

EDU NEWS

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A Closer Look at District Operations



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**GROWING
KWAZULU-NATAL
TOGETHER**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03 KwaZulu - Natal Department of Education: District Operations
 - 04 The Chief Director: District Operations - Mrs Thembelihle Gumede
 - 06 Ilembe District
 - 07 King Cetshwayo District
 - 08 Pinetown District
 - 10 Ugu District
 - 12 Umgungundlovu District
 - 13 Umlazi District
 - 14 The Chief Director: District Operations - Dr David Chonco
 - 16 Amajuba District
 - 17 Harry Gwala District
 - 18 Umkhanyakude District
 - 19 Umzinyathi District
 - 20 Uthukela District
 - 21 Zululand District
-

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In this special edition of **Edu-News**, we asked District Directors and Chief Directors: District Operations to wear their hearts on their sleeves. We asked them to talk to us about their academic performance aspirations of their districts while acknowledging the challenges that they face on daily basis.

We asked them to share with us their performance targets and share a word of encouragement to educators and learners, who are sitting for the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations.

In this issue of **Edu-News** you will read and discover the resilient spirit of men and women who have proven over many years that they are determined to excel against very difficult conditions.

To say 2021 has been a very challenging year would be an understatement. However, when you read the projections and performance targets of the officials that we spoke to, you will realise the resilience and unbelievable work ethic in this resilient force. District Directors are at the coal face of ensuring that curriculum delivery take place in their respective districts and they also need encouragement, even as they encourage their workforce in their districts. The healthy competition that exist between all the 12 districts is also very interesting and encouraging. If you have all District Directors under one roof, you won't help but notice the banter and tongue in cheek exchanges among them as they boast (in

jest), about which district is going to unseat and outperform which.

We salute our District Directors and their Chief Directors: District Operations for the hope that they are giving us on our prospect to yet again do well, against very difficult circumstances visited upon the sector by the protracted and persistent Covid 19 pandemic.

We once again welcome Dr David Chonco, who hit the ground running as the newly appointed Chief Director, responsible for six (6) districts. We also appreciate Chief Director, Thembelihle Gumede for having been at the helm of 12 performing districts for many years.

As our learners sit for NSC exams, we are hopeful that the province of KwaZulu-Natal is going to continue boosting the national average, as it is no secret that if KZN succeeds, the entire basic education sector succeed.

This is an ode to all District Directors, Circuit Managers, Subject Advisors and most of all, educators who makes all of us to shine.

**BRAVO TO ALL OF YOU
SIHLE MLOTSHWA**

In terms of the **KZN Department of Education, Chief Directorate: District Operations** has two clusters organised as follows:

Coastal Cluster which has the following six (6) districts supervised by: **Mrs Thembelihle Gumede**

1. Ilembe District
2. King Cetshwayo District
3. Pinetown District
4. Ugu District
5. UMgungundlovu District
6. Umlazi District

Midlands Cluster which has the following six (6) districts supervised by: **Dr David Chonco**

1. Amajuba District
2. Harry Gwala District
3. UMkhanyakude District
4. Umzinyathi District
5. UThukela District
6. Zululand District



THE CHIEF DIRECTOR DISTRICT OPERATIONS

THEMBELIHLE GUMEDE

1. BRIEFLY SHARE WITH US WHAT DOES ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN MEANS TO YOUR DISTRICTS AND HOW ARE YOU GOING TO ENSURE IT IS EFFECTIVE?

For me, the Academic Improvement Plan aims to improve quality of teaching, learning and management of schools as well as the effectiveness of the support and monitoring services provided to schools by the province and districts with a view to improve learning outcomes.

It is critical to indicate that a focused Academic Improvement Plan should target all schools in general, but have specific focus on underperforming schools with a view of completely eliminating underperformance over time.

As the Chief Directorate: District Operations Management, I have a responsibility to request for the budget that will support the implementation of the District Academic Improvement Plans. Such a budget is allocated proportionally across all districts, with bias towards districts that performed below 80% in 2020 NSC examinations.

2. TARGETS FOR COASTAL DISTRICTS

- **Ilembe - 90%**
- **King Cetshwayo - 80%**
- **Pinetown - 85%**
- **Ugu - 87%**

- **UMgungundlovu - 90%**
- **Umlazi - 90%**

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO ENSURE THAT DISTRICTS ATTAIN THE TARGETS?

Provide strategic leadership and management in the implementation of the District, Circuit and School Academic Improvement Plans and the review thereof on a quarterly basis after the analysis of term by term results.

Intervene in schools with instabilities and monitor the implementation of catch up programmes to cover for the time lost.

Monitor the setting of overall and subject targets for districts, circuits and schools.

In liaison with Branch: Corporate Management Service, support districts with the provision of human resources and other resources in schools, circuits, districts.

Ensuring that on a quarterly basis after the term results have been analysed, districts/ circuits/ schools review their academic improvement plans to be in line with curriculum needs that would have been identified through diagnostic reports and error analysis.

Ensuring the provision of Institutional Development and Support services to six districts.

Manage reporting on the performance standards determined by the Acting DDG: IDS in the districts.

Ensuring the establishment and

maintenance of the accountability systems at the level of districts and circuits in support of teaching and learning in all institutions.

Monitor that there is effective teaching and learning in all schools through the implementation of curriculum policies.

Support initiatives from the MEC's and HOD's Office. Currently the MEC has just finalised holding sessions with District MANCO's on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Provincial Twelve Point Plan.

Post the 31st of August 2021, districts were advised to audit schools that would have not completed curriculum coverage with a view of developing focused programmes to support such schools including deployment of lead educators.

Encourage districts to identify and support schools that experienced learning losses caused COVID-19 in the 2020 academic year

CHALLENGES FACED BY DISTRICTS

The issue of social distancing which makes it difficult for all grades to return to full time attendance because of the shortage of floor space and learner furniture.

Use of rotational time-tabling impacting negatively on curriculum coverage across all grades with the exception of Grade 12 learners who attend daily.

The restriction of kilometers to be travelled per month impacts on the number of visits to be undertaken by district officials to support schools especially underperforming schools.

Underperformance by small and non-viable schools which cannot be assisted through provision of learner transport services because of financial constraints.

Vandalism during unrests and impact of service delivery protests that disrupt teaching and learning in schools.

Serious budget cuts that resulted in non-filling of vacant educator posts and non-appointment of substitute educators in cases of educators on long sick leave and accouchement leave.

Non holding of Winter and Spring Camps because of the high rate of infections

caused by the COVID 19 variants

MESSAGE TO DISTRICTS, TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

To learners. We wish to say as you prepare yourselves for the final examinations, know that we are behind you, cheering you on to the finish line. You might be feeling stressed, overwhelmed, confused and tired- we understand that, but keep going. Give it everything you've got as you're nearly there and know that whatever happens next, you've got what it takes for an amazing life. Your final grades won't change that. Examination will test your memory and your understanding of a particular concept, not your intelligence.

To districts and teachers: We are conscious of the fact that 2021 began with a shaky start which saw us starting the first term mid- February because of the third wave of COVID 19. However, with the caliber of officials we have in you, we were able to rise above challenges by developing District Academic Improvement Plans, School Improvement Plans and Subject Academic Improvement Plans, which encapsulated measurable clear targets which were informed by data extracted from diagnostic reports.

Your dedication and hard work is evident in the majority of schools that were able to complete curriculum coverage by end of August 2021 in line with the Revised Annual Teaching Plans. We are now in the last mile of our 2021 journey. Let us support our learners across all grades to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

We have all what it takes to beat the negative impact of COVID 19. With the Honourable MEC's ICT Programme, we'll see a drastic change in learning methodology that promotes blended, high touch and outcome oriented learning, providing learners the opportunity to access learning anytime through virtual classrooms. Principals will use the tablets that are currently distributed to them to do administration anytime, anywhere, everywhere.



ILEMBE

District

Going about achieving a minimum target of 85% our work started on day one of the academic year when the vision, objectives and the priorities for the year were crafted, consulted and implemented. We have worked on mainly three priorities which are subdivided into five pillars. Our priority areas: Improving school leadership and management, improving curriculum delivery and management. Improving district support to schools. We have rallied every stakeholder into supporting teaching and learning. In that, the focus is on supporting teachers as well as learners. The district has carefully managed the improvement process from planning stage, implementation stage as well as monitoring and evaluation stage. We are happy with the progress so far although we had a fair share of disturbances which were the results of Covid 19.

Our biggest challenge this year is the subjects without teachers. We have so many vacancies which we cannot fill and the number keeps growing due to Covid 19 deaths.

We have lost quite a significant number of educators during the year. This is killing the momentum and it is something we have never faced before. We understand, it is way above us as a district.

Dealing with the challenges, we have spread the little resources we have. We are using teachers from other schools as lead educators to teach in schools without teachers. In some instances, our subject advisors are also plugging the gap as they go in and teach. Circuit Managers are planning with schools and even transporting specialists to schools where they are needed. We have used radio lessons aired in community radio stations so that one teacher can teach the entire district. We have also extended teaching time by using weekends, afternoons and holidays. We would have loved to use mass tutorials but the prevalence of Covid 19 is preventing us from doing that.

My message to educators of I Lembe District is, "Thank you so much, It has not been easy for you to brave the challenges of Covid 19 and go an extra mile to all our schools to provide quality education under very trying conditions. I am humbled by your commitment to the education of an African child. Our improvement journey started in 2017 and it is not yet over. Our minimum target of 85% is within reach and so is our maximum target. Once more we have a milestone to achieve together. **Good luck to all the learners.**



KING CETSHWAYO District

The District Director of the King Cetshwayo District, Ms Weziwe Nzama says that the minimum target of the district is 80%, but all the Circuit Management Centres (CMCs) are targeting above 80%.

“We are implementing the 12 point plan to improve our learner attainment and we are also strengthening the activities of DAPIP,” says the District Director.

She says they also had activities for Maths classes for big enrolment schools where teams visit schools to check curriculum coverage, learners structured revision programmes and they also have motivational sessions for Grade 12 learners.

Other district academic activities include meeting high enrolment schools with above 90 learners in Grade 12, performance analysis of the 12 point plan, motivating principals and lead educators deployed to school with needs. The district also implements operation scaffold to T40

schools as well as Accounting sessions with Circuit Managers on their school’s performance.

“We are faced with challenges such as staffing, curbing of kilometres and this year there was a rapid increase of Covid 19 infections,”

she said.

“To our learners we would like to say through your determination and your hard work you are now in Grade 12. By its very nature exams come with stress and anxiety. There are very few people who did not feel anxious when sitting for these exams. Make use of the previous question papers, study in groups, ask questions of clarity and lastly, don’t forget to protect yourselves from the Covid 19 Pandemic,” said the District Director.

Good luck to all the learners.

PINETOWN

District



Pinetown District under the leadership of Mr Sbu Kheswa has adopted the Academic Improvement Plan with the aim to obtain a minimum academic pass rate of 85%. In order for the district to obtain the targeted pass rate, the district initiated the programme of capacitating educators with the latest assessment changes in CAPS Chapter 4.

In all schools educators were capacitated on subject changes in all subjects. Mr Kheswa also raised that the district has conducted a content and methodology workshops to capacitate educators on content and with the latest teaching techniques which include learner differentiation and not 'one size fits all approach. "In turn, such workshops will assist educators to deal with learning losses effectively," said Mr

Kheswa.

Pinetown District has also capacitated school principals and educators on the latest SBA requirements and on SBA statistical moderation to eliminate schools with rejected SBA.

“Intervention programs (such as 5 + 1: Saturday classes) are underway and we are preparing to have vacation classes including learner boot camps during spring holidays. We have identified and trained lead educators that are assisting us with tuition in high enrolling and under achieving subjects,”

Kheswa said.

The district has also conducted school visits to provide on-site support to educators

as well as SMT members and revision workshops have been conducted in all subjects. Currently, the district is preparing for a roll out of the Just In Time revision program.

Mr Kheswa further raised that schools under Pinetown District do not have enough educators which is the most challenge that Pinetown District is faced with. "Covid-19 pandemic poses a serious challenge as learners are attending using rotational timetable. As a result, learners will progress to the next grade with a lot of content gaps as a result of learning time loss. The only way to deal with above mentioned challenges, our Subject Advisors have conducted content workshops, capacitating educators on a variety of approaches that will assist educators to teach a topic across a phase. We have distributed Step Ahead material to all schools and Subject Advisors are monitoring that they are used by educators," said Mr Kheswa.

The District Director concluded by sending a message to both learners and educators where he urged them to work very hard this year.

"I understand that you are attending school during Covid-19 pandemic. We appeal to you to organise yourselves to do your

work at home if you are on rotation. Create study groups (learning cells) and help one another with your studies. Remember to take all safety precautions, social distancing, washing of hands and so on. Draw up your own study timetable and make sure that you try to study at least 3 subjects per day with Maths/Maths Lit done daily....

This has been the most difficult year for you as educators. The challenges that you are faced with in 2021 have never been seen in any other academic year. I thank you for ensuring that you go an extra mile in trying to recover the learning losses that our learners suffered in 2021. You have been doing morning, afternoon and weekend classes voluntarily in trying to ensure that curriculum coverage is achieved. We thank you and urge you to continue assisting our learners

Good luck to all the learners."



UGU District

87%
minimum

**ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT
PLAN WAS INTRODUCED
BY THE KWAZULU-NATAL
MEC OF EDUCATION (IN
EACH DISTRICT) TO ENSURE
EXCEPTIONAL MATRIC RESULTS
OF ALL STUDENTS AS WELL
AS TO ENSURE EXCEPTIONAL
EXECUTION OF TEACHING
METHODS.**

This document will expand on the Ugu District's Academic Improvement Plan presented by its district director, Mr W.M Sibiyi.

The objective of the district of Ugu is to achieve a target of over

which would reflect a minimum of 5% improvement of the 2020 results – an achievement of over 90% would be satisfying. The achievement of success in this would mean implementing a variety of different strategies which include the following:

- *Close management, monitoring and support by management of respective schools to ensure that a conducive environment and ethos prevails in the schools for sound teaching and learning to occur.*
- *Ensuring that all schools and grade 12 classes have the necessary teachers to teach the respective subjects. Treating teachers with respect as professionals whilst expecting high learning outcomes.*
- *Continuous curriculum support and mentoring through on-site visits*

and support by officials advocating differentiated strategies.

- *Holding capacitation workshops, including the Just-In-Time (JIT) and final push workshops for the various subjects to provide guidance on content and revision strategies.*
- *Conducting sample SBA moderation to ensure standards are being maintained.*
- *Schools conduct extra classes in the morning, afternoon and on Saturdays*
- *Close focus on schools that achieved under 70% pass in 2020. They conduct extra classes on Saturdays (5 +1). Team visits to these schools to offer guidance and support.*
- *Encouraging professional learning communities to meet and discuss strategies of teaching and learning.*
- *Provision of resources such as step ahead material as well as examination guidelines and past examination question papers to be used judiciously.*

The main team players of ensuring that the academic improvement plan is executed and is a success has to be the educators and learners. Their role is of paramount importance and to meet their target mark, the schools and SMT's of the district of Ugu have implemented the school and subject plans. The district officials will also monitor and provide advise during on-site visits. Teachers are advised on how to use the statistical and diagnostic analysis to address underperformance and ensure that there are remediation processes in place to ensure that the set targets are reached. On the other hand, learners are given remedial lessons and exercises to close gaps in learning knowledge and "The Step Ahead" material that was provided to schools will be utilised. Although, teachers and learners will need to work hand-in-hand

in all of this, it will take more than teaching and learning to ensure the success of the academic improvement plan therefore there will be motivational talks by officials and outside speakers from time to time to motivate the learners to stay focused and attend school regularly.

So far, we have identified that our biggest challenge as a district is the learning losses that have resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic and civil unrest. We are tried to deal with these challenges the best way we know how, which is by introducing catch up programmes. Teachers maximised the contact time for completion of the syllabus and consolidation of work done; as well as the utilisation of the various resources provided to schools such as the step ahead materials, past examination question papers and examination guidelines.

In closing, Mr Sibiya left a message for his learners and educators:

"One expresses a sense of gratitude to the resilient, dedicated, passionate teachers that make us proud of our noble profession. We are reminded of the words of Aristotle,

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. Learners must remember that tough times do not last, tough people do. Keep your focus and give of your best. Your goal is achievable."

UMGUNGUNDOLOVU DISTRICT



Umgungundlovu, District, led by the District Director Mr Siqhamo Mabinza, has embarked on a conclusive plan to make sure that the District academic year reaches its objectives.

The district academic target this year is

90%
minimum

They have developed intervention strategies such as MDT visits, mediation of documents which entails examination guide lines, educator assistants, section four of the abridged CAPs and subject improvement plans, just to name a few. They have further appointed lead teachers to assist educators, subject content workshops and final push programmes etc. The district has a very strong plan to improve the academic performance in the poor performing schools, by tracking

learners performance individually and holistically.

This year has been challenging for the department as a whole, therefore the district has also faced a number of challenges which are: non-appointment of educators in substantive posts due to the budget cut, high absenteeism in learners and educators due to COVID-19, damaged schools from the riots, lack of internet support for the schools and the academic moral in learners and educators has dropped. The District has however made provisions to combat these challenges by trimming the curriculum in grades 10 and 11. The district has also organized just in time workshops from different clusters for novice and under performing schools. Programmes planned for the academic year includes extra classes, morning and afternoon classes, 5+1 programme, spring classes, revision programme and numerous other programmes.

Asked about his motivation to learners, the District Director said, "It is that time of the year when all matriculants learners will have to sit and write the final external examination. 2021 examination will be no different to the previous examinations you have been subjected. Examinations will be assessing work that has been taught and the work you have learnt.

The district believes in your capabilities, we are at no stage doubtful that you will make us proud and you will come out tops. As you continue to chase your dreams, remember that grade 12 results will open many doors for you"



“Umlazi District is known to be a trail blazer that strives under different conditions....”

UMLAZI District

**UMLAZI DISTRICT
TARGET FOR THE YEAR
2021 IS**

85%.
minimum

In order for the district to attain the target, the district had the following interventions; early morning and late classes, Saturday classes, Winter and spring classes, one plus programme, one plus nine programme, operation scarf folding and peer networking.

The challenges that Umlazi District has are; non appointment of educators, attrition for office based educators and non-basic, lack of resources both physical and non-human personnel lastly non availability of tools of trade.

In order to deal with the challenges the district is currently facing, we have escalated the matter of non-appointment of educators to the head office, we have requested assistants cluster coordinator educators in the circuit and CMS within the district. To overcome the lack of resources, we are networking with schools that have these resources to assist the district. Lastly, we have requested colleagues to utilise their personal tools of trade since there are non-availability of tools of trade.

“Umlazi District is known to be a trail blazer that strives under different conditions. The current challenge experienced in the province and country should be an encouragement to strive in achieving more within the given setup, therefore we cannot and shall not fail to achieve our intended objective and goal. **Good luck to all the learners**”, concludes the District Director, Mr Ntokozo Cele



THE CHIEF DIRECTOR DISTRICT OPERATIONS DR DAVID CHONCO

The Chief Director: Districts Operations, Dr David Chonco outlined the importance of Academic Improvement Plan and why it is important for districts to adapt to this plan. Dr Chonco said that the academic improvement plan means that there should be an effective school functionality, effective quality teaching and learning at all levels, particularly at the level of the classroom. He said the plan talks to educators planning, teaching, monitoring and responding. It should talk to curriculum coverage and learner attainment and there should be continuous assessment and evaluation.

“For schools to be functional there should be a strong leadership and accountability. Schools particularly classrooms, should be epicenters for learning and teaching - there should be a continuous

improvement in different learning areas and that the kind of learners produced by the system must be able to meet the market demands. As a way of enhancing District Academic Improvement plan, special emphasis is made in the implementation of the KZN 12 point plan,”

asserted Dr Chonco

Dr Chonco highlighted the target pass rate for this year for all districts under his cluster. “Collectively we have agreed to achieve the following targets as a way of improving the performance of the system,” said Dr Chonco.

- Uthukela District - 78.5%
- Umzinyathi District - 77.6%
- Amajuba District - 85.5%
- Zululand District - 81.7%
- Umkhanyakude District - 85.6%
- Harry Gwala District - 80%

In order to ensure that they attain the targeted pass rate, Dr Chonco said he uses “How can I help” approach, where he provides strategic leadership, administration, management and governance support to 6 districts, circuits and schools. He also ensures accountability at all levels of the system, ensuring curriculum delivery, assessment, teaching and learning and learner attainment, ensuring timeous appointment of educators through HR directorate and provision of education opportunities and access to education through bursaries and user friendly policies, setting clear targets from subject’s schools, circuits, circuit’s management centers and districts. “We also create conducive environment for teaching and learning by ensuring good relations with different stakeholders, i.e. labour formations, governing bodies, municipalities and business community etc.” he said.

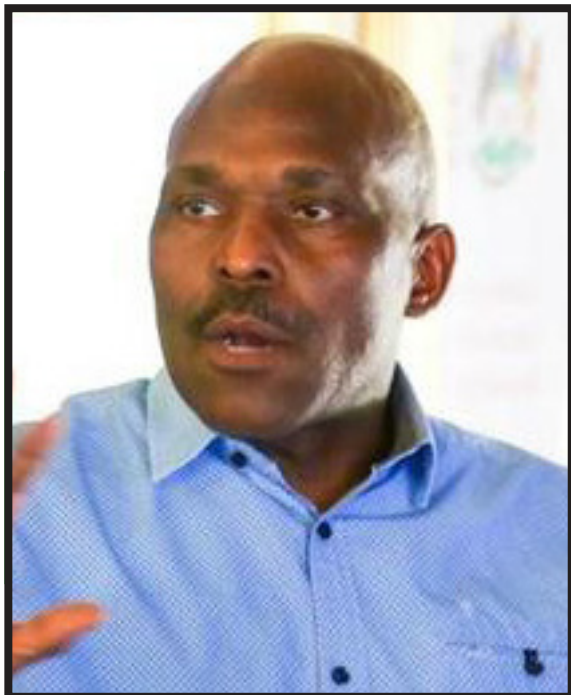
Dr Chonco raised challenges that are faced by districts that are under his supervision which involves, problem of multi-grading in schools, small and non-viable schools, timeous provisioning of educators, safe security in schools, schools with instabilities and infrastructure challenges in relation to specialists rooms. In order to deal with these challenges he ensures that educators are capacitated in dealing with multi- grading schools, working with curriculum team in dealing with content gap, mobilizing stakeholders within districts to support and protect schools, encourage business community to support schools, facilitating the transformation of the schooling system although there

are budget cuts and working with other directorates in supporting schools and districts.

Conveying his message to educators and learners, he said,



This is a difficult time in the history of our country since 1918 when we experienced influenza. Now we talk of COVID 19, stop and start and curriculum content gap, but we need to soldier on amid these challenges for the betterment of our future as a young generation, so as to deal with challenges like poverty, unemployment and inequalities. This is the generation that must rise and deal with the imbalances of the past and de-colonize our education system and lead us to classless society. This is our future we need to build it now.



AMAJUBA

District

“We want to claim our number one spot as the best performing district and we have a minimum target of 90% pass rate,”

said the District Director of Amajuba, Mr Themis Nzama.

He says they have a well-crafted academic support program consisting of game-changers that have worked in high performing districts that form parts of our cross-border networks. “We have a list of

good practises that have worked in high performing schools in the district and these are shared amongst all schools,” he said

The District Director says that their biggest challenge emanate from the budget cuts faced by the department, which restricts the allocation of resources to the schools in the form of teaching personnel. Mr Nzama says loss of life due to Covid-19 is another factor placing huge demand on the already limited human resources. “Infrastructural deprivation and knowledge deficits that result from the rotational modality of learner attendance is also a challenge,” he adds.

His message to educators and learners is, “Principals, teachers and learners have always been working extremely hard to sustain the high performance of the district. For this, you deserve a word of appreciation. Covid-19 brought in new challenges and principals had to learn to lead schools during uncertain times. Keep on working hard. Draw your inspiration from Galations 6 v 9 “ We must not be weary of doing good, for in due season, we will receive a reward, if we do not give up”.

HARRY GWALA

District



The Harry Gwala District wants to improve the performance by the minimum of 5% and a maximum of 10%, as the NSC performance was 75% in 2020. The minimum target for 2021 is 80% and the maximum is 85%.

“We intend to attain this by improving the quality of passes-increase bachelor passes, support struggling and progressed learners, focus on mathematics and science. There will also be classes on weekends and holidays for quality curriculum coverage.”

says the Acting District Director Mr Gregory Bekezela Khumalo.

Mr Khumalo says the biggest challenge for the district are subjects without teachers in many schools during the first term. “This brought a challenge of completing the ATP on time. We have deployed lead educators to assist so we have made progress, he said

“The message we would like to pass to educators and learners now that we are engaged in the last push and we have motivated all grade 12 teachers in all content subjects is, “now focus on the work and nothing else up to the end of the year. **Good luck to all the learners.**”

UMKHANYAKUDE

District



The Umkhanyakude District Academic Improvement Plan for 2021 consists of ten focus areas. These are curriculum coverage and assessment, arresting the decline of districts, circuits, schools and subjects, Improving the quality of passes, support for struggling and progressed learners, focus on Mathematics and Science, continuous analysis of performance and focused, holiday and weekend classes for quality curriculum coverage, school management systems, teacher capacity and professionalism, quality support and monitoring by district and finally, special interventions.

The District Director, Thanduyise Motha says they have strategies for all these focus areas, which include setting overall

minimum targets for the district at 85%, as well as conducting curriculum audits at district and school levels, providing physical resources to schools for productive teaching and learning, strengthen the quality of continuous assessment from grades 1-12 and holding special programmes to assist Maths and Science in the district, such as Science Olympiads, Mathematics clinics and peer teaching. Furthermore, there was intensification of participation in career exhibitions such as Eskom Expo, Astro Quiz, EMS Quiz, and Olympiads.

“We have the goal of holiday and weekend classes for quality curriculum Coverage by developing a structured revision programme. The targets for the district include maintaining to stay in the top three,” said the District Director

Motha says the challenges facing the district include the decline in pass percentage of the province, as it was noted that “in 2020 eleven districts” declined in their pass rate. “These challenges will be addressed by confirming that all required human and physical resources are available for productive teaching, as well as to identify all vacant posts and to recruit staff to fill in vacant posts in schools, circuits, CMCs and districts. Vandalised and storm damaged schools in the district will also be identified and repaired,” he said.

Good luck to all the learners.

UMZINYATHI District



UMzinyathi District is one of the most rural districts in KwaZulu-Natal and in the Department of Education.

The academic target for Umzinyathi District is a minimum of 80%. In order to achieve this, among other things, Umzinyathi District has done the following:

- Sustained site visits to T65 schools.
- Online support for all subject teachers.
- Provision of print LTSM.
- Coaching on “easy to score marks”.
- 1+9 fortnightly lead educators support for struggling educators.
- JIT training in term 3 for educators.
- Exposing top educators to Olympiads in BCM and Maths.
- Give support for standardised site-based assessment.
- Give guidance and monitoring use of the step ahead LTSM to bridge 2020 learning losses.

In order to deal with challenges caused by Covid 19 and other HR related matters, the district has done the following:

- Use lead educators to teach after hours in schools with vacant posts.
- Online and on-site support for educators in implementing the accelerated Improvement plan and.
- Supporting extended classes programme.

“Educators must always be positive and remember that no challenge is insurmountable. To learners we say this has been a very trying year for you with unprecedented challenges brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic. Have faith in yourselves – do not despair and spend every minute gainfully and you will reap just rewards for your sacrifices.”



UTHUKELA

District

Ms Popie Mokoena, the Uthukela District Director says that as a district, they are targeting a minimum

80%

pass rate for matric while they are expecting even more than their target for the 2021 National Senior Certificate results.

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, she mentions that only chosen schools by the district will camp in boarding facilities this year and numbers will be limited by targeting specific subjects. “We intend to recover as much of the lost teaching and learning time as possible. We ensured that extra work was completed by learners at home during closure as a result of a learner or a school being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

We also utilized workbooks, WhatsApp groups and other electronic learning platforms,” says the District Director.

Ten (10) schools to the value of R61 524 575 were affected by the recent civil unrest in the district, which has posed a huge challenge to the district. “Another challenge that the district is facing is that of maintaining Covid-19 protocols, especially social distancing during examination, as most of their schools have a minimum floor space,.” she said

In her concluding remarks, the director motivated all educators and learners in the district. “We are living in a very challenging era. However, work has to be carried out at the end of the day so that teaching and learning may continue. We also encourage learners to help each other. We further plead with our educators to also work as a team. We can achieve more if we work together”



ZULU LAND

District

“COVID-19 has created unprecedented disruption to education systems across the world. One of the consequences thereof was the reduced time in teaching and learning resulting in substantial learning losses across the subjects and grades. The 2020 National Senior Certificate results showed a decrease of 2.4% in Zululand District. This comes after 5.3% increase in 2019, this year we target a minimum of 81.7%” said the District Director Mr Dumisani Ndlovu.

Mr Ndlovu said the 2021 plan identifies areas which need urgent attention in the General Education and Training as well as the Further Education and Training Bands as follows:

- Large enrolment schools are producing high number of failures.
- Maths, Geography, Physical Sciences and Accounting underperformance.
- Learning losses due to COVID 19.

INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

Mediation of Recovery Annual Teaching

Plans, changes in CAPS chapter 4 and orientation workshops for target setting, intensive school based assessment Moderation for quality tasks, 1 + 9 teachers workshops for Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, Physical Sciences, Accounting, Technical Maths and Geography for underperforming schools, weekend classes: clustering underperforming schools Saturdays and Sundays for Mathematical Literacy and Geography once per term, Crossborder networking for Maths, Maths Literacy, Accounting, Physical Sciences and Life Sciences, Autumn classes for schools performed below 70% in 2020 NSC results, spring classes for schools performed below 70% in 2020 NSC results, morning, afternoon and Saturday classes to recover learning losses.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Subjects without teachers due to various reasons.

STRATEGY USED TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE

Allocation of lead teachers to assist learners, inclusion of newly appointed teachers to district programmes and Just In Time workshops.

MESSAGE TO TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

District understands that they are working under very difficult environment and appreciate their dedication and commitment. Teachers are also requested to motivate their learners develop differentiated programmes using learners capabilities, develop a clear revision plans informed by a clear revision timetable. Ensure that learners attend all extra tuition programmes and form well coordinated learning cells or study groups for peer learning, introduce learners to data free programmes e.g WOZA matric, Siyavula app, KZN Funda Portal, teaching and learning should take place until the final examinations.