



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

Minister Motshekga holds first Basic Education Sector Media Briefing



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, held the first ever Basic Education Sector Media Briefing on Sunday, 28 January 2018, at the Department of Basic Education (DBE) Conference Centre in Pretoria. Journalists descended on the DBE offices to hear the Minister provide feedback from the Basic Education Sector Lekgotla and other relevant priorities for the year 2018.

Addressing the media, the Minister said: “The presentations and discussions were extremely robust and valuable for taking the education system forward. We discussed and reflected on progress that the sector has made in relation to its commitments to the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDG4), the *National Development Plan* (NDP), the *Medium Term Strategic Framework* (MTSF) and the *Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*. Some of the presentations made at plenary on day 1 of the Lekgotla included an address by Professor Volmink, Chairperson of the Umalusi Council, followed by presentations on the following key topics: the 2016 *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study* (PIRLS); an Analysis of the 2017 National Senior Certificate (NSC) results; Sector Alignment, Progress to Skills for a Changing World; Entrepreneurship and 21st Century Skills; and a Report on the Quality Assurance of the DBE NSC November 2017 Examinations.

The theme for the Lekgotla was: *Equipping Learners with Knowledge and Skills for a Changing World*. Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) and Teacher Unions were given an opportunity to present under the sub-theme: Identifying Challenges/Gaps and Strategies.

The key message from the Lekgotla is that the system is indeed on the rise and we should embrace the optimism in the system.”

Click on the below link for the full media briefing:

<https://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/MediaReleases/tabid/347/ctl/Details/mid/7002/ItemID/5535/Default.aspx>



Minister Motshekga urges Free State Province learners to value education



As part of the ongoing Oversight School Visit and Monitoring Programme, Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, visited the Albertina Sisulu High School in Edenburg and Trompsburg High School in the Xhariep District in the Free State Province on 30 January 2018. The aim of the visit was to encourage teachers and learners to work hard and to remain committed to teaching and learning.

During her visits, Minister Motshekga met with the School Management Team (SMT) at both schools to initiate mechanisms to improve quality teaching and learning during 2018. During 2017, the Albertina Sisulu High School achieved an 80% pass rate. The SMT informed the Minister that learner discipline and a lack of parental support were contributing factors for the poor performance. Encouraged by the Minister’s visit, the schools were committed to achieve a 100% pass rate with an increase in quality passes.

Addressing learners at assembly, Minister Motshekga said: “We came all the way from Pretoria to encourage you to study hard.” She informed learners that discipline, commitment and dedication is essential if they hope to succeed academically. “I therefore encourage you to respect your teachers, and to invest quality time into your studies.”

Minister Motshekga proceeded to Trompsburg High School to speak to the Grade 12 learners. In her address, Minister Motshekga advised learners to work hard to sustain the trend of a 100% pass rate at the school. The Minister further advised learners to abstain from sexual activities and avoid social ills such as alcohol and drug abuse, and to remain focused on finishing their schooling. “Education is key because it will unlock doors of success for you; I therefore urge you to prioritise your education because you are our national asset,” concluded Minister Motshekga.

Second Chance Matric Support Programme makes inroads in the Free State Province



Minister Motshekga's visit to the Free State Province on 30 January 2018 also focussed on the promotion of the Second Chance Matric Support Programme.

The Province is currently running five centres as part of the Programme, which supports more than 1,000 candidates in the Motheo District. The Province has also established finishing schools where modularised and progressed learners are supported. Approximately 3,000 learners in Selokisa, Riverside, Tumahole, Tshepo Themba and Mohokare are benefiting from this initiative.

The Free State Province is one of the leading provinces in terms of the effective implementation of the Programme owing to its refined strategies and mechanisms aimed at mobilising young people to register with the Programme. The Programme is targeted at learners and individuals who failed to meet the requirements of the National Senior Certificate (NSC), the Senior Certificate (SC), or are seeking to upgrade their subjects and are enrolled as part-time candidates.

Minister Motshekga commended the Province for the work they are doing in this regard and added that the visit also formed part of a study tour to establish whether the Free State model could be utilised nationally. The Programme has been running smoothly in the Province with an increasing trend of learner performance in various subjects, including Mathematics, Physical Science, Accounting, Business Studies, Geography and Life Sciences.

One of the challenges raised by the community was that the District was large, thus making it difficult for those enrolled to attend face to face classes. Minister Motshekga highlighted the various support mechanisms offered by the Programme, including broadcast solutions and online facilities which can be accessed free of charge.

Addressing Xhariep community members, Minister Motshekga indicated that it is pivotal for learners to take advantage of the Programme to improve their academic performance. Minister Motshekga congratulated all the learners who excelled during 2018 and added: "We urge more young people to register with the Programme to prepare them for a better future. Our intention is to help young people to become productive citizens. We hope that, through the Programme, the lives of South African youth will be transformed for the better," added Minister Motshekga.

One of the candidates who completed his NSC through the Programme commented: "A failure in life is not a downfall, but a wakeup call for one to rectify one's mistakes and do better," said Makhalemele Mohau who shared his journey of how he was able to excel through the Programme in both Mathematics and Physical Science to pursue his studies at the University of the Free State. "I would like to thank Government for having given me a second chance to improve my results. The support that I received through this Programme was amazing. I therefore encourage other young people to consider registering with the Programme."



DG Mweli sets the tone for a Basic Education system on the rise



“Time management is one of the most important skills that educators must possess. Teachers must be in class on time to set an example and to prepare learners for the future.” Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mweli, provided the Department of Basic Education (DBE) staff members with strategic direction for an education system on the rise when he addressed them in Pretoria on 30 January 2018.

Mr Mweli referred to the Report on the 2017 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations that was presented by Dr Mafu Rakometsi, CEO of Umalusi, during the recent Basic Education Sector Lekgotla that took place at the Saint George Hotel and Conference Centre from 22 to 24 January 2018. “Umalusi reported excellence in achievement during the 2017 academic year, which was a stable year with minimal disruptions to learning and teaching. We have to recognise the progress and milestones we are recording whilst looking forward to greater progress during 2018.”

Mr Mweli further emphasised the importance of benchmarking the South African education sector against international assessments such as the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2016, which indicates a steady upward trend in the South African education system. “I want to highlight the important focus areas for basic education in the New Year, with the starting point being the implementation of UNESCO’s Sustainable Development Goal no. 4, to bring about equity, quality, inclusivity and lifelong opportunity for all.”

This links to the *National Development Plan* (NDP) objective, Chapter 9, that, “South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes. The performance of South African learners in international standardised tests should be comparable to the performance of learners from countries at a similar level of development, and with similar levels of access by 2030”.

“Our own *Action Plan 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*, remains the blueprint for the education sector with the six principles: Access, Redress, Equity, Efficiency, Quality and Inclusivity to remove the barriers to learning and teaching, guiding our programmes towards progress,” continued Mr Mweli.

Mr Mweli will be commencing with his Provincial Engagement Programme to the various provinces from February to May 2018. During these engagements, the focus will be on the 2017 NSC and PIRLS 2016 reports to ensure that every learner is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for a changing world. The Provincial Engagement Programme was introduced to the education system to strengthen the collaboration and support between the DBE and the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) as the system works collectively towards the delivery of quality education in South Africa. The engagements are also used to monitor the progress made by provinces in terms of improving effective curriculum coverage in schools across the country, and to discuss the state of readiness for the 2018 NSC Examinations, whilst exploring better mechanisms for improving quality learning and teaching in schools.

In closing, Mr Mweli expressed his gratitude to every Basic Education employee, stressing the fact that it remains the responsibility of each parent, each educator and each community member to teach and to guide our children towards a brighter future.



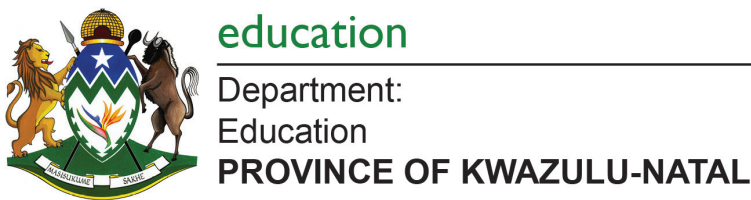
Provincial Round-up

Gauteng Province



Gauteng Education MEC, Mr Panyaza Lesufi, urged communities within the Gauteng Province to safeguard school infrastructure for the sake of their children’s future. Lesufi further appealed to protesting community members not to vandalise Gauteng schools: “If you are angry, I’m an anger absorber. Come to me and leave my schools alone.” MEC Lesufi handed over the newly-built Everest Primary School in Westbury on 17 January 2018. Everest Primary School, which cost R97 million to build, and accommodating approximately 1,000 pupils, is part of Gauteng’s mega-school infrastructure programme. Government plans to open more schools in the Province in an attempt to address the influx of pupils, which has been placing the Department under severe pressure.

KwaZulu-Natal Province



President Jacob Zuma recently visited three of the best-performing rural high schools in the KwaZulu-Natal Province on 24 January 2018. These rural schools are located in the King Cetshwayo District of Nkandla. Some of the students scored pass marks of 100% in Mathematics and Science. Two of these schools, Bhuqwini High School and Velangaye High School, are located in the Mabhuqwini, eMachunwini area, and Bizimali High School is located in the Mfongosi area. The President handed over learning and study materials to the best performing learners, including laptops and stationery.

Western Cape Province



The Western Cape Provincial Government will continue to supply water to schools in the event of “Day Zero” on 12 April 2018, in the drought-stricken Province. The role of the principal is to lead on water use reduction in every single way as schools must remain open for teaching and learning to continue. Every school must have a water management plan. Meetings with parents and School Governing Bodies (SGBs) must be organised for everyone to understand that water is a precious resource. Security at all schools will be improved to avoid water theft. Water security for all public schools across the Province implies that the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has to secure 23 mega litres of water daily for 1,116,516 learners, 32,000 teachers in 1,506 schools. The Province will provide oversight in identifying further augmented water sources from ground water, treated and recycled water to rain water.

- 06 – 09 February 2018: Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be embarking on his Provincial Engagement Programme to the KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 17 February 2018: The national ceremony of the 18th Annual National Teaching Awards (NTAs) will be taking place at the 5th Floor Pavilion, Sandton Convention Centre, Sandton, Gauteng Province
- 13 – 21 February 2018: Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be embarking on his Provincial Engagement Programme to the Eastern Cape Province
- 22 – 23 February 2018: Minister Angie Motshekga will be hosting her first quarter meeting with District Directors at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 26 – 28 February 2018: Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be embarking on his Provincial Engagement Programme to the Free State Province
- 01 – 31 March 2018: School Governing Body (SGB) Elections
- 28 – 29 June 2018: Minister Angie Motshekga will be hosting her second quarter meeting with District Directors at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 20 – 21 September 2018: Minister Angie Motshekga will be hosting her third quarter meeting with District Directors at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 06 – 07 December 2018: Minister Angie Motshekga will be hosting her fourth quarter meeting with District Directors at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province



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