



THUTO

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THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



NEWSLETTER

Ministry of Basic Education addresses DBE officials



Ahead of the National Elections and in preparation for the sixth administration, Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga and Basic Education Deputy Minister, Mr Enver Surty, met with DBE employees on 06 May 2019, to express their appreciation for the support received during their tenure in the Department.

Deputy Minister Surty, who has been the longest-serving Deputy Minister in the history of the Department, acknowledged the leadership and camaraderie of Minister Motshekga saying, “Minister Motshekga’s leadership contributed meaningfully to the provision of quality education and the various interventions she had put in place have assisted the sector to progress away from mediocrity towards quality education outcomes. One of the major success stories in education is the quarterly meetings with District Directors that Minister Motshekga institutionalised to ensure inclusivity. However, as every child remains a national asset, the DBE must continue to enhance holistic access and quality education to empower our learners with 21st Century skills to tackle the Fourth Industrial Revolution head-on.”

In turn, Minister Motshekga expressed her gratitude to Deputy Minister Surty, Basic Education Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mweli, DBE employees and teacher unions for their support and professional conduct during her stay in the Department. “We have stabilised the Basic Education Sector by improving access; however, more work still needs to be done. One of the key aspects for the sixth administration relates to issues of quality and efficiency, and providing citizens with a dividend of democracy”. Minister Motshekga cited the Sanitation Appropriate for Education (SAFE) Initiative; the migration of Early Childhood Development (ECD); the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Rollout Programme; the Three Stream Model; and the reshaping of the curriculum for 21st Century skills as major focus areas for the next administration.

“As a teacher and as a child of a teacher, it has been my privilege to drive the Basic Education Sector and to determine the future of the forthcoming leaders of our country. One cannot have a good harvest without preparing the soil. The improved National Senior Certificate (NSC) results are testimony to the upward trajectory of learning outcomes within the Sector. Let’s not lose focus, our successes are measured on work done in the classrooms – the impact of education must be felt in the classroom and in the learning outcomes of our learners,” Minister Motshekga concluded.



The ASIDI programme delivers three new schools to the Free State Province



The Free State MEC for Education, Dr Tate Makgoe, joined by various representatives from the provincial and the local Government, delivered three new state-of-the-art schools, built as part of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI), to the Motheo Education District in the Free State Province on 03 May 2019.

In his address, the MEC acknowledged the government's intervention in addressing infrastructure backlogs in provinces, saying that Thaba Patchoa, Dawiesville and Tweespruit Primary schools will play a crucial role in enhancing quality learning and teaching.

In his address, Dr Makgoe encouraged learners to embrace the government's investments and strive to achieve excellent results during the 2019 academic year. The MEC further applauded educators for their selfless service in ensuring that learners are equipped with basic skills such as numeracy, reading and writing. "Teaching is the only profession where we are servants of the people whose lives are, undoubtedly, transformed for the better. Through the ASIDI programme, Government invested more than R115 million to this community. Therefore the beneficiaries will be expected to work hard to achieve the best academic results in response to the new facilities provided by the ASIDI," remarked the MEC.

Various education stakeholders, including the teacher union representatives commended the government for having established the ASIDI programme. The teacher union representatives emphasised that it was essential for the community to protect the new schools and ensure that they are fully maintained to serve the current and future generations.



An update on the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme



The Department of Basic Education (DBE), in partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training have been working tirelessly to ensure a consistent supply of teachers in the country, especially for subject areas such as Mathematics, Physical Science and Technology, as well as the Foundation Phase.

The Director for Initial Education, Mr Gerrit Coetzee, stated that, “currently the two sectors observed an enrolment figure of 137, 731 young people studying towards the teaching profession in South Africa. These sectors have contributed more than 25, 334 graduate educators within the Basic Education Sector to date. The Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme remains an attractive option for aspirant teachers. In 2018, more than 74, 748 applications were received. Eventually, 13, 700 bursaries were granted to young people across all nine provinces, who are currently studying towards a degree in Education at the various institutions of higher learning. The DBE also observed progress in terms of bridging the gender equity gap in the teaching profession as 8, 633 females - as opposed to 5, 066 males - were awarded bursaries in 2018”.

He further alluded to the fact that the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme is one of the initiatives contributing to the strengthening of quality learning and teaching in the Foundation Phase with an increased trend of young female educators being recruited. In 2018, more than 3, 073 bursaries were awarded to female applicants who wanted to serve as Foundation Phase teachers in public schools. The sector must also be commended for its commitment to securing placements for graduate educators in various schools nationally. During the 2018 placement cycle, the DBE placed more than 1, 512 educators, specialising in Mathematics, Physical Science, Technical Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy.



Mid-Year Matric Examinations underway



During this week, the Grade 12 learners wrote the first papers in Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy and Technical Mathematics as part of Mid-Year Matric Examinations. The introduction of Mathematical Literacy in the Basic Education Sector has made huge strides in ensuring that every learner, irrespective of an academic stream, exits the education system with somewhat basic mathematical knowledge. However, as compared to Mathematics and Technical Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy presents a different dimension to learners.

Chief Education Specialist for Mathematics, Mr Leonard Mudau, said that, “Mathematical Literacy was introduced in Grade 10 in 2015 to equip learners with a set of skills that transcends both the mathematical content used in solving problems and the context in which such problems are situated. Maths Literacy assists learners to develop the ability to devise and apply both mathematical and non-mathematical techniques and considerations in order to explore and make sense of any context. It is very critical therefore for every citizen to have knowledge of the Mathematical Literacy curriculum”.

“For instance, the subject affords learners an opportunity to learn how to complete tax return forms, to analyse bills, to decipher directions and master driving speed calculations to become road-rules-abiding citizens. Through Maths Literacy learners are informed about several financial planning aspects including insurance policies; retirement annuities; pension funds and funeral plans,” substantiated Mr Mudau. Mr Mudau further highlighted: “Technical Mathematics was introduced in Grade 10 in 2016 to serve as an enabler to technology subjects such as Civil Technology, Electrical Technology, Mechanical Technology and Engineering Graphics and Design; in other words, it grooms learners to become artisans. However, some universities are also envisaging that those learners will pursue engineering degrees”.

“Meanwhile Mathematics is a language that makes use of symbols and notations for describing numerical, geometric and graphical relationships. It prepares learners for engineering, medical and mathematical sciences careers. It helps to develop mental processes that enhance logical and critical thinking, accuracy and problem solving that will contribute in the decision-making context,” added Mr Mudau.

DBE and Provincial Education Departments prioritise MST participation and success rate in the Basic Education Sector



The implementation of the Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST) Conditional Grant in the Basic Education Sector has made tremendous progress in terms of improving the MST participation and success rate in public schools.

The Grant was initiated in 2015 to provide support and resources to MST schools in line with the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for the improvement of MST teaching and learning at selected public schools. During the 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years, more than 1000 MST schools were supported through the assistance of the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs). As part of the revised list submitted by the PEDs, more than 1, 067 schools have been identified to benefit from the 2018/19 – 2020/21 financial years.

The Project Manager for MST, Ms Elspeth Khembo, said that, “according to the 2018 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination results, the sector has achieved the targets set in the Mid-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for attainment of a national average mark of 50%, as 64, 646 and 46, 233 candidates achieved above the 50% threshold in Mathematics and Physical Sciences, respectively. The general trend since 2008 has allowed the Physical Sciences target to be exceeded, while the system got close to achieving the Mathematics target”.

Ms Khembo also reported: “In the previous financial year, more than 419 schools were supplied with Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) resources such as laptops, tablets and software for Maths, Science and Technology to support curriculum and teaching methodologies at the Further Education and Training (FET) band. As one of the DBE’s initiatives aimed at increasing learner participation in Maths, more than 224,601 learners were funded to participate in Maths and Science Olympiads including coaching and revision camps to improve learner preparedness for the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. A total of 15, 526 teachers were also trained in pedagogic content knowledge in MST subjects during the 2018/19 financial period”.

Ms Khembo further applauded the sector for having registered a general increase in learner participation across all the MST subjects, especially since Technical Schools were writing their first Grade 12 papers in specialisations and Technical Mathematics and Sciences.

Government bridges inequality gap through no fee school policy



The Basic Education Sector has made significant strides in terms of increasing access to quality education, with 98% of children gaining access to the mainstream schooling in South Africa. Through the removal of compulsory school fees, Government introduced the no fee school policy, which has played a huge role in improving access to schools by removing the financial barriers which led to victimization and marginalization of poor children.

Ms Gladys Modise, the Director for the Financial Planning and Provincial Budget Monitoring, indicated that, “Through this policy, schools were placed into quintiles by Provincial Education Departments to ensure that those in the poor communities received full support from the government. Quintile 1 is the poorest quintile, while quintile 5 is the least poor. Annually, the state allocates an amount of funds to each school in order to finance its recurring expenditure including textbooks, minor

maintenance, stationery, and electricity. Each year, the Minister of Basic Education publishes a determination of the percentage of learners which should be in no fee schools nationally. Presently the determination specifies that at least 60% of learners nationally are to be in no fee schools. This effectively means that currently all schools ranked in Quintiles 1-3 should be classified as no fee schools.”

She added: “Learners benefiting from the no fee school policy increased from 9, 111, 724 in 2014 to 9, 655, 797 in 2019. In 2019, there are 87% no fee schools, which accommodate 79% of learners. No fee schools are allocated a higher amount of state funding per learner as compared to fee paying schools. The no fee schools received a threshold of R1, 390 per learner in 2019”.

TALIS surveys learning environments and working conditions of teachers in schools

The results of the third Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), sampled in approximately 200 schools from each participating country, will be released in a country report during June 2019. In each of the participating countries, 20 teachers teaching Grades 8 and 9 were selected. This is the first time that South Africa participates in the study, enabling an important baseline of teacher survey data.

TALIS, which is administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), is the first international survey to focus on the learning environments and the working conditions of teachers in schools. It fills important information gaps in the international comparisons of education systems and offers an opportunity for teachers, school principals and School Management Teams to provide input into education analysis and policy development in key policy areas. TALIS aims to provide valid, timely and comparable information to help countries review and define policies for developing a high-quality teaching profession.

Following the completion of the questionnaire data, South Africa also participated in the international *TALIS Video Study*. Teachers and principals were interviewed about teaching and learning conditions to improve teaching methodology in the classroom. The OECD and the DBE will use these videos collected in participating countries to illustrate findings from the TALIS survey, and feature teachers and school principals from around the world speaking about concrete aspects of their work. It will pilot methodologies and significantly add to research data of the international benchmark studies (TIMSS, PIRLS, and SACMEQ) and the new design of Systemic Evaluation planned for 2019, by providing insights from classroom observations in an internationally comparative fashion. Countries such as Australia, Japan, Korea, Norway, the United States and the United Kingdom are amongst the 48 countries that participate in the study.

Provincial Round-up

Gauteng Province



Gauteng Education MEC Mr Panyaza Lesufi, said on 03 May 2019, his last day in office, that of all the things he had done during his tenure, he was most proud of having improved township education. “I am leaving office knowing that almost 15% of township schools achieved a 100% pass rate in matric which means they wrote the same examination as children in private schools”. MEC Lesufi has been widely praised for his continued effort in public service, as well as his contribution to quality education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in particular. MEC Lesufi said that much still needs to be done to improve the learning and teaching conditions in schools. He cited the vandalising of schools as a major challenge, and added that communities needed to nurture their schools as an investment for the betterment of their own children, and not to destroy them. MEC Lesufi served as MEC for Gauteng Education for a period of five years.

Eastern Cape Province



The Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE), together with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), recently held a two-day Curriculum Management workshop for 106 Circuit Managers and Curriculum Specialists from the Alfred Nzo East, Alfred Nzo West, Joe Gqabi, OR Tambo Coastal and OR Tambo inland districts. The purpose of the training was to empower ECDoE officials with the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the Curriculum Manager’s Module for school principals and deputy principals. NECT Coordinator, Ms Nomakorinte Ncukana said that, “collaborating with the ECDoE, we envisage developing the standards of education, as well as identifying key factors that can positively enhance learner performance during school monitoring and support visits in the province”. Those attending the workshop were of the view that the implementation of the programme would contribute to the communication of a common vision for all stakeholders in the community, as principals and their deputies will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to lead teachers, learners and communities.

Upcoming Events

- 14 May – 16 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place in Mogale City in the Gauteng Province
- 16 May – 18 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place at Doxa Deo Church in Bloemfontein, Free State Province
- 16 May – 18 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place in the Northern Cape Province
- 23 May – 25 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place at Mmabatho Convention Centre in the North West Province
- 23 May – 26 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place at Vista Missionvale Campus in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province
- 25 May 2019: South Africans will be celebrating Africa Day
- 28 May – 31 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place at Bethsaida Ministries in the KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 30 May – 02 June 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place in the Limpopo Province
- 30 May – 02 June 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place in the Western Cape Province
- 31 May 2019: Deadline for the submission of the SADC Secondary School Essay Competition entries to the SADC Secretariat
- 31 May – 02 June 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competition will be taking place at Witbank Civic Centre, Emalahleni in the Mpumalanga Province
- 25 – 28 June 2019: The annual ABC Motsepe SASCE will be taking place at Rhema Bible Church in Randburg, in the Gauteng Province

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