



# THUTO

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THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



## NEWSLETTER

### Minister Motshekga receives sanitiser donations



Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, received two significant donations of sanitisers on 31 August 2020, to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in schools. The handover of 80,000 litres of hand sanitisers from Sasol took place at Sasol Bowling in Johannesburg, followed by the donation from Onderstepoort Biological Products in Pretoria.

Energy and chemical company Sasol, and Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Minister, Thoko Didiza, donated the sanitisers on behalf of Onderstepoort Biological Products.

"I want to sincerely thank Sasol for this donation because it has allowed us to open schools safely. Education is very important and a lifeline for poor children. Covid-19 has brought a new dynamic, which is not only disrupting our schooling time, but also our resources. The money that we were supposed to use for sanitation infrastructure had to be used for sanitisers, masks and all sorts of things, which were not part of our plan. Treasury said to us there is no new money, reprioritise within your budget. We had to take money from other budgets to deal with this main factor of safety in our schools," the Minister said.

Sasol Vice President for Social Investment, Mr Gao Mothoagae, said that "the initiative was the company's way of contributing to the fight against Covid-19. This sanitiser initiative has been running for the last four months. We are so proud about what we have been able to do in collaboration with our base energy team and the Sasol energy team to be able to deliver solutions that impact and protect the right to life for so many".





# Buses handed over to learners with special needs in KwaZulu-Natal Province



The DBE has reaffirmed its dedication and commitment towards strengthening Inclusive Education in South Africa. Dr Regina Mhaule, Deputy Minister for the Department of Basic Education, together with KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Education, Mr Kwazi Mshengu, officially handed over 15 buses and wheelchairs to learners with special needs in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The event took place at Scholar Amoris Special School in Umzinto on 3 September 2020.

In her address, Dr Mhaule said that, “the sector has made significant strides in ensuring that no learner is left behind. However, the outbreak of Covid-19 has put us two steps backwards, resulting in glaring challenges around inequality. Last year, we adopted the mantra that every learner matters. Indeed, every learner matters; that is why we have decided to open the space to allow various education stakeholders, including the private sector, to improve inclusive education in schools.”

Dr Mhaule further added that, “This handover is part of the Sector’s broader programme of equipping schools, including special schools, with the capacity to ensure that learners enjoy the right to a basic education. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to convey our most sincere gratitude to all those who have played a role in making this project a reality for the school, staff, learners and parents. I am looking forward to a continued relationship with them. I am confident that you will look after these resources to increase access to quality education for as many learners with special needs as possible.”

MEC Mshengu acknowledged the efforts made by the DBE in support of learners with special needs. “As a province, we will continue to champion the cause of learners with special needs. A contribution of this nature will go a long way in assisting us to reach out to 74 special schools in the province.”



# Woza Matrics launched in support of Grade 12 learners



This year was a challenging academic year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Class of 2020 requires academic and moral support now more than ever. Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, therefore recently launched the *Woza Matrics*, a free-to-air television initiative aimed at supporting matric learners following disruptions caused by Covid-19.

The 12-week *Woza Matrics* campaign commenced this week on 1 September 2020, and will support Grade 12 learners in the build-up to their final matric examinations by providing quality educational content. Subjects covered include Mathematics, Life Sciences, Geography, Physical Science, Accounting, Economics, Maths Literacy, English First Additional Language, History and Business Studies.

*Woza Matrics* will be broadcast on SABC 3, on all DStv packages and on Openview (Channel 122) from 8:00 - 10:00 and 13:00 - 15:00, seven days a week. It will also be available for free on the DStv Now Catch Up app.

*Woza Matrics* is led by the DBE, assisted by the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) and developed in collaboration with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Multichoice and eMedia Investments, as well as several educational content providers including Digicampus, Mindset and Monyetla Trust, the Programme for Improved Learning Outcomes (PILO), and other educationalists.

“This initiative has come at the right time whilst we are working to get schooling back on track. Matric is always stressful, but 2020 has been filled with unusual stresses. I want to congratulate all our Grade 12 learners and their families for their perseverance and determination. It is abundantly clear that additional support is required for learners and we will continue to provide this. There are a few months left before the end of the year and *Woza Matrics* will give learners the support they need to prepare for their final examinations,” said Minister Motshekga during the launch.





# Psychosocial Support to learners returning to school

**Life can be difficult sometimes, if you need someone to talk you may contact any of the call centres below:**



**Childline Hotline: 08000 55 555**



**LoveLife Free Plz Cal Me 083 323 1023**



**LifeLine Toll Free: 086 132 2322**



**SADAG**

**Suicide Crisis Line 0800 567 567/ 0800 212 223**

**or SMS 31393**

**Substance Abuse Line 0800 12 13 14 or SMS 32312**

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused wide-spread anxiety amongst learners, teachers and parents across the country following the detection of the first case in the Western Cape in March 2020. Many have been affected, either by the loss of a teacher or a family member, or the fear of contracting the illness. The necessary precautionary health measures that need to be taken at schools daily may also heighten fear and anxiety. Providing Psychosocial Support (PSS) therefore plays a significant role in learner enrolment and retention, thus contributing to optimal achievement as schools will be sitting for their end of year examinations during November 2020.

As a restorative measure, psychosocial support aims to ensure that the psychological, social and emotional needs of children are identified and responded to before they escalate into larger issues. The DBE, in partnership with the Departments of Health and Social Development, implemented the Integrated School Health Programme (IHSP) through which health screening of learners is provided. The screening aims to identify and address important health, social and psychological barriers to learning. Dr Faith Kumalo, Chief Director: Care and Support in Schools, along with Ms Faith Mmola, and Ms Poppie Skatane, Deputy Directors: Psychosocial Support Directorate, developed material intended to improve the psychosocial wellbeing of learners in schools.

Vulnerability is one of the key barriers to development and learning. It is therefore essential that learners with vulnerability are identified early and addressed to enable each child to reach their full potential. A conducive school environment is important in this endeavour. Educators can play a key role to identify vulnerable learners and refer them to the Learner Support Agent (LSA) working with the School Based Support Team (SBST). A District Based Support Team (DBST) is also available should schools require assistance and specialised intervention with some cases. Schools can further refer learners and educators to local NGOs and partners, and can use the national call centres that provide free telephone counselling. These contact numbers are listed on the DBE website.

PSS resources from the DBE and various organisations have been uploaded onto the DBE website. These include “A Guide for Learner Support Agents and Schools on Providing Psychosocial Support to Learners”, as well as advice to parents as a COVID-19 support package at: [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za).

<https://www.education.gov.za/covid19supportpackage.aspx>



# Umalusi gives quality assurance of the 2020 NSC Examinations



The Covid-19 pandemic makes the Class of 2020 a unique cohort as the pandemic has proven to be a game changer in terms of how business processes in respect of quality assurance is conducted within the Education Sector. The National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations will be taking place from 5 November to 15 December 2020.

Dr Mafu Rakumetsi, Umalusi CEO, gave the assurance that Umalusi will remain sensitive to the needs of the Class of 2020. “As a Quality Council, we would be abdicating our responsibility if we allow changes to be made in the quality and content of question papers. Umalusi does not advocate for the downgrading or trimming down of the quality of examinations. Umalusi has been in continuous discussions with various assessment bodies regarding possible changes in the school calendar and examination timetables. We are willing to show flexibility in these proposed logistical arrangements by accommodating all parties concerned,” Dr Rakumetsi said during a briefing to the Sector on 31 August 2020.

An adapted risk management approach will be applied, where audits will be carried out remotely. The nine Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) will be required to submit valid evidence for each of the pre-determined key indicators that address the appropriate state of readiness focus areas. Evidence required is to be submitted and verification visits will be conducted where necessary. A monitoring and marking differentiated approach for monitoring of writing and marking is considered and it entails remote monitoring through real-on-time digital means and deployment of contracted monitors.

Onsite monitoring at sampling centres will be conducted under strict Covid-19 protocols enforced by Umalusi. The approach assumes a desktop evaluation of records and evidence against the criteria for the appointment of markers. The databases, spreadsheets and records of all appointed markers from PEDs are compared with Umalusi records of appointed markers from previous years. External moderators will be deployed to marking centres and will spend approximately three days per question paper. Umalusi will, at all times, ensure adherence to the Covid-19 pandemic protocols and regulations, including travel protocols. Essentially, the verification of marking will follow the conventional approach with minor modifications. In conclusion, Umalusi gave the assurance that the system remains trustworthy in terms of accountability, standards and stakeholder satisfaction.



# Rural Education Assistant Project re-emphasises the importance of literacy and numeracy



Teaching approaches in rural schools have been changed for the better owing to the recruitment of Education Assistants (EAs) as part of the Rural Education Assistant Project (REAP).

The REAP was launched by Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal Province on 27 September 2018, as a model to improve literacy and numeracy in schools. The REAP is a pilot project aimed at researching the use of EAs in the Foundation and Intermediate Phases for improving the quality of education in rural schools.

Director for the Rural Education Directorate, Dr Phumzile Langa, has recently deployed a team of education experts to the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo Provinces, to monitor the effective implementation of the REAP amid Covid-19. According to Dr Langa, the EAs assist teachers with curricula and co-curricular activities, for example assisting learners with classwork and reading activities. Dr Langa expressed her gratitude to the School Management Teams (SMTs) under whom the 750 EAs are employed. “The SMTs made a significant contribution to this project since they ensured that the EAs were properly inducted before engaging learners,” said Dr Langa.

Ms Khululiwe Nyusela, Deputy Principal for Tekwini Primary School, reported that the REAP has been very helpful in her school. “The EAs enable teachers to concentrate on the core classroom business taking responsibility for maintaining discipline, social distancing and ensuring that learners are frequently sanitised. I really appreciate the role played by EAs in improving learning outcomes, although schools are expected to work in stringent measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Teachers should guide them to enjoy working in a schooling environment.”

Education Assistant, Mr Sipiwo Mbambani, described the REAP as a game changer, adding that, “since I have been working with the learners, I developed a passion for the teaching profession. I will have to find a way to pursue a career in this field”.



# NSNP continues to provide schools with healthy daily meals

**UNDER THE COVID-19 CONDITIONS, OVER 9.6 MILLION LEARNERS ARE SERVED AND/OR COLLECT NUTRITIOUS MEALS THROUGH NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME**



*If you have any complaints feel free to dial the number(s) below to help address the issue but give the name of school, district etc.*

**DBE Toll Free no.: 0800 20 29 33**  
**Tel no.: 012 357 3000**

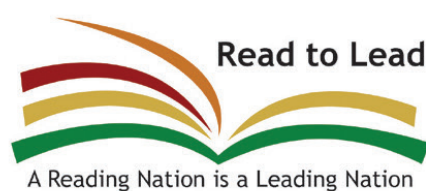
website  
[www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za)

facebook  
[www.facebook.com/BasicEd](https://www.facebook.com/BasicEd)

twitter  
[www.twitter.com/dbe\\_sa](https://www.twitter.com/dbe_sa)



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With most learners back at school and the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) in full swing, schools are reminded to ensure that Volunteer Food Handlers adhere to safety protocols at all times. Despite the Covid-19 conditions, special arrangements have been made with districts and schools to ensure that learners continue to receive meals under stringent protocols, whilst adhering to requirements such as social distancing and wearing masks for their health and safety. Healthy school meals improve the health and wellbeing of learners as most come from food insecure households.

- Wear clean NSNP full protective clothing during food preparation, including aprons, head gear that cover all hair, cloth face masks and boots;
- Maintain social and physical distancing in the kitchen;
- Adhere to social distancing when serving meals to learners. Learners must also adhere to social distancing when receiving meals;
- Clean your kitchen thoroughly in the morning and in the afternoon;
- Disinfect/wipe work surfaces with a dishcloth dipped in hot, soapy water with Jik or Domestos;
- It is important to clean cooking and eating utensils such as cutting boards and work surfaces with warm soapy water;
- Equipment and utensils should also be washed with warm, soapy water and Jik after use;
- Separate raw from cooked food using separate cutting boards for vegetables and meat and always use clean and safe water when washing vegetables and fruits;
- All waste must be collected regularly;
- Keep waste in covered containers and clean waste bins daily with hot soapy water;
- Waste disposal areas must be separate from the food preparation area to avoid contamination; and
- If using a pit for waste disposal, cover the pit with soil daily.



# Provincial Round-up

## Eastern Cape Province



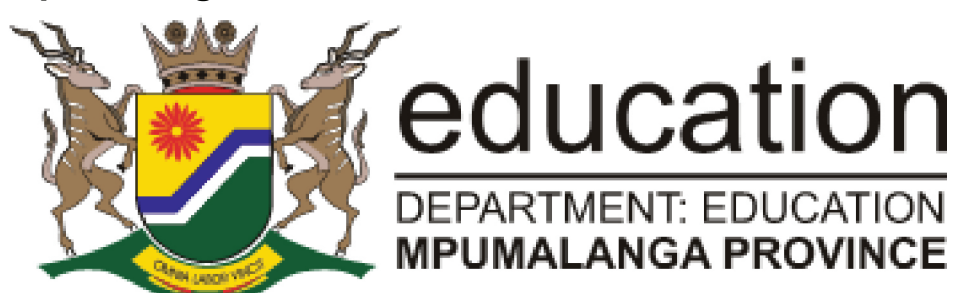
Eastern Cape Education MEC, Fundile Gade, encouraged learners to become responsible for their lives and their own future, not only within the school premises, but in their homes and within their communities. MEC Gade, recently visited two Elliotdale rural high schools, Zangqolwana and Ganizulu Senior Secondary Schools to hand over 200 shoes to needy learners residing in these villages. MEC Gade concluded the visit saying, “Shape your lives, you still have an opportunity to make a difference, but do not forget that respect goes a long way. Respect each other as colleagues and schoolmates. Respect your teachers as they are also your parents”.

## Free State Province



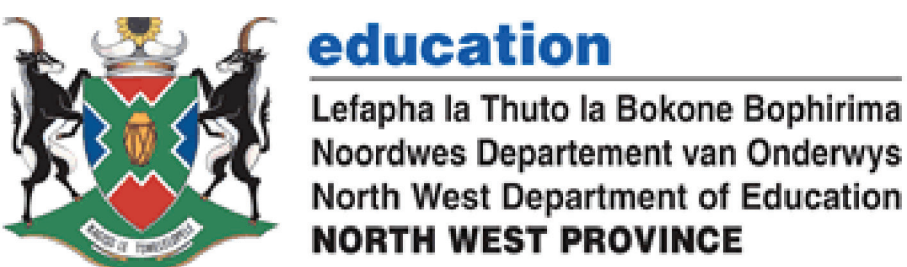
The Free State Department of Education has opened the registration process for learner admission to schools for the 2021 academic year from 7 August to 30 October 2020. The registration is open for learners commencing with Grade R, Grade 1, Grade 8 and those changing grades. Learners seeking to be at various schools in different grades will be admitted according to the age requirements and should produce the following documents as proof: a birth certificate, parent’s Identity Document and citizenship and school report, amongst others. The department is committed to allow all children access to basic education and no child will be denied his or her inalienable right to education as enshrined in *The Constitution*. Parents are therefore encouraged to apply for the admissions of their children before the closing date to avoid unnecessary delays and inconvenience. This will also curb the influx of parents presenting themselves at schools seeking admission on the first day of schooling. This tendency hampers the commencement of the teaching time and the entire academic program of the year. In addition, to heeding the call to apply on appropriate time, this also will ensure that the department has enough time to address any disputes. This will be in the best interest of the learners who will be placed on time and that learning and teaching kicks off on the first day of the school. Application Forms are available at all schools.

## Mpumalanga Province



Mpumalanga Education MEC, Bonakele Majuba, this week, met with and conveyed his condolences to the bereaved families of the two Gert Sibande Education District Officials who passed away in the line of duty in a car accident. The visit to the families of the late Messrs Jerome Thulani Majozi and Mr Thokozani Cyril Manana took place in Amsterdam, Mkhondo Local Municipality. “We are deeply saddened by the untimely passing away of these two officials. We sincerely express our deepest condolences to their families, friends and relatives. We wish them strength and peace during this dark hour,” MEC Majuba said. The late Mr Manana was laid to rest on 3 September 2020 in Amsterdam, and the late Mr Majozi will be laid to rest on 5 September 2020 in uLundi, KwaZulu-Natal. The DBE conveys its sincere condolences to the families, friends and relatives of the two officials.

## North-West Province



The North-West Department of Education MEC, Mmaphefo Matsemela, officially handed-over Boitekong II Secondary School to the community of Boitekong Township near Rustenburg on 1 September 2020. During the ceremony, MEC Matsemela indicated that a conducive learning environment encourages better school attendance. “I have no doubt that better facilities, such as a new school, new classrooms and new ablution blocks, encourage better school attendance. And better school attendance is obviously good for learners. It is also good for the broader community surrounding the new school,” said MEC Matsemela.



# Upcoming Events

- September 2020: Heritage Month will be commemorated
- September 2020: Public Service Month will be commemorated
- 08 September 2020: Minister Motshekga to launch the TeacherConnect platform at the Vodacom Teacher Centre in Sunnyside, Pretoria in the Gauteng Province
- 11 September 2020: Minister Motshekga will be attending a donation ceremony at the Chinese Embassy in Pretoria, Gauteng Province



"Growing South Africa Together for an Ethical Public Service"

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