



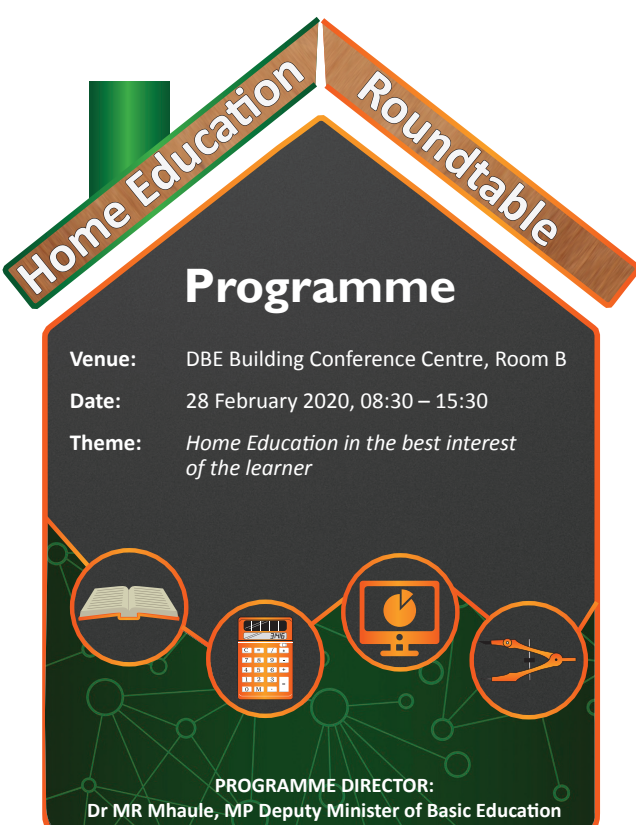
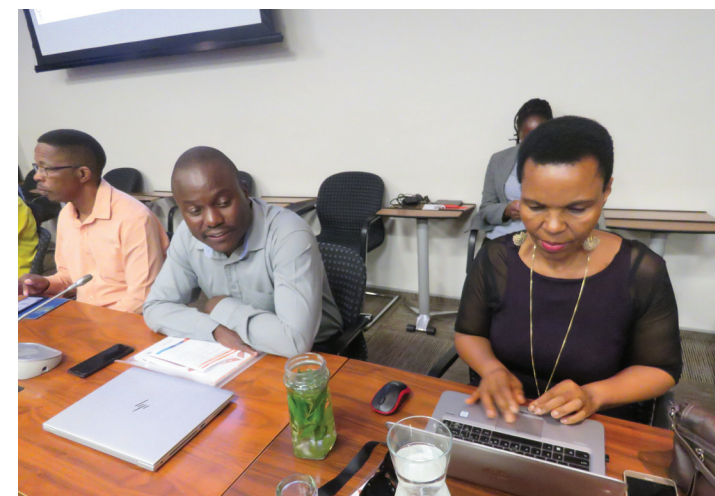
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NEWSLETTER

Minister Motshekga hosts first ever Roundtable on Home Education



A Home Education Roundtable took place at the DBE Building in Pretoria, Gauteng Province, on 28 February 2020. The Roundtable will contribute to the development and implementation of a Strategy and Sector Plan on Home Education. It will also ensure coordination on implementation, monitoring and evaluation through the strengthening of collaborate efforts.

In her keynote address, Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, outlined the objectives of the Roundtable saying that, “we need to create a Home Educators’ Network with key stakeholders to strengthen collaboration, tighten issues around registration and assessment, as well as monitoring and support to ensure that every child has a right to education in accordance with the *Constitution*. As every child is a national asset, we need to ensure that learners, and especially those with special needs, are safe and included in the system”.

Basic Education Deputy Minister, Dr Reginah Mhaule, explained that the important role that parents play as teachers in Home Education, cannot be underestimated. “If Home Education falls into the hands of careless parents, the results could be disastrous”.

Best practices on Home Education were shared and curriculum providers unpacked ways in which a community of practice in support of parents could be established though webinars, discussion forums, provision of notes and material, and ensure that assessment is valid and reliable.

Chief Director for Curriculum Implementation and Monitoring at the DBE, Dr Moses Simelane, gave a presentation the *Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* (SIAS) Policy, the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill and the General Education Certificate (GEC), which all impact on Home Education before the delegates broke into four commissions. The commissions unpacked the following matters on Home Education: strengthening advocacy and registration; curriculum implementation, monitoring and evaluation; assessment, recording and reporting; and facilitating access, mobility and progression within institutions of learning.





DG Mweli motivates The Glen High School Mathematics Class of 2020



Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mweli, paid a surprise visit to the Mathematics Class of 2020 at The Glen High School in Pretoria to motivate learners as part of his Provincial Engagements.

During his visit, Mr Mweli thanked the teachers and the school principal for their commitment towards attaining quality results in the annual National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations. He then advised Grade 12 learners to study hard and practice Mathematics regularly to achieve excellent results. Mr Mweli further encouraged learners to invest time in Home Languages to improve their overall performance. “You need to be more determined and follow your teachers’ instructions to perform better. I am truly impressed with your discipline and I am convinced that you will achieve a 100% pass rate this year”, said Mr Mweli.

In her brief to Mr Mweli, the principal, Mrs Caroline Nel, explained: “During 2019, the school saw 200 Grade 12 learners sitting for the NSC Examinations. Of the 200 learners who wrote, only two learners fell short. Mrs Nel was pleased that the school achieved a 100% pass rate in Physical Science, with 7% of learners obtaining distinctions, followed by an 83,3% achievement in Mathematics. “One of the contributing factors to school performance is the promotion of reading across the curriculum. During 2020, the school will place more emphasis on Mathematics and Home Languages and ensure that challenging topics are fully addressed.”

Gauteng Department of Education sets 90% target for 2020 NSC Examinations



Key education stakeholders in the Gauteng Province intend to raise the overall performance from 87.2% achieved in 2019 to a target average of 90% in 2020. During his visit to the Gauteng Province this week, Mr Mweliso Mkhondo alluded to the fact that the Sector is on the rise. He, however, urged provincial officials and school principals to identify factors surrounding declining subjects such as Mathematics, Home Languages and Technical subjects. Mr Mweliso visited various districts in the Gauteng Province to monitor intervention support programmes and strategies designed for improving learning outcomes.

During his presentations, Mr Mweliso said that Provincial Engagements continue to empower Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) in improving the throughput rate in schools. “Although the province has made progress in terms of overall results, the performance of Technical subjects, Mathematics as well Home Languages remain areas of concern”. Mr Mweliso further applauded the province for its outstanding intervention support programme, targeted at progressed and gifted learners. “It is recommended that you maintain a balance in supporting all categories of learners. If you concentrate only on progressed learners and pay less attention to gifted learners, there are high chances that your results might decline. It is advisable to use data in profiling learners according to their grade, subject and age. District Directors and school principals should be data driven”.

DG Mweliso added that the school holiday programmes (Autumn, Winter and Spring Camps) are significant interventions for improving district and school performance. “Gauteng is the only province which has intensified school holiday camps to assist learners in revising challenging topics throughout the year. I therefore encourage you to continue with these camps as they assist schools in producing quality results. Another area that we need to strengthen is teacher development and recruitment. Vacant posts should be filled with qualified teachers, especially in Mathematics and Home Languages,” concluded Mr Mweliso.

DBE prepares to fast-track the effective implementation of Focus Schools



The DBE is drawing on lessons from various technical education experts to pave the way for the establishment of Focus Schools in South Africa.

Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mveli, hosted a *Think Tank* on the establishment of Focus Schools at Emperors Palace in Kempton Park in the Gauteng Province from 21 to 22 February 2020. The *Think Tank* was aimed at drawing on collective expertise within the sector to deliberate and develop practical implementable plans to support the effective implementation of Focus Schools across all provinces. The participants explored best practices, existing local and international models, and strategies to deliver on flagship Focus Schools in support of the implementation of the Three Stream Model. It is envisaged that, through the Focus Schools approach, learners will be channelled into various careers in the non-academic stream where they will be afforded an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to their communities.

According to Ms Cheryl Weston, Director for Further Education and Training, the *National Development Plan* (NDP) calls for the Basic Education Sector to produce school-leavers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for employability, entrepreneurship or further studies. “The DBE has developed, and is implementing the Three Stream Model, designed to achieve these core goals. Whilst some provinces have made progress in establishing Focus Schools or schools of specialisation, progress has not been the same across all provinces. We therefore needed to engage as a sector to unpack the Focus School concept for effective implementation.”

Ms Weston further explained: “The *Think Tank* was critical because it provides a roadmap to the sector on how best to implement Focus Schools. Issues that were engaged with during the *Think Tank* included conceptual understanding of Focus Schools; the structure of curriculum offerings; operationalisation of the programme; national areas of focus; and protocols for governance and partnership. The discussions were notably frank, open and constructive and emerged with a set of key recommendations to fast-track and standardise the uniform implementation of Focus Schools. A Roundtable for Focus Schools is planned to consult with educational stakeholders to create an opportunity for partnership and collaboration and to develop a national sector plan for Focus Schools”.

Fourth Annual NSNP Forum celebrates the role of nutrition in enhancing the cognitive and physical development of learners



The Fourth Annual National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) Forum will be taking place at the Lakes Hotel and Conference Centre in Benoni, Gauteng Province from 3 to 5 March 2020. The Forum will be held under the theme, “The role of nutrition in enhancing learners’ cognitive and physical development”.

Since the launch of the NSNP Forum in 2017, it has targeted key implementers of the Programme at provincial and district level towards improving quality, efficiency, monitoring and evaluation, as well as support services of NSNP activities. Approximately 250 participants will be attending the Forum, which brings together government officials and key stakeholders in the Sector to find solutions to challenges, and share best practices with provinces and partners. This collaborative approach ensures that learners do not attend school hungry, but that their learning capacity improves, along with their access to quality education.

The Forum will be integrated with the Africa School Feeding Day on 1 March, an initiative of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), emphasising the well-being of Africa’s children to ensure optimal development for brighter futures.

The main objectives of the Forum are to create a platform for key NSNP implementers at all levels (National, Provincial and District), to share new developments and innovative methods in nutrition; recognise school meals as the world’s most widely-used safety net and the vital role it plays in education; and to recognise excellence in the implementation of the Programme. The Forum proceedings will therefore culminate with the announcement of the winners of the NSNP Best District Awards and exhibition, on 5 March 2020. Over the years, the Programme has helped to meet the nutritional needs of our learners and continues to contribute towards achieving the outcomes of basic quality education.

The importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD) as a critical determinant of future health and wellbeing cannot be ignored. As the function migrates from the Department of Social Development to the DBE, an amplified focus will be placed on improving access to ECD services, as well as the quality of provision as a main priority for the 6th Administration to reduce socio-economic inequality.

Strides in Inclusive Education confirm that every South African child matters

The Basic Education Sector has made strides in Inclusive Education in South Africa, as the system gears towards full implementation by 2030 to be in line with the *National Development Plan* (NDP) goals to provide Inclusive Education that enables everyone to participate effectively in a free society, thus ensuring that all children, including those with disabilities, have access to quality education.

Chief Director for Curriculum Implementation and Monitoring at the DBE, Dr Moses Simelane, said that, “when compared to 2002 statistics, the number of special schools had increased from 295 to 501; learner enrolment in special schools increased from 64, 000 to 93,699; the number of learners with disabilities in public ordinary schools increased from 77,000 to 121,461; and the number of children with severe to profound intellectual disability supported in special care centres has reached 11,233 in three years of implementing the *Conditional Grant for Learners with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability*. In addition, there is a total of 848 mainstream schools that have been capacitated to become full-service schools nationally.”

Dr Simelane added that, “in 2014, the DBE promulgated the *Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* (SIAS), which provides a policy framework for the standardisation of procedures to identify, assess and provide support programmes for all learners who require additional support. To date, the progressive rollout of the SIAS Policy has reached 5,821 officials and 113, 204 teachers from all public schools in the country. To date, nationally, a total of 2,059 teachers have been trained in Braille, 2,394 teachers have been trained in South African Sign Language (SASL), 4,626 teachers trained in Autism as well as 33,923 teachers trained in Inclusive Programmes to ensure that teachers are empowered to appropriately teach the diversity of learners in their care.

Going forward, the key priorities for the Sector are to prioritise the acceleration of the institutionalisation of the SIAS Policy and Curriculum Differentiation by filling of posts in Inclusive Education at all levels; mobilising out-of-school children with disabilities; and the provision of access to therapeutic services to learners in special care centres. The implementation of SASL CAPS must be part of the mainstream intervention programmes, particularly at Grade 12. In addition, full-service schools will be incrementally converted, strengthened and resourced to equip them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities of ensuring that no learner is left behind. Furthermore, the *Guidelines for Resourcing an Inclusive Education System* will be finalised and School-based and District-based Support Teams will be monitoring progress to ensure the full implementation of the *White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* by 2021.



Helping learners to break the silence about HIV and Sexuality Education



SABC1 aired the debut episode of the ground-breaking, 13-episode production of the *Breaking the Silence* television series on 24 February 2020. The HIV Prevention and Sexuality Education (SE) television series was developed through a partnership with the Department, Red Pepper Studios and Kheth'impilo. The *Breaking the Silence* television series takes the format of a *docutainment*, a documentary that captures intergenerational dialogue between educators and learners, in a Reality TV style.

Director for Social Cohesion and Equity in Education, Mr Likho Bottoman, explains that, “the television series was developed in view of the current research evidence suggesting that the best education modalities to drive SE effectively is through a continuous, safe and open dialogue. The production

consists of thematic areas and discussion points aligned to the SE sub-topics contained in the Lifeskills and Life Orientation Learning Area. This will provide structured opportunities for young people to honestly explore their own attitudes and values, and to practice the skills they need to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing”.

The DBE received funding for this project from the Global Fund, through the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for the implementation of a prevention programme for sexual and reproductive health, including prevention of sexual abuse and harassment as well as the promotion of condom use among the youth.

Provincial Round-up

Eastern Cape Province



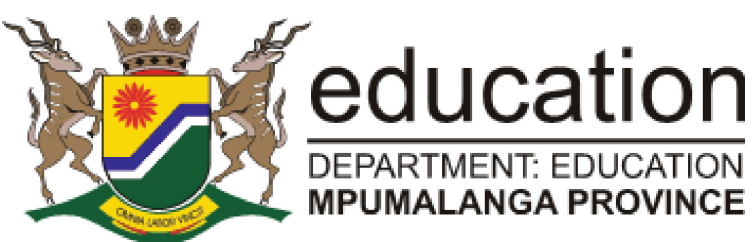
The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) in the Eastern Cape Province recently honoured more than 300 members who have excelled in their areas of specialisation at the International Convention Centre in East London. Teachers who attained more than 80% passes in the subjects they taught in the 2019 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations, excelled in organising extra-curricular activities at their schools or demonstrated excellent leadership qualities, were honoured. The awards initiative started in 2018 with 111 members receiving awards. The number grew to 300 in 2019, and this year, more than 300 teachers were awarded in various categories as a symbol of excellence. SADTU said the event is part of the union's 2030 Vision Pillars, *Creating a Learning Nation*.

KwaZulu-Natal Province



The KZN MEC for Education, Mr Kwazi Mshengu, together with the KZN Head of Department (HoD), Dr Enock Vusumuzi Nzama, officially launched the *Revival of the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign* (QLTC). The launch took place at the Sibusisiwe Hall in Mandeni in the Ilembe District Municipality on 24 February 2020. The QLTC pledge was signed by traditional and religious leaders, teacher unions, principals, teachers, School Governing Body Associations, parents and learners. The QLTC Campaign calls on all individuals and organisations to assume responsibility for improving the quality of education. The QLTC aims to mobilise all members of communities, throughout South Africa to acknowledge that “it takes a community to raise a child”.

Mpumalanga Province



The Mpumalanga Provincial Government will commence with the construction of seven new schools in five fast-growing towns. Delivering her State of the Province Address on Tuesday, Mpumalanga Premier Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane said two schools will be built in Mbombela, one in Secunda, Ermelo, Lydenburg and eMalahleni, respectively. The province also plans to build a school for deaf learners within the City of Mbombela Municipality. The project is at the design stage. Premier Mtsweni-Tsipane also touched on the province's drive to address the shortage of rare skills, reporting that 281 learners attended a study course in Russia. The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) has also partnered with the province and funded 81 new students, who are studying overseas. "Our bursary scheme has assisted more than 3,334 learners, who are studying in various fields such as medicine, veterinary science, information technology, aviation, education (Mathematics and Science) and engineering. The artisan development programme was set up to deal with and address the issue of artisan development in the province, as envisaged by the *National Development Plan*. This has, thus far produced 2,950 artisans, ranging from welding and pipe fabricators, boiler makers, safety and quality officers. The province will, in partnership with its private sector partners, intensify and increase the number of existing programmes to 25,000 young people who will be trained in various skills during the next financial year.

Western Cape Province



A partnership between ID Mkize Secondary School in Gugulethu and Whitby High School in Yorkshire in the United Kingdom is going from strength to strength. The two schools have been twinned since 2011 through the British Council. The school recently hosted 20 learners from Whitby to raise awareness about plastic pollution. ID Mkize Principal, Zola Pahlana, explained the exchange between the local learners and the visitors as enlightening. He was very proud of how well his learners did in a debate session with the visitors about the pros and cons of social media and its impact on society. The learners also shared ideas on recycling, the use of ecobricks and teaching communities to be more environmentally conscious. The school has also extended their support to neighbouring schools like Siviwe School of Skills and Sokhanyo Primary School.

Upcoming Events

- 26 February – 02 March 2020: Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be engaging with district and provincial officials during his Provincial Engagement Visits to the Gauteng Province
- 03 – 05 March 2020: The Fourth Annual National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) Forum will be taking place at the Lakes Hotel and Conference Centre in Benoni, Gauteng Province under the theme, "The role of nutrition in enhancing learners' cognitive and physical development"
- 03 – 11 March 2020: Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be engaging with district and provincial officials during his Provincial Engagement Visits to the Limpopo Province
- 12 – 16 March 2020: Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mwel, will be engaging with district and provincial officials during his Provincial Engagement Visits to the Western Cape Province
- 13 March 2020: The DBE National Excellence Awards for Districts and Schools will be taking place at the Glen High School in Waterkloof Glen in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 13 March 2020: The DBE will be tabling its Annual Performance Plan (APP) and Strategic Plan 2020 in Parliament, Cape Town in the Western Cape Province

Enquiries:

Editor: Mr Elijah Mhlanga

Chief Director: Media Liaison - National and Provincial Communication

Tel. No: 012 357 3773