



THUTO

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THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



NEWSLETTER

Minister Motshekga receives prestigious AFTRA Award of Fellowship



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, received the Africa Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) Award of Fellowship at the Manthabiseng Convention Centre in Maseru, Lesotho on 14 May 2019. Minister Motshekga received the Award during the 10th Anniversary, the 8th Teaching and Learning in Africa Conference, and the 10th Roundtable coordinated under the auspices of the AFTRA, and hosted by the Government of Lesotho.

The recipients of this prestigious award were acknowledged and recognised for the contributions made in their various capacities to ensure that education systems on the African Continent, espouse the social justice principles of access, equity, redress, inclusivity, quality and efficiency.

“The mission of AFTRA, to ensure that all African countries become truly professionalised and establish Teacher Regulatory Authorities, is a noble one, and we must all encourage fellow Ministers of Education to support this cause. We must continue to be good ambassadors of education and training systems in our various countries. This must be inclusive of Early Childhood Development (ECD), and inclusive education for Learners with Special Educational Needs. We must continue to work together to ensure that the commitments we have made through our various protocols, are fulfilled,” said the Minister.

“Despite investments made by Governments on the African Continent towards education systems, we continue to lag behind other countries in Europe and Asia, particularly when it comes to the performance of our learners in regional and international benchmark studies. It is therefore important that we work together to ensure that we attract into the teaching profession, young and excellent students to become teachers who are empowered with the skills, knowledge and competencies necessary for a changing world. This Award will propel us to double our efforts in ensuring that our African children – our continental assets, are exposed to the best education systems possible; and that through our education systems, and our decolonised and diversified curricula, our learners attain the skills, knowledge and competencies for a changing world and the Fourth Industrial Revolution,” Minister Motshekga concluded.

SA young scientists compete in world's biggest High School Science Competition



Seven brilliant young minds represented South Africa at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Phoenix, Arizona, in the United States of America, from 12 to 16 May 2019, where they showcased their whiz brains. The learners are top achievers who were selected following the Eskom Expo for Young Scientists International Science Fair (ISF). Projects by learners ranged from research to alternative ways of creating and transferring electricity to increase the overall energy efficiency of solar panels.

Keira van Niekerk from Northcliff High School in the Gauteng Province, presented “Trans-Tricity”, a project that involves an alternative way to create and transfer electricity. Generated electricity is transferred using wireless power transfer (WPT), from the kinetic source through inductive energy.

Pearl Mayilule from Maphokwane High School in the Limpopo Province tested if grilling fuel that released higher temperatures and more drippings of fats from meat onto a fire, made meat more carcinogenic.

Sana Shaik from Star College Girls High in the KwaZulu-Natal Province devised a project that involves a catheter design using transmission of antimicrobial blue light to fight catheter-related infections.

Runè Edeling from Eunice Secondary School in the Free State Province came up with a project to investigate how golf-ball style dents or dimples applied to certain areas of the bodywork of a heavy truck, can be used to decrease the aerodynamic drag for the purpose of increasing fuel efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Lerissa Brits from Hoërskool Diamantveld in the Northern Cape Province developed a project to decrease mortality from trauma sites, by developing an eco-friendly wound dressing with anti-bacterial and haemostatic properties using an indigenous plant.

Shaziyah Laher from the Nizamiye Al-Azhar Institute in the Eastern Cape Province investigated a more efficient way for the production and disposing of plastic that is less harmful towards the environment.

Hritik Mitha from Bryanston High School in the Gauteng Province initiated a project called, “Increasing the efficiency of solar panels by glazing”, aimed at increasing the overall energy efficiency of solar panels.

These learners are obviously harnessing their 21st century skills to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution head-on.



DBE workbooks – a South African education legacy



The DBE workbooks, a project initiated by Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga during 2014, in addition to the existing Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM), added value to the improvement of quality education in South Africa.

During 2014 to 2019, the DBE has consistently provided Volume 1 and Volume 2 workbooks per semester to various provinces to strengthen quality learning and teaching from Grades R to 9.

Chief Education Specialist for LTSM, Mr Makondelela Tshitema, said: “For the past five years, the DBE has been providing high quality workbooks to schools across all nine provinces. The workbooks were designed to cover a wide scope of lessons in all eleven official languages, Mathematics and the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) in General Education and Training (GET). During this period, the DBE sent a total of 346,836,020 Grades R to 9 workbooks to all public schools making it the most impactful project in the Basic Education Sector. Workbooks also provide worksheets that are tied to the pace and level of the curriculum requirements, whilst providing challenging tasks for learners to develop a constructivist approach to learning”.

In his reflection on the success of the project, Mr Tshitema added, “Learning aspects covered by the workbooks include quality activities and ideas that portray good practice aimed at improving learning outcomes. It further offers learners an opportunity to acquire and apply skills in a systematic way, and ensure that learners are given adequate opportunities to consolidate their skills through written responses. The workbooks project should be commended because it provides a model of good practice, which guides teachers to improve their teaching through a variety of activities to reinforce Mathematical concepts and skills, as well as literacy language skills at an early age of a child’s schooling”.

<https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/Workbooks/tabid/574/Default.aspx>

Management and reporting of sexual abuse and harassment in schools



The DBE takes school safety very seriously, and as an apex priority, the Department has put in place various policies and measures to ensure the safety of all learners, educators and relevant stakeholders in schools. Sexual harassment and violence affect learning environments negatively, creating an atmosphere of fear and aggression. These are certainly not conditions our learners should be subjected to as part of their learning experiences. There is no place for violence, drug abuse, sexual harassment and other criminal acts in schools as it poses a serious barrier to learning.

Government has developed a protocol to ensure schools follow a standardised procedure when addressing allegations of sexual violence and harassment. This protocol aims to assist schools to act appropriately and timeously in investigating allegations of sexual violence and harassment; provides guidelines on how schools should treat victims of sexual violence and harassment; and offers guidelines on how to deal with those who are alleged to have committed such acts and clearly outlines what constitutes unacceptable conduct and this applies to all learners, educators and relevant stakeholders in schools.

Those who are accused of having violated the code of conduct must be treated fairly and in line with the policies and laws of the country. If the victim and the perpetrator are learners, the principal must immediately contact the parents/guardian of both the victim and the perpetrator. The principal must write a letter to the parents/guardians detailing the incident within 24 hours of receipt of the complaint. The letter must contain the nature of the reported incident and the procedures to be followed, but must not reveal the names of victim/alleged offender. If the learner violated the school's code of conduct, then the due process of a disciplinary hearing must be followed. However, should the conduct constitute a criminal offence, it must also be reported to the South African Police Service (SAPS) who will conduct concurrent investigations.

Government encourages schools and learners to report all incidents of abuse. Incidents or suspected incidents of sexual abuse and harassment can be reported to principals, educators or any other person victims feel comfortable talking to. Further assistance is available by contacting the Childline toll free number on 0800 055 555.

National Schools Moot Court Competition explores rights, equality, freedom of expression and human dignity



The 2019 Elections have proved one disquieting fact: the youth are uninvolved in their own political future, do not vote and therefore do not utilise their right to democracy. It is important that young people are oriented into the demands and ethos of the constitutional dispensation. With schools being viewed as catalysts for social change, they are the focal point around which the constitutional values and the principles of the supreme law can be instilled. Since its inception in 2011, the National Schools Moot Programme has managed to explore various sections of the *Bill of Rights* such as rights, equality, freedom of expression and human dignity. It offers a platform for young people to experiment with the actual application of the country's supreme law. The Moot Court exercise is not only about the law, but the founding values that underpin the country's Constitutional Law.

The DBE, in partnership with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, and the South African Human Rights Commission will collaboratively host the ninth National Schools Moot Court Competition Finals from 25 to 29 September 2019, at the University of Pretoria and the Constitutional Court. All provincial rounds will be hosted between 12 August and 07 September 2019 with the various provincial coordinators submitting the selected essays to the national coordinators on 27 July 2019.

The Programme invites all Grade 10 to 11 learners to prepare an essay on a fictional Constitutional Court case as a team of two learners, both as applicants and respondents to the case. During the National Finals, each province is represented by a delegation of eight learners (four teams), preparing them to argue as both applicants and respondents during the finals at the Constitutional Court, where Judges form part of the bench. The best essay writers and oral argument presenters are offered bursaries to study towards law at a university of their choice. The National Finalists will represent South Africa at the International Schools Moot Court Competition in The Hague, Netherlands which will take place at during 2020.

<https://www.education.gov.za/Programmes/MootCourt.aspx>



Provincial Round-up

Gauteng Province



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Gauteng MEC for Education, Mr Panyaza Lesufi, announced that the 2020 online admissions for Grades 1 and 8 have been postponed until 20 May 2019. This comes after the Federation of Associations of Governing Bodies of South Africa (FEDSAS), the Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysunie (SAOU) and other SGB associations raised concerns with the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) regarding various aspects of the system. These stakeholders pleaded with the MEC to delay the opening of the online admissions due to the GDE's implementation of the newly amended admissions regulations and feeder zones. According to the GDE, a major concern for parents is the system's failure to make provisions for language. This will allow the GDE the opportunity to inform the public of the GDE's tutorial and step-by-step user-guide to clarify the system and acquaint parents with the processes, as well as the incorporation of the feeder zones to fully comprehend the 3-phase admissions process which include: the registration and application process; the placement of learners; and the admission to a school. Although the system will still be accessible to allow parents to familiarise themselves with the process, they will not be able to submit an application.

KwaZulu-Natal Province

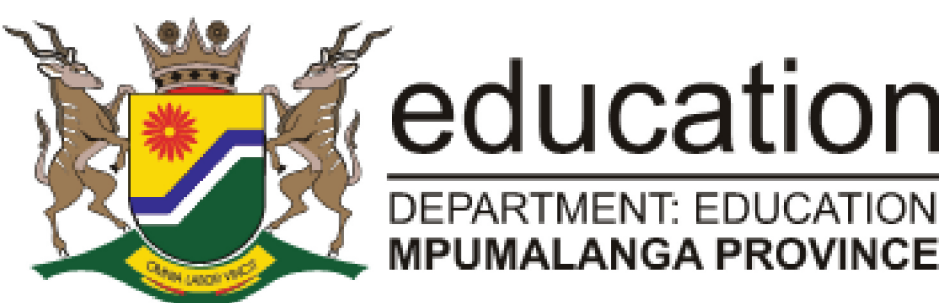


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PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

The Communication and Publication Directorate of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZNDoe), led by the Head of Communication, Mr Muzi Mhlambi, held a Communication Policy presentation engagement session on 13 May 2019. Mr Elijah Mhlanga, Chief Director for the DBE Media Liaison and National and Provincial Communication Chief Directorate, delivered a Communication Policy presentation during the engagement session. The hands-on presentation which took place at the Gagasi FM Radio Station Boardroom, was thoroughly enjoyed by attending officials. The aim of the presentation was to enhance the communication skills of provincial communicators whilst simultaneously strengthening interprovincial and intergovernmental communication. Gagasi FM is a radio station broadcasting in Durban and surrounding areas specialising in R&B, Afro Pop, Hip Hop, House and Kwaito music. The station launched on 13 March 2006, and claims to be the only English and isiZulu radio station in the country. The station was reported as having 1 million listeners during its first year of operation.



The Communication Directorate of the Mpumalanga Department of Education, led by the Head of Communication, Mr Jasper Zwane, also hosted a Communication Policy presentation engagement session on 15 May 2019. Mr Elijah Mhlanga, Chief Director for the DBE Media Liaison and National and Provincial Communication Chief Directorate again delivered a presentation as part of his communication engagement sessions across the various provinces. Areas covered during the session included the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) Communication Policy; Digital Media; and the strengthening of interprovincial and intergovernmental communication.

Upcoming Events

- 16 May – 18 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competitions will be taking place at the Doxa Deo Church in Bloemfontein, Free State Province
- 16 May – 18 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competitions will be taking place in the Northern Cape Province
- 22 May 2019 – First seating of the National Assembly
- 23 May 2019 – First seating of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP)
- 23 May – 25 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competitions will be taking place at the Mmabatho Convention Centre in Mmabatho, North West Province
- 23 May – 26 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competitions will be taking place at the Vista Missionvale Campus in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province
- 25 May 2019: South Africans will be celebrating Africa Day
- 25 May 2019 – Inauguration of the President
- 27 May 2019 – Announcement of Ministers
- 28 May 2019 – Ministers are sworn in
- 28 May – 31 May 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competitions will be taking place at the Bethsaida Ministries in the KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 29 – 30 May – Induction of Ministers
- 30 May – 02 June 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competitions will be taking place in the Limpopo Province
- 30 May – 02 June 2019: The ABC Motsepe SASCE provincial competitions 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 competitions will be taking place at the Witbank Civic Centre, Emalaheni in the Mpumalanga Province
- 20 June 2019 – State of the Nation Address in Parliament, Cape Town, Western Cape Province
- 25 – 28 June 2019: The annual ABC Motsepe SASCE will be taking place at the Rhema Bible Church in Randburg, Gauteng Province

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