



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

Matric Message from Minister Angie Motshekga



It is that time of year once again when we see the fruits of our labour as another cohort of Grade 12 learners prepare to write the final National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations of 2017. This is the culmination of 12 years of hard work by all involved in the education system.

Learners sit for their first examination in earnest on Monday and we know only too well what a stressful time it can be in the life of a learner.

I would like to wish the Class of 2017 the best of luck for this year's National Senior Certificate Examinations.

We must encourage learners during this time to keep their heads down, study hard and stay focused. I am confident we will all be proud of what can be achieved.

We need to remind learners that they have spent at least 12 years in the education system and that they owe it to themselves to put their all into these examinations. The world is truly their oyster.

We have seen the green shoots sprouting across different areas of our education system through TIMSS and SACMEC studies among others, and I am hopeful that this year's National Senior Certificate will continue to instil confidence in our system and in this vitally important qualification.

The National Senior Certificate is not only a school leaving Certificate, but it is a gateway or the key to a better quality of life for so many of our young people.

As we grapple with a youth unemployment challenge, the NSC enables learners the opportunity to study further or to gain meaningful employment and stimulate our economy.

Data from the 2011 National Census indicated that the unemployment rate for 25 to 35 year olds who have "less than matric" was 47% in 2011, much higher than those 25 to 35 year olds that had a matric (33%), a diploma or certificate (20%), and about six times higher than for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

The Stats SA Education Series report confirms this with more recent data.

"Over the period 2008–2015, unemployment rates were the lowest among postsecondary qualification holders and the highest among those who dropped out without completing secondary schooling."

The Matric Certificate is an extremely valuable document, it gives people the opportunity to further their studies and improve their likelihood of employment. It is also for this reason that we are giving those who have not managed to qualify for their matric a Second Chance to get a Matric and therefore a second chance at attaining a better and more prosperous life through the Department's Second Chance Matric Support Programme.

To all of those writing this year's NSC examinations, good luck and I am looking forward to sharing all of our successes at next year's results ceremony.

Learners are urged to remain calm during NSC Examinations



The National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations, commonly referred to as “matric” signifying the culmination of twelve years of formal schooling, will commence on 23 October and conclude on 28 November 2017.

The NSC Examinations is administered and conducted in terms of the *Regulations on the Conduct, Administration and Management of Assessment* for the national NSC Examinations taking place across all provinces in the country.

A supplementary examinations may be granted to an unsuccessful NSC candidate, provided they meet specific criteria. The closing date for applications to the supplementary examination is 19 January 2018.

During the NSC Examinations period, learners become stressed as they are desperately aiming for good results in order to secure a place at universities and colleges. Examination stress is a natural phenomenon experienced by all learners. Pupils also become stressed because of external pressures from family members and peers, or because they put too much pressure on themselves. Learners cope much better with these pressures if they are prepared for the examinations. Learners are therefore reminded to stay calm and collected during this period and to visit the DBE website for tips, guidelines, previous examination papers, as well as the NSC Examination timetable:

[https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalSeniorCertificate\(NSC\)Examinations.aspx](https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalSeniorCertificate(NSC)Examinations.aspx)

Invitation to comment on draft *Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill*

The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, has published the draft *Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill* in the *Government Gazette* on 13 October 2017. All interested parties are invited to submit their comments on the draft Bill by 10 November 2017. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has already briefed a number of organisations, such as School Governing Body associations and unions involved in the education sector, as well as Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), on the content of the draft Bill.

The draft Bill proposes to amend the *South African Schools Act, 1996* (Act No. 84 of 1996), and the *Employment of Educators Act, 1998* (Act no. 76 of 1998) as to align them with developments in the education landscape and to ensure that systems of learning and excellence in education are put in place in a manner which represents, protects and promotes the right to basic education enshrined in section 29(1) of the *Constitution* of South Africa.

After the closing date for the submission of comments, the comments that have been received will be analysed and considered for possible incorporation into the draft Bill. Comments should indicate the name and detailed contact information of the person or organisation submitting them, and should be directed to: The Director-General, Private Bag X895, Pretoria, 0001, for attention: Adv. Deon Rudman, tel. 012 357 3856, email rudman.d@dbe.gov.za, fax 012 323 9430.

Click on the below link to comment on the draft *Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill*:

<https://www.education.gov.za/Resources/Legislation/CallforComments/DraftBELABill.aspx>

The Director-General supports the last push activities in Provinces



The closure of schools for the Spring Break offered provinces an ideal opportunity to support learners with revision and consolidation activities (last push) through “Spring Classes,” before the commencement of the 2017 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations. The Director-General of Basic Education, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mweli, who is well known for “leading from the front”, began his visits to several of these classes across the nine provinces. The purpose of the visits are to motivate learners to take advantage of the classes and buckle down to some serious studying so as to improve the quality of passes in the 2017 NSC Examinations.

In this week’s *Thuto*, visits to all nine provinces are featured.

Click on the below link to read these articles:

<https://www.education.gov.za/Home/DirectorGeneralSpringcampvisits.aspx>

DBE and Nestlé celebrate National Nutrition Week in Gauteng and North West Provinces



The DBE, in collaboration with Nestlé, celebrated National Nutrition Week (NNW) on 10 October 2017 at the Harry Gwala Primary School in Tshepiso in the Johannesburg District, Gauteng Province, and at the Logagane Primary School in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District, North West Province on 13 October 2017. The theme for annual NNW, “Rethink your drink – Choose water”, is in line with the South African Food Base Dietary Guidelines (SAFBDG) to “Drink lots of clean, safe water” and “use sugar and food and drinks in high sugar sparingly”.

The purpose of the celebration was to raise awareness on the importance of drinking plenty of clean and safe water. Ms Neo Rakwena, Director for the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), speaking at the Harry Gwala Primary School celebration, highlighted the importance of eating healthily and living a healthy life style. Goal 25 of the DBE *Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030* which outlines the importance of promoting the well-being of learners in pursuit of excellent academic performance. The NSNP provides learners with nutritious meals daily at schools, as well as nutrition education. Ms Rakwena further highlighted that the celebration is held annually under a different theme.

At Logagane Primary School, Chief Director for Care and Support in Schools, Dr Faith Kumalo, mentioned that, “it is important to create awareness amongst members of the public about the adverse effects of sugary beverages on health, and to instead make water a beverage of choice. Water constitutes the major portion of the human body (50-70% or two thirds) and is essential for life”. Dr Kumalo further encouraged parents to “take the message home” and make it their habit to drink more water.

A Grade six learner from Logagane Primary School, Kesaobaka Maamogwa, recited a poem on water. “Water is a very valuable resource; without this precious resource there is simply no life at all. We must try to preserve water for future usage and not waste it,” she said.

Mr Jerry Voyi, a Community Liaison Officer from the Department of Health (DoH), Ratlou Sub-District, demonstrated how to make and use a tippy tap – a simple and hygienic device to wash hands with using soap and running water – as a method of saving water. “In Ratlou we are experiencing a problem with people not washing their hands thoroughly. We hope to decrease the mortality rate caused by diarrhoea using the tippy tap method,” Mr Voyi said.

At both primary schools learners engaged in activities conducted through the Healthy Kids Programme, a global initiative by Nestlé SA aimed at raising knowledge on nutrition and promoting physical activity amongst learners, food handlers, teachers and parents. This partnership is guided by the DBE’s Life Skills Curriculum, which focuses primarily on nutrition and physical activity.

Cooking workshops also took place on the day, led by chefs from Nestlé Professionals. These professional chefs guided learners on preparing healthy sandwiches and snacks. A study by the Nestlé Research Centre found that involving children in preparing and cooking meals helps to encourage good eating habits early in life.

Dr Kumalo concluded the events by requesting and encouraging educators to start planning activities to advocate the 2017 theme through both Life Orientation and Life Skills subjects. Dr Kumalo also encouraged parents to choose water rather than energy dense food for the sake of their own, and their children’s health. “Schools are in a unique position to promote health by providing nutrition education in the curriculum, as well as inculcating lifelong habits such as vigorous physical activity daily. Healthy children are successful learners,” she concluded. Each school received a donation of sporting equipment from Nestlé. The day concluded with Zumba dancing, dance aerobics and a variety of sporting activities.



Let's Play Physical Education challenge promotes a healthy lifestyle for learners



The DBE, in partnership with the Physical Education Institute (PEISA), has initiated a national advocacy and sector mobilisation strategy to create awareness about the importance of Physical Education in schools. These various Physical Education activities, which are embedded in the *Quality Physical Education Framework*, are aimed at encouraging learners, teachers and various education stakeholders to promote a healthy lifestyle. The Physical Education drive, which is spearheaded by Active Education and supported by *SuperSport Let's Play*, is one of the promotional initiatives that showcases the importance of Physical Education in schools.

The 2017 *Let's Play* Challenge finals will take place on 27 October 2017 across all nine provinces in primary schools (Grades 4 and 6) concurrently to determine the winner of an all-weather multi-purpose course worth R1.3 million, sponsored by The Sports Trust, which will be built at the winning school.

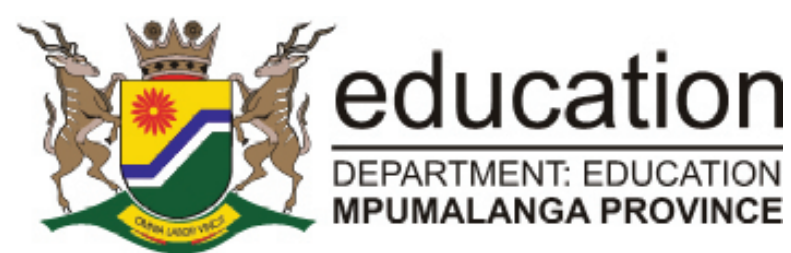
During the Challenge learners face an obstacle course that has to be completed within 45 minutes through a variety of exercises at a participating school administered and adjudicated by the Active Education team whilst the teacher is supervising the learners. The schools with the highest number of learners participating in the course, win and proceed to the finals.

The 2017 Challenge concluded in the KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape Provinces during the week of 11 to 15 September 2017. For the 2017 Challenge, 34,800 learners and a number of 435 primary schools participated, with 108 towns visited.

The Sport and Enrichment Directorate, Active Education and the various sponsors will be attending the Challenge at the Nelson Mandela Primary School in Sasolburg, Free State Province in support of the Challenge on 27 October 2017.

Provincial Roundup

Mpumalanga



The Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Education will hold their National Teaching Awards ceremony on 20 October 2017 at the Mbombela Stadium in honour of the late OR Tambo. The Mathematics, Science and Technology Academy in Emalahleni will be renamed as the OR Tambo Mathematics, Science and Technology Academy on the commemoration of Tambo's birthday, 27 October 2017. "The Academy is aimed at improving the quality of education by training our teachers and learners, and also to encourage more learners to study Mathematics and Science," said MEC for Education, Ms Reginah Mhaule.

Western Cape



Thousands of students from the Western Cape Province commenced with the writing of the 2017 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examination on 16 October 2017, starting with Computer Applications Technology. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) said that 7,807 full-time and 272 part-time candidates wrote the complex exam that relied on reliable electricity supplies. MEC, Ms Debbie Schäfer, said to avoid any planned power disruptions, the WCED has engaged with both Eskom and the relevant municipalities. Eskom has indicated that they have prioritised the matric exams as a key activity in the province, and have therefore not scheduled any planned electricity interruptions on examination dates in their direct Eskom supply areas across the Province. MEC Schäfer said that PED officials have already visited examination venues to ensure that all networks and stand-alone workstations are properly set up and that all relevant instructional procedures have been adhered to. The same procedures applied when 833 full time and 8 part time NSC Candidates wrote their Information Technology examination on 17 October 2017.

Upcoming Events

- 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
- 27 October 2017: The *Let's Play* Schools Physical Education Challenge will be taking place at the Nelson Mandela Primary School in Sasolburg, Free State 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
- 19 January 2018: The closing date for applications to the supplementary examinations
- 01 – 31 March 2018: School Governing Body (SGB) Elections



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