit%20KZN%20FINAL.PDF>



## Primary School Reading Improvement Programme focusing on improving reading in English First Additional Language





During 16 to 18 August 2017, approximately 248 Foundation Phase English First Additional Language (EFAL) subject advisors from across all nine provinces received training on the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme (PSRIP) for the third and fourth terms at the OR Tambo Garden Court Hotel in the Gauteng Province.

The three day training workshop commenced with a series of EFAL activities assigned to the subject advisors in various commissions facilitated by EFAL experts and trainers. This approach helped the subject advisors to learn from each other whilst brainstorming various methods that can be used to improve reading levels in the Foundation Phase. More than eight training rooms were set up to provide the subject advisors with opportunities to interact in small groups and to receive individual attention from the trainers. This group of subject advisors will go on to train more teachers in their respective provinces.

The DBE, in partnership with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) and funded by the ETDP-SETA, developed the PSRIP during 2016. The Programme is aimed at capacitating subject advisors and teachers to improve quality learning and teaching in the EFAL classes in the Foundation Phase. Since the inception of the PSRIP in October 2016, progress has been made in the various provinces in terms of rolling out the Programme, resulting in 248 subject advisors and 11,701 teachers from 1,673 schools spread across all nine provinces receiving training for term 1 and 2 respectively. The training of subject advisors took place during November 2016 for term 1 and February/March 2017 for term 2. Subsequent to this, the training of teachers took place between December 2016 and May 2017 for both terms.

Ms Virginia Khumalo, one of the trainers, said, “it has been a wonderful experience to work with these subject advisors; they were very participative on each and every exercise that we gave them. It is always critical for trainees to attend refresher courses in order to perform their duties optimally. The subject advisors in attendance benefited a lot from this course because it unpacked several components of the EFAL as part of the curriculum. We are confident that the knowledge gained here by subject advisors will help teachers to apply effective teaching techniques to improve the facilitation of the EFAL classes.”

Subject advisor from the North West Province, Ms Elizabeth Sechoaro, highlighted: “I enjoyed every minute spent during this training. EFAL is a very critical language and it needs to be taken seriously, because it is used as a medium of instruction within the classroom. This training has enlightened us to work hand in hand with teachers in ensuring that they apply appropriate teaching techniques to boost learners’ reading ability”. Another subject advisor from the Limpopo Province, Ms Jermina Machaka alluded that the most critical skill she acquired was the EFAL facilitation. “In most cases, teachers find teaching alphabet letters in EFAL very challenging. Through this training, we are sure that teachers will have a new approach to EFAL teaching”.

The training was officially wrapped up at a report back session with additional subject advisors given a platform to make presentations on lessons learned and to give feedback on the overall Programme.

## State-of-the-art facility handed over to Dweba Senior Secondary School



Hlabati village is a 40km drive along a gravel road off the N2 between Mthatha and Qumbu in the Eastern Cape Province. This little village came alive with the sound of celebration when the DBE, through the Provincial Legislature Member, Mr Mpumelelo Saziwa, handed over Dweba Senior Secondary School to the community on 15 August 2017.

“Dweba Senior Secondary School boasts state-of-the-art facilities such as a Science Laboratory, a fully resourced Library and a Nutrition Centre, owing to the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative (ASIDI) Programme. The school’s 578 learners now have a fully functional school that will nurture the minds of future leaders,” Mr Saziwa said during his address.

With a total of 134 schools completed in the Eastern Cape Province to date, the province is the largest benefactor of the ASIDI Programme, with 248 schools provided with water, 167 schools with access to sanitation and 180 schools with electricity.

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. “We are fortunate to have received this truly special world-class facility. We look forward to educating some of the best learners the Eastern Cape Province has to offer at this school in the near future,” School Principal Mr Jacobs George remarked.

## Regional Round-up



### Gauteng

The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) reported that approximately 71, 275 parents have not yet responded to offers of the placement of learners at schools, which commenced on 24 July 2017. The GDE said the lack of response is causing serious delays in the system. The department has sent SMS notifications to parents to remind them to respond to the offers of placement. Since the placement period started three weeks ago on 24 July, approximately 117,081 learners have been placed, including 65,595 in Grade 1 and 51,486 in Grade 8. The department said it will determine when to open the Online Application System for late applications, after the placement of applicants who applied on or before 12 June 2017 is concluded. The early processing of admissions means that learning and teaching can commence on the first day of the 2018 academic calendar. The placement of learners at schools will close on 20 October 2017.

## Upcoming Events

- 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
- 01 September 2017: The provincial rounds of the DBE Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place in the Gauteng Province
- 02 September 2017: The provincial rounds of the DBE Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place in the Western Cape Province
- 04 September 2017: The provincial rounds of the DBE Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place in East London, Eastern Cape 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
- 07 to 08 September 2017: The provincial rounds of the DBE Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place in the Free State Province



- 08 September 2017: The provincial rounds of the DBE Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place in Ermelo, Mpumalanga Province
- 08 September 2017: The provincial rounds of the DBE Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place in Kimberley, Northern Cape Province
- 13 September 2017: The provincial rounds of the DBE Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place in Mafikeng, North West 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
- 27 October 2017: The DBE and the South African Council for Educators (SACE) will host the 2017 World Teachers' Day Seminar at Bolivia Lodge in Polokwane, Limpopo Province
- 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.