



THUTO

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THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



NEWSLETTER

Learners set to sing in honour of Madiba during annual ABC Motsepe SASCE Championships



The National Co-ordinating Committee of the ABC Motsepe South African Schools Choir Eisteddfod (SASCE) Competition confirmed that all nine provinces officially completed the 2018 Provincial Competitions on 03 June 2018. The winning choirs and soloists selected at provincial level, will compete in the National Championships which will be taking place at Rhema Bible Church in Randburg from 26 to 29 June 2018.

The annual Championships, regarded as one of the critical care and learner support initiatives, afford learners an opportunity to showcase their musical talent. The Eisteddfod is one of the strategic school enrichment programmes that promotes national reconciliation, national identity, social transformation and cohesion through song.

As part of the Nelson Mandela centenary celebrations, the ABC Motsepe SASCE has commissioned and dedicated three powerful songs in honour of the global icon. These songs include *Vela Mandela*, *Vela Sikubone* composed by Mr Tanduxolo Mahlangeni, *Natso-ke Madiba* by Mr Bongani Cola and *Rivonia!* by Mr Qinisela Sibisi.

Mr Sifiso Ngobese, Director from the Sport and Enrichment in Education Directorate, and the chairperson of the National Co-ordinating Committee, indicated that the Competition complements Government's efforts towards achieving a non-sexist, non-racial state, which embraces cultural differences and diversity. "In the quest to uphold the *Constitution* of the Republic of South Africa let us showcase and celebrate our cultures and honour them in their authentic form, but within the parameters that protect and preserve the dignity of our learners. This is not a prescription to guide the specific Indigenous Folklore category, but rather to ensure sensitivity and to avoid sensationalism and exploitation around our cultural expression," explained Mr Ngobese.

Mr Ngobese acknowledged the efforts and commitment of teachers, conductors, and parents for raising the morale of participants during the provincial leg of the Competition. "The sterling work done by provincial co-ordinators and co-ordinating committees, including teacher unions, is appreciated in ensuring that South African learners are given a musical platform rooted in South African culture and history.

Assessment experts encourage the DBE to improve learner assessment at public schools



“It is befitting for us to converge in this fashion to share best practice on international assessment to inform the DBE’s decision in dealing with assessment deficits. Although the DBE has made huge strides in terms of strengthening the National Senior Certificate (NSC), more work still needs to be done to improve the level of literacy and numeracy in the General Education and Training (GET) band. The DBE needs to ensure that the sector empowers learners to become innovative, problem solvers, and critical thinkers to contribute to the development of the South African economy,” said Chief Director for National Assessment and Public Examinations, Dr Rufus Poliah during the DBE and Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development (OECD) workshop. The workshop took place at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg from 07 to 08 June 2018.

Dr Poliah further added that the DBE is busy finalising the preparatory processes for the implementation of Systemic Evaluation, which will be carried out at the beginning of October 2018. “The findings of this study will help us to improve operational systems at national, provincial and district levels with a view to strengthening the implementation of policies on improving learning outcomes. We also believe that the study will guide all levels of the Department in setting targets in relation to the national benchmarks for learner performance,” explained Dr Poliah.

Deputy Director-General for Planning, Information and Assessments, Mr Paddy Padayachee and Dr Poliah both delivered critical presentations on assessments. Dr Yuri Obara Belfali from the OECD commended the DBE for its ambition in developing a coherent framework for evaluation: “The OECD strongly encourages South Africa to join the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to improve its National Education system for the better,” she said.

The workshop was attended by local and international assessment experts, focusing on developing a coherent *National Evaluation and Assessment Framework* to improve quality learning and teaching. The DBE partnered with OECD to gain an international perspective on best assessment policies and practices during the development of the framework. The OECD was expected to provide insight and experiences of developing countries participating in PISA. PISA includes several countries with emerging economies, from within BRICs and the G-20, including Russia, Japan, China and Switzerland.

The event ended with a report back session on the input collated during the commission discussions.

Click on the below link to view the highlights from the commissions:

<https://www.education.gov.za/OECD06-18.aspx>

Rural Education Assistants Project kicks off



The Rural Education Assistants Project (REAP), announced by Minister Angie Motshekga during the 2018/2019 Education Budget Vote Debate, kicked off in the iLembe and Umzinyathi districts of the KwaZulu-Natal Province. REAP is an initiative of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to improve literacy and numeracy in three of the country's most rural provinces, i.e. Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Approximately 150 recommended applicants from the two KwaZulu-Natal districts attended briefing sessions hosted by the DBE and Provincial and District officials from 28 to 31 May 2018.

Approximately 700 unemployed matriculants will be placed as Education Assistants (EAs) in 188 primary schools across the three Provinces over the next three years. All the recommended EAs must be 18 to 25 year old South African citizens in possession of a Grade 12 National Senior Certificate (NSC) with a pass in English, their First Additional Language, and Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy. REAP is a pilot study to evaluate the effect of assistant teachers in the Foundation Phase and in Grade 4. The Project's lead researcher will report annually on its progress and will determine the usefulness of the Assistants to develop a strategy to recruit teachers for rural schools.

An initial R29.2 million has been allocated to the Project, which will be increased to R58.3 million during the next two years. These assistant teachers will assist with a variety of curricular activities: improving numeracy, literacy and reading skills; and co-curricular activities such as co-ordinating homework, Mathematics, reading and creative arts clubs, as well as agricultural projects.

Schools chosen to take part in the pilot project were subjected to a strict set of criteria. These were Quintile 1 to Quintile 3 schools (Foundation and Intermediate phases) with a good academic performance and effective management, a full staff complement including Senior Management Teams (SMT) and be willing to commit to the objectives of the REAP. In addition, the school must be able to delegate one teacher to supervise the EAs, provide office space and be willing to work with neighbouring primary schools and the local community. Additional pilot projects will be conducted in the Alfred Nzo and OR Tambo Districts in the Eastern Cape Province, and the Sekhukhune and Mopani Districts in the Limpopo Province up until 2021.



Reading Clubs – Inculcating a reading habit in young learners



The aim of the Spelling Bee and Reading Clubs programmes are to improve academic performance through fun activities. The DBE Spelling Bee commenced during 2013 in partnership with independent Spelling Bee implementers. It was taken to scale in 2014 and has been running since. Underpinning the Spelling Bee programme is the establishment and nurturing of Reading Clubs in schools and school communities to reinforce the DBE's *Read to Lead Campaign*.

The 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) calls for increased time spent on reading in the Foundation and Intermediate phases in the curriculum, as well as the encouragement of an increase in the culture of reading.

To date, more than 538 officials in seven provinces (Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Northern Cape, Western Cape, and Free State) have attended a capacity-building workshop on how to establish and sustain Reading Clubs to promote reading for enjoyment. The Reading Clubs are specifically aimed at inculcating a reading habit amongst learners in the lower grades. Currently, there are approximately 416 Reading Clubs co-ordinated in collaboration with the Nal'ibali Trust, with whom the DBE has signed a Memorandum of Agreement, throughout the country.

Reading Clubs are often confused with Book Clubs (mostly for adults). There seems to be a consensus among key stakeholders that a Reading Club is “a relaxed environment where people who love stories and books meet regularly to read, tell stories and talk about what they are reading with children of all ages”.

The DBE Reading Clubs' Competition will be launched during 2019. Currently four districts within two provinces have been participating since 2017, namely: the Eastern Cape (Maluti and Bizana) and KwaZulu-Natal (Ugu and Uthukela). The objectives of the competition are to develop a reading habit amongst young learners; to encourage reading for enjoyment; to inculcate a reading culture in a school that will lead to life-long learning; to mobilise social partners for support; and to encourage the spirit of volunteerism in reading promotion. Workshops will be made available for stakeholders and implementing partners as part of the preparations for the DBE Reading Clubs' Competition in 2019.

For additional information on Reading Clubs, click on the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHWqDugSTqQ&index=2&list=PL892B45D4C03497BB>

Gearing up for the first National Senior Certificate Examination on South African Sign Language Home Language



The DBE and Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), through the South African Sign Language (SASL) Task Team, have committed themselves to ensure that plans to roll out the first Grade 12 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations in SASL Home Language in November 2018 is successful.

On 01 June 2018, the special Task Team, established by the National Examinations and Assessment Committee (NEAC) and chaired by the Director for Public Examinations, Mrs Priscilla Ogunbanjo, met at the DBE in Pretoria. The aim of the meeting was to evaluate the preparedness of the system for the first Grade 12 NSC Examinations in SASL HL and to develop guidelines for the conduct and administration of the first SASL HL examination. A total of 58 learners from 10 schools that offer SASL HL will sit for the examinations in 2018. The introduction of SASL HL in the sector will provide deaf learners with the opportunity to achieve unendorsed NSCs which will enable them to access higher education.

The examinations, which will be centrally marked, will be written in the form of recorded signing - the question papers and learner responses would be signed and recorded for marking and moderation purposes.

The DBE plans to conduct a preparatory examination in SASL HL Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3 on 13, 15 and 17 August respectively. The preparatory examinations will be administered following the same norms and standards and security measures and procedures relating to the conduct of the final NSC Examinations. This will assist in testing readiness of the system to ensure effective administration of the final year examinations in November 2018. The learner responses will be marked nationally at the DBE utilising teachers from schools offering SASL HL.

The marking process will train teachers on the standardisation of the marking of responses to SASL HL question papers; set a benchmark for future marking; familiarise teachers with the expectations of marking in SASL HL for Grade 12; and prepare the system for the November 2018 examinations.

The Basic Education Sector is optimistic about the introduction of SASL HL and the combined effort of all stakeholders will ensure the successful administration of the first SASL HL examinations in November 2018.

Provincial Round-up

Western Cape Province



Western Cape Education Department (WCED) MEC, Ms Debbie Schäfer, this week announced a R10,000 reward for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of criminal elements traumatising Western Cape schools. During the last three weeks, four separate armed robberies have taken place just after the school day had ended, with learners and educators still participating in after-school activities and meetings. Educators and staff were threatened at gunpoint and were robbed of personal items. School ICT equipment was stolen and, in one case, a vehicle was hijacked on the premises. The WCED has provided additional security at the schools, as well as trauma counselling. The reward will be paid in cash, and the anonymity of the caller will be secured, unless they are required to personally give evidence. Members of the public with information pertaining to these armed robberies must please contact the WCED Safe Schools hotline on 0800 45 46 47.

North West Province



The North West Education and Sport Development Department is pleased that learners of Madibogopan Village returned to school this week. This came after an urgent intervention meeting of the North West Provincial Government departments' engagement with the community leaders of Madibogopan Village. The protest has affected schooling for a period of over three months without learning and teaching taking place in the area. The community met with MECs Mr Sello Lehari (Education and Sport Development), Mr Fenny Gaoloalwe (Local Government and Human Settlement), Ms Mmule Maluleke (Public Works and Roads), Dr Mpho Motlhabane (Community Safety and Transport Management) and Mayor for Ratlou Local Municipality, Councillor Tebogo Modise. MEC Lehari indicated that the department has already drawn up an intervention plan to be rolled out for learners to gain lost learning and teaching time. Winter schools and Saturday classes will also commence during the June vacation as part of the recovery plan.

Eastern Cape Province



The Eastern Cape Department of Education, in collaboration with the Career Exhibition Information Association (CEIA), recently hosted a career Expo in the Buffalo City Metro. The exhibition stretched over a period of four days in Dimbaza, King Williams Town, Mdantsane and East London. The career exhibition targeted Grade 9 learners, providing advice on subject choices in the FET band. Grade 12 learners were informed about various career choices, as well as available bursaries. Three thousand learners from 80 schools attended the Expo. Supporting the Expo were exhibitors from the Walter Sisulu University, the Nelson Mandela University, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), the Richfield Graduate Institute of Technology and the Pearson Institute of Higher Education. Career exhibitions assist learners to obtain exposure to different career choices and contribute to motivating learners to improve their performance.

Upcoming Events

- 11 – 14 June 2018: A SA-SAMS/EMIS Workshop will be hosted at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province, to share best practice with representatives of the Kingdom of Eswatini
- 12 – 13 June 2018: The National Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Conference will be taking place at the St George Hotel in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 12 – 15 June 2018: The 5th South African Tuberculosis (TB) Conference will be taking place at the International Convention Centre in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 14 June 2018: The National Council of Provinces Education Budget Vote Debate (NCOP) 2018 will be taking place in Parliament, Cape Town, Western Province
- 15 – 16 June 2018: EduWeek Africa will be taking place in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province
- 18 – 22 June 2018: A SADC Meeting of Ministers of Education, Training, Science, Technology and Innovation will be taking place at the Zimbali Lodge in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 21 June 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 25 – 29 June 2018: The Annual ABC Motsepe SASCE National Competition will be taking place at the Rhema Bible Church in Randburg, Gauteng Province
- 05 – 06 July 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
- 27 – 29 July 2018: The national finals of the Youth Citizens Action Programme (YCAP) 2018 will be hosted in the Eastern Cape Province
- 16 August 2018: A Lunchbox Lekgotla seminar will be taking place at the DBE in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 17 August 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the Eastern Cape Province
- 29 August 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the Gauteng Province
- 01 September 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the Western Cape Province
- 05 September 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the Free State Province
- 07 September 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the Mpumalanga Province
- 07 September 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the Northern Cape Province
- 13 September 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 13 September 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the North West Province
- 13 – 14 September 2018: The provincial leg of the Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted in the Limpopo 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
- 28 – 30 September 2018: The annual iNkosi Albert Luthuli Oral History Programme will be taking place at Freedom Park, Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 03 – 07 October 2018: The national finals of the Eighth National Schools Moot Court Competition will be hosted at the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province
- 06 October 2018: The National Spelling Bee Championships will be hosted at the ZK Matthews Auditorium, Unisa 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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