



THUTO

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THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



NEWSLETTER

DBE and partners workshop Coding and Robotics Curriculum for the GET Band



The Department of Basic Education (DBE), in partnership with Standard Bank and Africa Teen Geeks, has put together a team of experts in the field of Computer Applications Technology (CAT) and Information Technology (IT) to write a Digital Skills Curriculum for Grades R to 9. The six day curriculum writing process took place at the Hoopoe Haven Lodge in Fourways, Gauteng Province from 24 to 31 March 2019.

Chief Education Specialist for Digital Skills in General Education and Training (GET), Ms Carina Labuschagne, says the process will be implemented within the next 12 to 24 months. “Once the curriculum development process has been completed, there will be a need for the development of the necessary material and teacher training activities to prepare the sector for the piloting processes. Our intention is to pilot the Curriculum in Grades R to 3 during 2020 and in Grades 4 to 6 during 2021. The last phase of piloting will be conducted in Grades 7 to 9 during 2022”.

Ms Labuschagne added that the Digital Skills Curriculum will consist of several critical variables, including Application Skills; Internet and e-Communication Skills; Data and Information Management Skills; and Computational Thinking Skills and Coding. Ms Labuschagne describes Coding as the writing of instructions for computation using a programming language to achieve a specific goal or to solve a problem. Coding therefore refers to a programming tool, which was designed specifically for educational purposes, based on sound programming principles. The curriculum will provide learners with the necessary knowledge and skills to become inventors of new technologies to make a valuable contribution towards the global community.

The introduction of the Coding and Robotics Curriculum was approved by the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) on 08 March 2019. Chief Director for MST and Curriculum Enhancement Programmes, Mr Seliki Tlhabane said: “This is a deliberate move by the sector to reposition the curriculum to prepare our learners with skills for the changing world. Coding and Robotics will integrate diverse skills such as Creativity, Collaboration, and Problem Solving to groom learners for future careers”.

Mr Tlhabane explained, “Before computers can be used to solve a problem, the problem itself and the ways in which it could be resolved, must be understood. This includes the development of important skills that most subjects assist with. It also consists of specific problem solving skills such as the ability to think logically, algorithmically and recursively. Coding is essentially written instructions that a robot or computer programme can read and then execute. Learners must determine the task they want to complete through a robot, design the code to make it happen, and then send it to the robot to view the outcome. We are grateful to our partners, Standard Bank and Africa Teen Geeks for making this possible”.

Director-General Mveli monitors the Autumn Camp Programme across provinces



Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mweli, undertook a visit to six provinces during March 2019, to monitor progress at the various autumn classes aimed at improving quality and efficiency in schools. These provinces included Gauteng, the Northern Cape, the North West, the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and the Free State. The Autumn Camp Programme focuses on progressed and borderline learners, as well as top achievers. As part of the Programme, provinces inject extra effort into ensuring that learners are assisted in consolidating and revising the scope of the curriculum content covered during the first term of the current academic year.

Addressing learners during these camps, Mr Mweli thanked learners for having sacrificed their school holiday period to attend Autumn Camp classes. “Although it might be challenging to continue with lessons during this period, you will see the benefit of these classes in the long run. Begin with the end in mind because achieving excellent results in the final National Senior Certificates (NSC) Examinations begins now. I therefore encourage you to maintain your dedication and commitment to achieve quality results this year”.

Mr Mweli acknowledged the collective efforts of provincial centre managers, teachers and school principals in administering the Autumn Camp classes during the school holiday period as these classes assist in increasing the number of distinctions at schools in non-affluent areas.

Initiatives such as the Autumn, Winter and Spring Camp Programmes provide top performing and under performing schools with an opportunity to share best practice and to enhance learning outputs.



DBE and Vodacom prioritise Early Childhood Development in Limpopo Province



Early Childhood Development (ECD) is currently in the process of migrating from the Department of Social Development to the DBE with more than 700,000 children currently accessing ECD across the country. The next step in the process is to proceed towards two years of compulsory ECD for all children in preparation for Grade 1.

The DBE, in partnership with the Vodacom Foundation, the Nelson Mandela Foundation, UN Women and Global Citizen handed over an ECD Centre at Divhani Community Crèche and School of Excellence at the Frank Ravele Secondary School in Vhembe, Limpopo Province on 20 March 2019.

The Frank Ravele Secondary School is one of 12 Schools of Excellence identified by the DBE for the collaboration with Vodacom. Vodacom currently connects 3,000 schools and 92 Teacher Centres across the country. The Divhani Community Crèche, which is one of 15 ECD Centres chosen for refurbishments, received a complete infrastructure makeover, including a mini computer laboratory, proper sanitation, educational toys and a trolley solution with tablet devices which function as part of a mobile library. Vodacom also provides ICT teacher training, waterless toilets and the refurbishment of toilets and furniture.

Deputy Minister Enver Surty welcomed Vodacom's efforts in providing infrastructure and digital literacy to communities. Reflecting on ECD, Deputy Minister Surty commended Vodacom for prioritising the safety of learners by ensuring age-appropriate infrastructure and sanitation for a conducive environment for teaching and learning, as well as restoring the dignity of learners.

Vodacom Chief Officer for Corporate Affairs, Ms Takalani Netshitenzhe said: "The education ecosystem will address socio-economic challenges faced by rural communities where educational institutions and facilities are poorly resourced. This partnership will ensure that we address challenges together".



Professional Learning Communities as a scalable professional development solution to address learning barriers

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

AUGUST 2018

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) present teachers and principals with an opportunity to improve their level of competence by sharing inclusive practices. In a PLC, classroom teachers, school managers and subject advisors come together to collectively determine their professional development needs according to the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development 2011-2025*. PLCs are needs-driven and stimulate collaborative learning, the characteristics of effective Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD).

In collaboration with the DBE and PEDs, the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB) initiated 12 inter-school pilot PLCs amongst foundation and intermediate phase teachers from public ordinary, full-service and special

Professional Learning Communities-
A guideline for South African schools

schools in the Free State, North West and the Northern Cape provinces during 2017 and 2018. Findings of the pilot were established through data collection and analysis in a collaboration between the Central University of Technology, Sol Plaatje University, KU Leuven (Belgium) and VVOB South Africa.

Teachers who participated in the pilot perceived the PLCs to be effective when they are needs-driven; supported by school management; skilfully facilitated; based on mutual trust and respect; regularly guided by input from external experts; and when participating teachers share a sense of collective responsibility for student learning. Findings also reveal that participation in the PLC pilot improved the knowledge and skills of teachers, and supported them to adapt their teaching strategies to reach all learners. The PLC pilot was implemented through funding from the European Union and the Belgian Government.

These findings were recently shared with the DBE and the South African Council for Educators (SACE), and the DBE is planning to take these findings forward through revitalising school-based PLCs. PLCs create effective learning opportunities and offer an opportunity for departmental officials to establish needs, and base further content support to educators upon those needs.

Click on the below links for additional information:

[Professional Learning Communities – A guideline for South African Schools](#)

Entrepreneurial culture to transform South African education



The E³ (Entrepreneurship, Employability and Education) initiative is the result of a number of key country strategies, including the *National Development Plan* (NDP) which identifies education as being central to enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity of the nation. The NDP states that courses should be designed, introduced and taught to promote and instil an entrepreneurial mindset in every learner.

The E³ initiative commenced during 2018 with 73 pilot schools teaching using project-based learning methodologies to unlock an entrepreneurial mindset, provide iterative, reflective learning opportunities and develop 21st Century learning skills and competences. The pilot continues in 2019 and will include a further 180 schools over the next three years to create a “tribe” of motivated teachers who will have been involved in developing and implementing creative, fun, project based learning activities. Eventually these learning methodologies will be rolled out to all schools, in all subjects and all grades.

The goal of E³ is to change the education system so that it produces a new generation of engaged citizens, prepared through their schooling, to build the economic engine of South Africa. In this way SA will become an entrepreneurial nation that will simultaneously reduce poverty and unemployment. The outcomes that the programme anticipates to achieve (by 2030) are for all learners to have developed 21st Century skills, knowledge and have self-reliant, solution-oriented mindsets to prepare them to complete school with the motivation to continue studying, be able to be employed or to start their own enterprises.

The *Sector Plan on Entrepreneurship in Schools* (EiS) was launched during the DBE Sector Lekgotla on 22 January 2018, and is located in the Curriculum Implementation and Quality Improvement GET Directorate. The EiS (now named E³) Operational Committee comprises of representatives from the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), the New Leaders Foundation (NLF) and the Community and Individual Development Association (CIDA).

“Our value proposition is that we provide the platform for all education initiatives working with DBE schools who are striving to bring 21st Century skills into the pedagogy. Included in this process is the need for all learners to develop curious, enquiring, empathetic minds. They will do this in every subject by being encouraged by the teacher to conceptualize a need, develop a solution and design a project that meets the needs of their environment and that fulfils a purpose within themselves. Teachers will create the opportunities for fun and fascination and provide the direction and guidelines for the 3 stages of conceptualization, process and project outcome. From a young age learners will grow their empathy, become caring, and develop a continuous problem-solving mindset that is driven by what they care about”, said Dr Mamiki Maboya, Deputy Director-General for Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring.

Provincial Round-up

Gauteng Province



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Education MEC, Panyaza Lesufi visited sites in Tshwane in the Gauteng Province on 26 March 2019, to interact with learners and teachers participating in the Secondary School Improvement Programme (SSIP) holiday classes. SSIP is the Department’s intervention programme to support schools by offering free tuition classes, taught by expert tutors on weekends and school holidays. MEC Lesufi used the opportunity to encourage learners to study hard and not to lose focus in obtaining their Senior Certificate, thus ensuring a bright academic future. MEC Lesufi also accentuated the opportunities presented by the Second Chance Matric Support Programme (SCMSP) during a SCMSP and *Read to Lead Roadshow* that took place at Grace Bible Church in Pimville, Soweto on the same day.

Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) employees, this week, attended a testing and health screening day to afford employees an opportunity to know their health status and to interact with various medical and financial schemes to assist department employees with holistic wellness. Mr Khanyisa Guzana, from the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) said that, “The ECDoE Employee Health and Wellness Directorate has a well-established partnership with GEMS,” and added that the health testing services and health screening day had been fruitful and well-attended.

Upcoming Events

- 05 April 2019: The Ministerial Task Team examining existing textbooks and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) will launch their evaluation report at the DBE Building in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 05 April 2019: The Zanolkhanyo Primary School in Libode, Eastern Cape Province will be handed over to the community as part of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) Programme
- 06 April – 10 May 2019: The DBE and the Physical Education Institute of South Africa (PEISA) will be celebrating Physical Education Month
- 08 April 2019: Deadline for the submission of the SADC Secondary School Essay Competition entries to the various Provincial Education Departments (PEDs)
- 09 April 2019: The Wesselton Primary School in Ermelo, Mpumalanga Province will be handed over to the community as part of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) Programme
- 10 April 2019: The Victor Poto Senior Secondary School in Libode, Eastern Cape Province will be handed over to the community as part of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) Programme
- 12 April 2019: The Chief Henry Bokleni Senior Secondary School in Libode, Eastern Cape Province will be handed over to the community as part of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) Programme
- 24 April 2019: President Cyril Ramaphosa will be launching the Presidential Reading Club Initiative in the Gauteng Province
- 27 April 2019: South Africa will be celebrating Freedom Day
- 31 May 2019: Deadline for the submission of the SADC Secondary School Essay Competition entries to the SADC Secretariat

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