



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NEWSLETTER

Minister Motshekga addresses the 40th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, represented the Republic of South Africa at the 40th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO in Paris, France on 14 November 2019. UNESCO seeks to build peace through international cooperation in education, the sciences and culture.

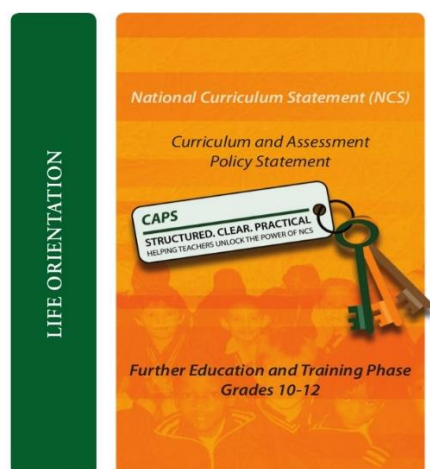
Minister Motshekga took to the podium to outline the main priorities of the Basic Education Sector in the sixth administration. “As a Sector, we have achieved universal access to basic education and redressed the inequalities of the fragmented and divisive apartheid education system of the past. We are now focusing on improving the quality, inclusivity and efficiency of the system, paying attention to learners with Special Education Needs; quality pedagogy; teacher development; reading with meaning, especially in the early grades; and continuing to support the system with the appropriate resources and processes. With regards to efficiency, we are focusing on improving the retention and progression rates of our learners, with the intention to improve our children’s readiness for the specialised and diversified curriculum offerings and programmes post the basic education phase”.

Minister Motshekga emphasised that Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remains a critical concern in South Africa, hence Government is in the process of finalising the *National Strategic Plan to address Gender-Based Violence and Femicide*. “As we mobilise for support in curbing GBV in the country, we implore UNESCO to lead and guide in programmes directed at the boy child, intended to socialise them differently. This will help in ensuring that they don’t perpetuate toxic gender practices that may lead to violence against women, children and the public,” said Minister Motshekga. In conclusion, the Minister commended UNESCO for its contribution towards improving the quality of education globally. “We appreciate UNESCO’s support in respect of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), which we will implement in our schools from 2021.”

Department of Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mveli and Secretary-General at the South African National Commission of UNESCO, Mr Carlton Mukwevho, supported the Minister during the visit.



Comprehensive Sexuality Education lesson plans available online



UNESCO and DBE have this week invited 20 journalists to be trained on Early and Unintended Pregnancy which incorporates all the much debated Comprehensive Sexuality Education and related matters. This was done in a bid to provide clear and factual communication about the Department of Basic Education's pilot on the use of the Scripted Lesson Plans. The capacity building workshop held in Sandton, at The Capital Hotel, was addressed by Mr Elijah Mhlanga, Chief Director for Communications as part of a series of interviews done on radio and TV to provide clarity on the CSE SLP debate. On the first day of the workshop he also spent an hour and 20 minutes (10am -11:30am) at Power FM studios in Houghton: [Follow the link to the podcast here.](#)

The scripted lesson plans, which are being used in the CSE pilot phase in selected schools, were placed on the DBE website for all South Africans to access. The pilot is being conducted in areas that have recorded high HIV infection rates and a prevalence of sexual abuse.

The CSE has been part of the curriculum since the year 2000, with the only change being that, in 2015, the Department developed Scripted Lesson Plans (SLPs) which are currently being tested in five provinces to strengthen the teaching of CSE in schools. SLPs are support materials that are designed to aid teachers and learners to address these important topics in a systematic manner. The core aim of the CSE and its SLPs are to ensure that learners build an understanding of concepts, content, values and attitudes related to sexuality, sexual behaviour change, as well as leading safe and healthy lives. The Department is concerned about lower sexual debut and increasing risky sexual behaviour amongst adolescents, which lead to mental health issues such as depression, vulnerability to violence and poor educational outcomes.

Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, recently launched the "Let's Talk!" Early and Unintended Pregnancy Campaign. The Campaign is driven by multiple factors, including poverty; lack of information and access to reproductive health services; cultural norms; peer pressure; and sexual coercion and abuse. "Let's Talk" is a social and behavioural change campaign which seeks to reduce early and unplanned pregnancies across 21 countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region.

The Department is embarking on a communication campaign to communicate these matters further. Fake news has also negatively impacted the debate leading to unnecessary public outrage.

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

DBE and PEDs explore mechanisms to address Gender-Based Violence in school communities



Director for Social Cohesion and Equity in Education, Mr Likho Bottoman, chaired an Interprovincial Task Team Forum held at the DBE Building in Pretoria from 13 to 15 November 2019. The Forum addressed various Equity Components such as Social Cohesion, Transformation, Youth Development and Gender Empowerment. The DBE's Social Cohesion and Equity in Education Directorate and the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), have a long-standing partnership in respect of Social Cohesion programmes in public schools aimed at rekindling nation building efforts in education. These include Oral History; Human Rights Education; Civic Education; Active Citizenry; Heritage Education; Values in Education; and Democracy Education.

Speaking during the Forum, Mr Bottoman said: "Given that Social Cohesion has been identified as one of the priorities for the sixth administration, the Directorate found it opportune to convene provinces for an engagement regarding programme delivery and innovation, as well as exploring different ways to creatively take Social Cohesion programmes forward".

"The Equity Component focuses on the intersecting vulnerabilities of children which impact on social inclusion and educational outcomes, with gender equity and gender empowerment intervention receiving additional attention. Previously, the gender empowerment programme has been implemented to provide added support to the girl child. Lately, the Component has taken up the challenge of addressing the issues of young men and boys, given the increasing vulnerabilities of boys in South Africa. The boys' intervention programme is directed at changing harmful social and gender norms, a phenomenon that sits at the heart of school-related GBV."

The provinces agreed to the implementation of a values-driven communication/ commemoration calendar to promote common values relevant to children in South Africa's diverse society.

DBE launches Ministerial Advocacy and Mobilisation Campaign to end school related Gender-Based Violence

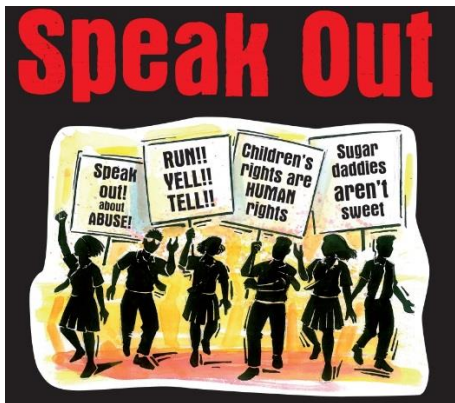


The DBE recently launched a Ministerial Advocacy and Mobilisation Campaign to end school-related Gender-Based Violence (GBV) after President Cyril Ramaphosa made a call for all sectors of Government to take active steps to address the current scourge that is eroding the fabric of South African society. Both girls and boys are targets of GBV, and both genders therefore need protection and intervention from bullying, sexual harassment, abuse and violence in schools.

The Campaign will be taking place under the over-arching theme: “Ending Gender-Based Violence starts with me: I prevent gender violence, I report gender violence”. The Campaign is broken down into four sub-themes, namely, *Respectful Relationships*; *What should I do about violence?*; *How violence makes me feel*; and a focus on *The four types of violence*. This is part of a 365-communication programme responding to the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to facilitate a sustained behavioural change campaign as an urgent intervention to the problem.

During the first week of the Campaign, the role of *Respectful Relationships* will be the focus to combat GBV in schools. The importance of peer influence on adolescents cannot be underestimated. An adolescent’s peers can be part of the most important social relationship, often contributing more to his/her development than families do. Strong peer relationships help teens to find independence from their parents and to develop their own personal identities, as well as a sense of belonging. However, associating with the wrong friends can be detrimental, leading to social ills and drug and substance abuse. Learners will be made aware of the difference between good and caring friends who treat others respectfully, versus the disrespectful actions and attitudes of bad friends.

School safety committees are largely responsible for responding to violence. The responses of witnesses, bystanders and those informed about violence is to report it. The *Protocol for the Management and Reporting of Sexual Abuse and Harassment in Schools* details the response to sexual violence in schools. Similarly, the *Protocol to Deal with Incidences of Corporal Punishment in Schools* can be used to report teachers who use violent forms of discipline. Teachers need to be supported in the use of positive discipline, restorative justice and conflict resolution. It is important that teachers know how to de-escalate conflictual interactions and engage disaffected learners in constructive conversations and link them to psycho-social support services.



Amendments to Section 4 Abridged CAPS



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, acting in terms of section 61(c)(d) of the *South African Schools Act, 1996* (Act. No 84 of 1996), and after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers, has published the amendments to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), Grades R-11. The CAPS, Grades R-12, was approved as National Policy and published in the Government Gazette 34600, Notices 722 and 723 of 12 September 2011.

“The DBE developed an abridged version of Section 4 of the CAPS, focusing mainly on the reduction of formal assessment tasks across most subjects after concerns were received from teachers, subject specialists, parents and education stakeholders about the challenges in

the implementation of the CAPS in many subjects across the grades,” explained Ms Cheryl Weston, Director for Curriculum Implementation and Quality Improvement (FET). Some of these were with regards to curriculum/assessment overload and poor curriculum coverage; poor quality of formal assessment tasks; lack of guidance on the use of cognitive levels; and the need to create more time for teaching and formative assessment. The nature and grade of the subject, and the type and number of the assessment tasks e.g. tests, projects, assignments, case studies and simulations had to be reviewed.

The abridged version of Section 4 of the CAPS provides the interim changes made to the programme of assessment for subjects in Grades 1 to 11, for implementation in January 2020. The changes were made to relieve teachers from the burden of overload regarding the number of assessment tasks, thus, improving the focus on teaching and learning. The revisions in some subjects also include guidance regarding cognitive demands and types of assessment. The reduction of tasks from Grades 1 to 11 varies from subject to subject and grade to grade based on the individual nature of the subject. There was no reduction of tasks in Life Orientation, Mathematics, Technical Mathematics and Technology subjects in the FET phase. The amendments must be read in conjunction with the relevant CAPS for the identified subjects in both the GET and FET Band.

<https://www.education.gov.za/Resources/Legislation/GovernmentNotices/GETandFETAbridgedCAPSdocuments.aspx>

DBE converts Grade R-6 workbooks into adaptable e-Pub/e-book format



In a bid to enable learners and teachers to access digital technology, the DBE has opted to convert Grade R-6 workbooks from static Portable Document Format (PDF) to the adaptable ePub/e-book format. The workbooks are mostly in static PDF file format that is not user-friendly on mobile devices since it is not easily reflowable and are more or less an image of a page. PDF files don't adapt to various sized monitor displays and devices.

The DBE has developed state-owned digital content resources consisting of 334 workbooks, 594 graded readers, and 25 Mind the Gap Study Guides. "Quality digital content resources, both in the interface and presentation methodology, enhance active learning and knowledge retention amongst learners," said Chief Education Specialist for Information Communication and Technology, Mr Henry Kavuma. He further explained that, "the availability and accessibility of quality digital content resources is central to effective and impactful integration of ICT in teaching and learning. This is because educational content resources are the essence of all intellectual and pedagogical engagement, in and out of the classroom. The majority of available state-owned digital content resources are adapted from print textbooks and workbooks that are designed for traditional teaching practices".

Chief Education Specialist for Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM), Mr Makondelela Tshitema, explained: "The DBE is continuing to distribute hard copies of the Grades 1-9 workbooks across all nine provinces. The distribution of workbooks Volume 1 for the 2020 academic year is at 99.91% complete. This implies that out of 23,298 schools, a total of 23,277 schools have received their workbooks consignment as of 13 November 2019".

Inaugural Indigenous Spelling Bee Championship to take place at the University of Venda



The DBE will be hosting the Inaugural Indigenous Spelling Bee Championship at the University of Venda on 28 November 2019. The African languages that are ready for implementation are Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Sepedi and Siswati with Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces being the three participating provinces.

Deputy Director for Enrichment and Sport at the DBE, Mr Potledi Ngoepe, explained that, "the aim of the Indigenous Spelling Bee is to encourage the use of mother-tongue education, as well as the promotion of indigenous languages for Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-5) learners to master age-appropriate reading comprehension".

The Department successfully hosted the sixth Spelling Bee National Championship at the University of South Africa (UNISA) Main Campus in Pretoria on 21 September 2019. Bayyinah Ahmed Manjoo from Star College Cape Town in the Western Cape Province, was the winner after spelling the word "insuperable" in the first elimination round, which saw many spellers eliminated.

The DBE Spelling Bee is hosted in collaboration with key partners such as the AVBOB Foundation, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, SABC Education and the University of Venda.

Youth reminded about the closing date for the Funza Lushaka Programme intake



As the 2019 academic year draws to a close, it is crucial for youth intending to pursue careers in education to note the closing date for the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. The closing date for returning bursars is 22 November 2019, whilst the closing date for new applicants is 10 January 2020. The Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme is a Government initiative designed for recruiting vibrant young people to the teaching profession.

Through this Bursary, the DBE has progressed well in terms of promoting innovative subjects in public schools to meet the demand of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. To date, the DBE has awarded 7,835 bursaries to strengthen curriculum coverage in Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST) subjects, including various technology subjects such as Electrical Engineering; Information Technology; Electrical Technology; Computer Application Technology; and Civil Technology.

Director for Initial Education, Mr Gerrit Coetzee, explained: “As part of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme, Government continues to emphasise the necessity to strengthen quality learning and teaching in the Foundation and Intermediate Phases. Thus far, 5244 vibrant teachers have been trained, specialising in General Education and Training. Funza Lushaka is among the programmes that can be used to prepare educators for subjects that are responsive to the demands of the changing world. These include Coding and Robotics; Marine Sciences; Hydro/Aquaponics, and Aviation Sciences. Interested students must complete a first degree and then register for a Post Graduate Certificate in Education in the Senior Phase/FET teaching, before applying for the Funza Lushaka Bursary”.

Provincial Round-up



The Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) visited the community of Maletswai in the Joe Gqabi District, Aliwal North to commemorate 2019 National Disability Rights Awareness Month. Inclusive Education Director, Ms Amanda Msindwana, gave an overview of her directorate, explaining the nature of support that is given to learners with disability, as well as their parents and guardians: “The Inclusive Education Directorate ensures that learners are not left behind because of their barriers. We ensure that learners can access the curriculum and that parents are supported as the ECDoE has put programmes in place during and after school.” Mr Temba Kojana, Superintendent-General of the ECDoE added that collaboration is required to succeed. “We need to take advantage of the resources to move forward; let’s focus our energies on the various forms of disabilities and find schools that will accommodate every learner as they are gifted differently and not disabled.” Eastern Cape Education MEC, Mr Fundile Gade, encouraged parents, teachers and the community to work together to bridge the gaps for the good of learners with disabilities.



KwaZulu-Natal Education Head of Department, Dr Enock Vusumuzi Nzama received Braille textbooks at the Open Air Special School in Glenwood, Durban. The books are part of the Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) for learners with Special Needs. Dr Nzama commended the Department’s Inclusive Education Directorate for their role in arranging the handover. South Africa will be commemorating 2019 Disability Rights Awareness Month (DRAM) from 3 November to 3 December 2019, under the theme “Together building a South Africa inclusive of Disability Rights”. The month, which is used to raise awareness and to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, will culminate in the International Day of Persons with Disabilities that is observed on 3 December globally. It is also an opportunity to reflect on progress Government and the Basic Education Sector has made in addressing the challenges faced by persons with disabilities, as we commemorate 25 Years of Democracy, in realising the political and socio-economic rights of persons with disabilities as entrenched in the *Bill of Rights* and the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.



Education MEC for the North West Province, Mrs Mmaphefo Matsemela, is satisfied with the administering of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations process across the province. Examination Centres are being monitored by officials from Umalusi, the National Department of Basic Education, Provincial Education Departments, Districts and Subdistricts in all examinations centres across the province. MEC Matsemela joined the monitoring team and visited Kgalatllhowe Secondary School in Motlhaba Village near Moruleng on 11 November 2019. “We are satisfied with the smooth running of the NSC examinations in the province thus far. In some areas irregularities such as acts of dishonesty amongst learners have been reported and appropriate steps are being taken. Generally, there are no hiccups in all the centres of our province. We would like to thank all stakeholders for their continued support for learners during this examination period”, said MEC Matsemela. The North West Education Department will release the Class of 2019 matric results on 08 January 2019 at the Fields College Secondary school hall in Rustenburg at 09:00.

Upcoming Events

- 03 November – 03 December: National Disability Rights Awareness Month is commemorated annually
- 19 November 2019: The Kader Asmal Award Adjudication process, part of the 20th National Teaching Award (NTA) process, will be taking place at the DBE Building in Pretoria in the Gauteng Province
- 24 – 28 November 2019: The Adjudication process of the 20th NTAs will be taking place in the Gauteng Province
- 27 November 2019: The DBE Editorial Committee will be hosting a Lunchbox Lekgotla Seminar at the DBE Building in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 27 – 28 November 2019: A Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST) Conditional Grant Inter-provincial meeting will be taking place in Cape Town in the Western Cape Province
- 28 November 2019: The inaugural Indigenous Spelling Bee Championships will be taking place at the University of Venda in Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province
- 29 November 2019: The DBE will be hosting a Man Forum at the DBE Building in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 01 December 2019: World Aids Day is commemorated globally
- 03 December 2019: The DBE World Aids Day commemoration will be taking place in Potchefstroom, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District in the North West Province
- 03 December 2019: The day is marked as International Day of Persons with Disabilities, and is also commemorated as National Disability Rights Awareness Day
- 04 – 06 December 2019: A Teacher Development Workshop will be taking place in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 06 December 2019: DBE Long Service Awards will be taking place at the Botanical Gardens in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 08 – 13 December 2019: The South African Schools National Championships (Summer Games) will be taking place at the University of Pretoria
- 07 January 2020: Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, will be announcing the NSC Results at the Vodacom Dome in Midrand, Gauteng Province

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