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NEWSLETTER

Celebrating 25 Years of Democracy through music and song



Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal were the winning provinces during the 2019 ABC Motsepe South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod (SASCE) National Championship held at Rhema Bible Church in Randburg, Gauteng Province, from 25 to 29 June 2019.

The two provinces were victorious after long hours of superb performances by choirs and soloists in the Intermediate and Senior Phases. Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, presented the awards to the winning participants to acknowledge and recognise the exceptional musical performances delivered by these talented learners.

The ABC Motsepe SASCE was organised by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), in partnership with the Motsepe Foundation under the theme: *Celebrating 25 Years of our Democracy*. The flagship programme has become a prestigious annual platform for the music industry in identifying young aspiring vocalists and soloists who aspire to become professional South African artists.

Minister Motshekga, who spent two days at the competition, said that the ABC Motsepe SASCE National Championship assists the Sector in promoting national identity and social cohesion as learners, despite their cultural beliefs, values, race and language, proudly share the national stage. The Minister added that the Championship should be viewed as racial and cultural glue in the nation building process, which deserves to be sustained. In closing, Minister Motshekga saluted teachers, education officials and parents for the level of dedication and energy invested in the Championship, which has been organised annually since 2010.





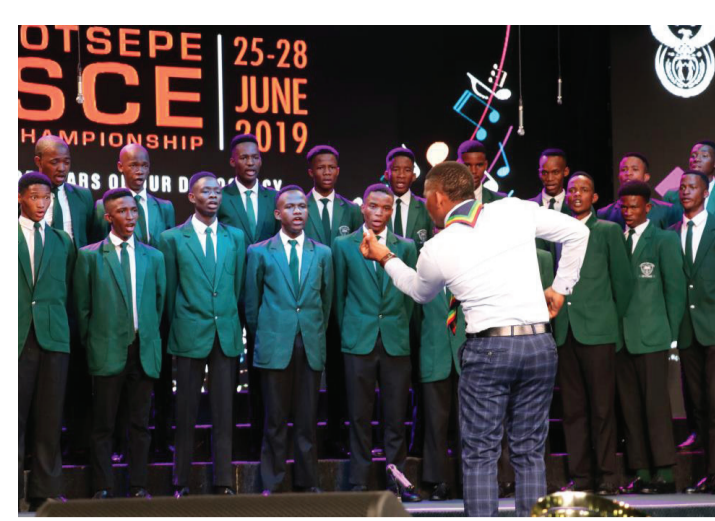
ABC Motsepe SASCE showcases South Africa's musical talent



The 2019 ABC Motsepe SASCE National Championship continues to be a hub of entertainment as thousands of learners ascended the stage to showcase their musical talents.

This year saw more than 7,000 learners from across nine provinces in several genres of the competition united in song to celebrate the country's democracy. Professor Linda Viljoen, one of the Adjudication panel members, applauded the conductors for the sterling work done in preparation of the choirs for the National Championship: "Through song, learners are able to develop a positive mind-set and strive towards changing the character of society".

Secondary School duet champions, Liyabona Qutwa and Oyama Vena from Nombulelo Secondary School in the Eastern Cape Province, explained that the Championship will assist them in pursuing the music career they dream about as winning at this level requires hard work and dedication. The pair expressed their gratitude towards their teachers, parents and conductors for their support.



Winter Camp Programme progressing smoothly in all nine provinces



The Winter Camp Programme is progressing well across all nine provinces, with thousands of learners at various centres revising the scope of curriculum content covered since the beginning of the year. In each camp, provinces prioritise challenging topics in high enrolment subjects revealed through the pre-tests model used to gauge content knowledge amongst learners on the first day of the official opening of the Winter Camp Classes.

As part of his Winter Camp Monitoring Programme, Basic Education Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mveli, visited more than 80 centres from 15 June to 29 June 2019, to assess the effective administration of provincial intervention support programmes.

The Winter Camp Programme, which is implemented by the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), in collaboration with the education districts, paves a way for underperforming schools to score a high volume of quality passes and distinctions as teachers with good track records of achieving excellent results are put to task to provide in-depth tutorial lessons at various camps. Through this Programme, provinces continue to push hard in ensuring that learners who have been performing at level 1 to 2 in their respective subjects are fully supported to rise to level 5 and above.

Addressing learners in provinces, Mr Mveli told the Class of 2019 to throw in all their efforts and to use the remaining 34 days of teaching contact time fruitfully in preparation for the 2019 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations. The implementation of the Programme will no doubt assist the education districts in exploring ways to increase the number of distinctions and quality passes amongst schools in quintile 1 to 3. "The PEDs must be applauded for having lobbied for extra support from Institutions of Higher Learning in sustaining Winter Camp classes in the country," said Mr Mveli. Mr Mveli further acknowledged the efforts of parents, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), universities, education stakeholders and the private sector in ensuring that learners benefit from the Programme.



Strengthening Psychosocial Services and Safety in the Sector through PART



Many South African schools, teachers and learners are faced with the reality of violence, substance abuse and bullying on a daily basis. Many of these negative behavioural patterns have psychosocial origins, and severely disrupt the learning and teaching process whilst causing trauma and anxiety among learners and teachers alike.

The Psychosocial Support Directorate hosted a Professional Assault Response Training (PART) workshop from 25 to 28 June 2019, under the theme “Safety and Dignity through Problem-Solving”. The workshop was facilitated by Prof Nicholas Smiar from the University of Wisconsin in the United States of America, a renowned and well published expert on the subject with over 55 years’ experience. Participants included officials responsible for Psychosocial Support and School Safety at the DBE and across all Provincial Education Departments (PEDs).

The aim of PART is to teach self-control and critical thinking during emergency response situations. The training aims to equip participants with the skills to facilitate safety and dignity through problem-solving, including in dangerous situations. The training methodology is mainly experiential in the form of role playing, and is aligned to the relevant legislation on youth justice in South Africa.

PART focusses on preparation in attire; mobility; precautions; observation; and self-control (AMPOS) in an attempt to reduce avoidable risk. Other topics covered include identifying triggers and alternatives; crisis communication and intervention; evasion from attacks and safe response to high danger; as well as the capturing of reports to accurately reflect the assaultive incident and the interventions used. Restorative Conferencing is a section in PART that focusses on debriefing after an incident. It is an approach which considers the views and behaviour of all involved in a dispute, and attempts to resolve problems in a calm and positive way.

“The implementation and roll-out of PART in the Sector will assist in addressing the pressing challenge of safety in our schools, which is a necessary pre-requisite for optimum teaching and learning. We are indebted to Prof Smiar for freely sharing his vast knowledge and insights with us,” says Dr Faith Kumalo, Chief Director for Care and Support in Schools.



The South African National School Sports Championships unearth sporting talent



The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture South Africa in collaboration with the DBE, will be hosting the SA School Sports Championships (Winter Games) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, from 30 June to 05 July 2019.

School sport is a critical Physical Education priority and a bedrock for sport development in South Africa; it is also the only place where the talent of our learners can be nurtured. School sport contributes to the development of motor capabilities and teaches learners the value of active, healthy lifestyles.

The collaboration provides young athletes with an opportunity to showcase their sporting talent. During the Summer Games which took place at the University of the Witwatersrand from 9 to 14 December 2018, approximately 3825 athletes participated in the various sporting codes. Gauteng Province was the winner with KwaZulu-Natal Province in second position and the Western Cape Province in third position.

The SA School Sports Championships enable Government to deliver on its strategic objective of increasing the participation of sport and recreation from grass roots level to national, through a structured pathway for sport and the development of SA youth. The sporting codes include chess, football, volleyball, tennis, rugby, hockey and netball.

Provincial Round-up

Eastern Cape Province



The Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) Statutory Advisory and Protocol Services (SAPS), this week, held a two-day induction programme for the Eastern Cape Advisory Council (EAEC) members at the Osner Hotel in East London. Chief Director for SAPS, Ms Naledi Mbude, emphasised the importance of working hand in hand with the Council, and being supportive to the MEC to ensure policy implementation in meeting the needs of community members. “The Eastern Cape Province must develop a culture of high performance,” said Mr Themba Kojana, Superintendent-General of the Department. Eastern Cape Education MEC, Mr Fundile Gade, emphasised the importance for the Province to understand the needs of its people, as well as the implementation of its policies. MEC Gade also advised the council members to work together to improve, not only the education system, but inclusive education and to accommodate people with disabilities. The Council will host its first meeting on 2 July 2019.

KwaZulu-Natal Province



Vodacom KwaZulu-Natal is presenting 70 provincial female learners with an opportunity to learn to code during the winter school holidays from 24 June to 05 July 2019. The Vodacom Code Like a Girl Programme will help to narrow the gender digital divide at an early age as female participation is falling in a field that is expanding globally with men still dominating the number of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) graduates globally. The Programme aims to develop coding skills for girls aged between 14 to 18 years, and encourages them to consider the uptake of ICT and STEM subjects. It also provides influential mentors to inspire them to be passionate about technology and its possibilities. The Programme has been implemented in South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, DRC and Lesotho with over 755 young girls trained during 2019. During the course, learners will be exposed to a basic knowledge of computer languages and development programmes. They will also be taken on a fun and empowering life skills journey whilst developing coding, presentation and communication. At the end of the week, each girl will know how to develop her own website and present her work to the rest of the coding class. Projects, such as Vodacom’s Code Like a Girl, have the potential to significantly close the gender gap and inspire young girls to pursue STEM careers in the digital era that we are transitioning towards.

Western Cape Province



BETTER TOGETHER.

In order to assist learners to obtain excellent academic results during the NSC Examinations, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has initiated a number of targeted and sustained interventions at schools across the Province. These interventions include Winter Schools and Winter Camps for Grade 12 learners who are struggling in specific gateway subjects. On 20 June 2019, MEC Debbie Schäfer visited the Grade 12 Winter School Programme at Salt River Secondary School, where almost 500 Grade 12 learners from four high schools in the area were attending an intensive revision programme ahead of the 2019 NSC Examinations. The Grade 12 Winter Schools Programme aims at assisting learners in high enrolment subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Science, Geography, Life Sciences, Accounting and Economics. The Winter School programme also includes Winter Camps where Curriculum Advisors will be supporting and assisting individual school programmes. Additional resource materials have also been developed to complement the lessons being presented. The dates of each school’s programme differ. Some schools have offered programmes on specific days, while others, throughout the holiday period.



Limpopo Education MEC, Ms Polly Boshielo, met with the Representative Council of Learners (RCLs) at Hayani Guest House in Polokwane to outline how she intends supporting them during her term in office. In her address, she encouraged learners to keep away from alcohol, unsafe sex and violence, and rather focus on their studies in order to have a better future. Using her childhood difficulties as an example, she also told RCLs that there is no excuse for not making a success of your life. "I lost my mother when I was young and my brother was only 2 years old. I am from a very poor family and sometimes we didn't have food to eat, but I studied different courses at the Universities of Johannesburg, the Witwatersrand and Unisa and completed my Masters Degree in Public Management at Harvard University. You have more opportunities at your disposal and can achieve more than what I did." The South African Police Service (SAPS) also addressed learners on issues of law and order, and advised them on how to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner to avoid breaking the law.

Upcoming Events

- 29 June 2019: Basic Education Director-General, Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mveli, will be embarking on Provincial Engagement visits to oversee Winter Classes in the Eastern Cape Province
- 30 June – 05 July 2019: The 2019 SA School Sports National Championships (Winter Games) will be taking place in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province
- 02 July 2019: The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) South African Country Report will be launched at the Nelmapius Secondary School in Pretoria, Gauteng Province
- 16 July 2019: Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, will be presenting her Budget Vote in Parliament, Cape Town, Western Cape Province
- 18 July 2019: Nelson Mandela International Day will be celebrated globally

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