



**basic education**

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**THUTO**



## NEWSLETTER

# SGB elections get underway in March



“Although it takes a community to raise a child, parents must play their part in supporting schools with the education of their children. The 2018 School Governing Body (SGB) Elections will be taking place during March under the theme: *Changing the Education Landscape*. During February 2018, Departmental officials, accompanied by officials from the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), will be visiting the various provinces and schools, to ensure the state of readiness for the March elections,” said Mr James Ndlebe, Director for the Education Management and Governance Development Directorate.

There are over 24,000 public schools in South Africa with every school having a SGB that is democratically elected. By participating in the SGB elections, every parent has the opportunity to be part of Government’s drive to improve learning outcomes and reach the goal of quality education in all our schools. SGBs have a key role to play around developing policies relating to issues such as learner admission, language of instruction at the school, religious instruction, school fees and a code of conduct for learners.

A school’s SGB is made up of mainly parents, educators, non-teaching staff, learners (at Grade 8 and higher) and community members. The term of office is one year for learners and no more than three years for all other members. In addition, the school principal is a member of the SGB by virtue of her or his official capacity. An SGB must elect office-bearers, including a Chairperson, Treasurer and a Secretary. These appointments must be made at a first meeting to be held within 14 days of the election of the SGB. Only a parent member may serve as Chairperson of the SGB, except for special schools.

The SGB may co-opt members with expertise in areas that may benefit the SGB and the school. Any member of the community who can offer particular skills, creativity, a passion and commitment to quality education, may be co-opted. The SGB may need someone with fund raising, marketing or computer skills or even an ex-pupil who is now a successful business person in the community. It is important to note that co-opted members have no voting rights but can make an enormous contribution to their local school.

Many parents and members of the community are reluctant to make themselves available for nomination because they think that because they have full-time jobs they will not have the time. In fact, once elected, the members of the SGB can arrange for meetings to be held at a time that is convenient to both working and non-working parents. “Make sure that your voice is heard and that you play an active part in your child’s education, either by offering to stand for the elections as a possible SGB member or by nominating the best candidates for the SGB elections and making sure that you vote on SGB election day. As a member of the community who is passionate about education and South Africa’s future, make sure your voice is heard,” Mr Ndlebe advised all parents ahead of the SGB elections.

Contact the DBE at 0800 202 933 if you have any queries around SGBs and their responsibilities.

Click on the below link for additional information:

<https://www.education.gov.za/Informationfor/SGBs.aspx>

# Strengthening the utilisation of African Languages as the Language of Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Phase



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, has, during many occasions, emphasised the importance of benchmarking the South African education sector against international assessments such as the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).

The PIRLS 2016 reported that it is important to increase the time spent on reading in the Foundation and the Intermediate Phases and provide support to African Languages. The Study further recommended that the teaching of reading literacy and the training of pedagogical content knowledge of teachers across all languages in the Foundation Phase, and especially African Languages, should be strengthened, and that the time spent on the formal reading programme in both the Foundation and Intermediate Phases in the curriculum should be utilised optimally as per the time allocations in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS).

The 2016 PIRLS also concluded that although there has been a significant increase in learner performance in isiZulu from 2006 to 2016, there is a downward trend with regard to Sepedi. The reasons cited for the general low trends in learner achievement in African languages is attributed to poor quality teacher training programmes, and the lack of quality reading resources in African languages.

Learning to speak in the mother tongue is important for a child's overall development. The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) encourages the use of mother tongue languages in the early grades. The CAPS provide support for the teaching of African languages in Home Language, First Additional and Second Additional Language levels. In the early grades the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) across the curriculum is encouraged to teach all subjects in Grades R to 3. The transition to English LoLT takes place in Grade 4 in schools that choose to use English as LoLT in Grade 4 and beyond.

Jenny Katz a renowned researcher, linguist and trainer from the Molteno Institute, facilitated a session on the teaching of African languages at the Foundation Phase Languages Subject Committee Meeting which took place at the DBE in Pretoria on 31 January 2018. Ms Katz provided an insightful comparison between the linguistics embedded in English and African languages. The teaching of phonics, high frequency words and grammar skills were emphasised in both the Sesotho and Nguni language groups. There are significant changes in grammar skills for learners transitioning from an African language to English and both phonic and grammar skills therefore need to be taught systematically and explicitly in all languages.

The Molteno Institute has launched an Open Education Resource (OER) platform to strengthen the utilisation and teaching of African languages by providing phonics programmes and high frequency words in isiXhosa and other African languages. Provincial and District Language Specialists were encouraged to engage with, and mediate these resources with teachers. The DBE has put plans in place to develop reading norms and standards which will inform the benchmarks for time allocation for a formal reading programme, core reading resources, classroom libraries, reading fluency and the number of books to be read per term and the comprehension and writing strategies and skills to be mastered at the end of each grade commencing from Grades R to 12.

## DBE and Nal'ibali join hands to promote a culture of reading



The DBE, in partnership with Nal’ibali, hosted the World Read Aloud Day (WRAD) celebration at Mofolo Park in Soweto on 02 February 2018, to remind education stakeholders about the importance of reading. Approximately 1,000 learners drawn from various schools in Soweto gathered at the park to enjoy a story telling session by author, Ms Zukiswa Wanner.

Nal’ibali’s WRAD is becoming one of the biggest literacy drives in South Africa, reaching thousands of children and adults every year in its bid to raise awareness of the importance of reading aloud for children’s literacy development and school success.

Nal’ibali Managing Director, Ms Jade Jacobsohn mentioned: “Reading aloud, and particularly in home languages, is one of the most important things caregivers can do for their children. By exposing them to the sophisticated words and language not common in conversation, this simple activity helps young children build a strong language foundation and develop their vocabulary”.

YoTV presenter, Mr Ofentse Tlou, also addressed learners during the occasion, saying that, “Reading is very important in our lives; even the job we do as presenters requires us to read a lot. I therefore encourage you to read a book every day so that you can gain more knowledge”.

The Acting Chief Director for Education Human Resources Development, Mr Enoch Rabotapi, indicated that the DBE has embarked on several initiatives to enhance reading levels in schools. “Our main focus this year is to work towards instilling a reading culture for learners to read for both academic and recreational purposes. This will be achieved thorough the *Read to Lead Campaign*, which was launched in 2015. The DBE is currently working with the private sector to capacitate teachers to become more competent in teaching learners to read with comprehension.”

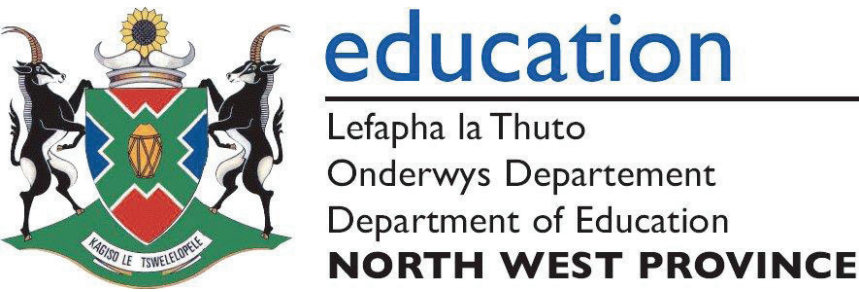
During 2017, the DBE conducted the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme, in partnership with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), for 11,000 Foundation Phase teachers across all nine provinces. The *Action Plan 2019 Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*, emphasises the importance of early grade teaching in order to increase the number of learners in Grade 3, who by the end of the year, have mastered the minimum language and numeracy competencies for Grade 3.

The Department will therefore continue to work with Government Departments, NGOs, and the private sector to ensure that schools have the necessary resources to promote reading.



## Provincial Round-up

North West Province



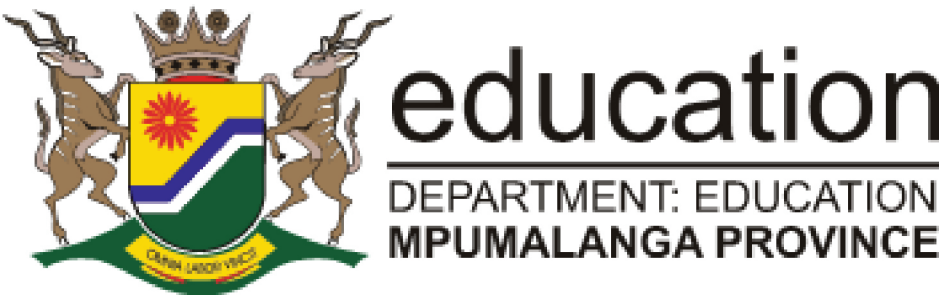
The North West Education and Sport Development MEC, Mr Sello Lehari, will embark on a Provincial Roadshow to improve the provincial academic results. The MEC also intends to motivate and express his gratitude to hard working officials working at service points. The purpose of the Roadshow is to motivate and encourage departmental officials and principals to work hard during 2018 to improve their National Senior Certificate (NSC) results. The Roadshow will target underperforming Sub-Districts in the Province. The first Roadshow took place at Huhudi Secondary School, Genyesa Village in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality in the underperforming Sub-District of Kagisano Molopo.

Gauteng Province



Gauteng Education MEC, Mr Panyaza Lesufi, is set to place more than 3,000 pupils by 15 February 2018. A total of 3,366 Grade 1 and Grade 8 pupils still need to be placed in Gauteng schools. Before the start of the academic year, 28,000 students had not been placed, with Lesufi blaming this on a number of reasons, including parents’ refusal to let their children be accommodated at alternative schools. Since the start of January 2018, an extra 13,155 late applications had been received for various grades. Despite this, the department needed to place just over 3 000 pupils. MEC Lesufi added that the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) had been receiving an increasing number of applications from Zimbabwe, Burundi and India.

Mpumalanga Province



The Portfolio Committee on Basic Education’s Oversight Visit to the Mpumalanga Province, and the Nkangala Education District, in particular, took place last week with a visit to the Leonard Ntshuntshe Secondary School in Emalahleni. This is one of the well-performing schools visited by the Committee and boasts pass rates of 97%, 99% and 97% in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations for the past three years. Committee Chairperson, Ms Nomalungelo Gina, praised the school for this outstanding performance. The principal highlighted several social challenges, including theft, drugs and child-headed households. The Committee then split into two groups to visit Marhagi Secondary School and Verena Senior Primary School, which cater for Grades 7 to 9. The last school to be visited was Wolvenkop Special School, which caters for hearing impaired learners and learners with severe intellectual challenges. The Committee was impressed with the school management, infrastructure and the quality of work being done with the students. The visit concluded with a meeting at the Mpumalanga Provincial Education Department.

Upcoming Events

- 13 – 21 February 2018: Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be embarking on his Provincial Engagement Programme to the Eastern Cape Province
- 17 February 2018: The national ceremony of the 18th Annual National Teaching Awards (NTAs) will be taking place at the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Pavilion, Sandton Convention Centre, Sandton, Gauteng 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
- 12 – 15 March 2018: Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be embarking on his Provincial Engagement Programme to the Northern Cape Province
- 15 March 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 19 – 23 March 2018: Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be embarking on his Provincial Engagement Programme to the Gauteng Province
- 26 – 28 March 2018: Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be embarking on his Provincial Engagement Programme to the Limpopo Province
- 19 April 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 17 May 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 21 June 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 28 – 29 June 2018: Minister Angie Motshekga will be hosting her second quarter meeting with District Directors at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 19 July 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 16 August 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 20 September 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place 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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