

# EDU



# NEWS

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VOL. 67 | JULY 2025



## HALALA KZN CHAMPIONS: NATIONAL SASCE CHAMPIONSHIPS



**UMGUBHO WOSUKU**  
**LUKADOKOTELA UNELSON**  
**MANDELA EMNYANGWENI**  
**WEZEMFUNDO**



**2025 WINTER GAMES UNITE**  
**LEARNERS THROUGH**  
**SPORT & CULTURE**



**MINISTERIAL SCHOOL**  
**FUNCTIONALITY & OVERSIGHT**  
**VISIT**

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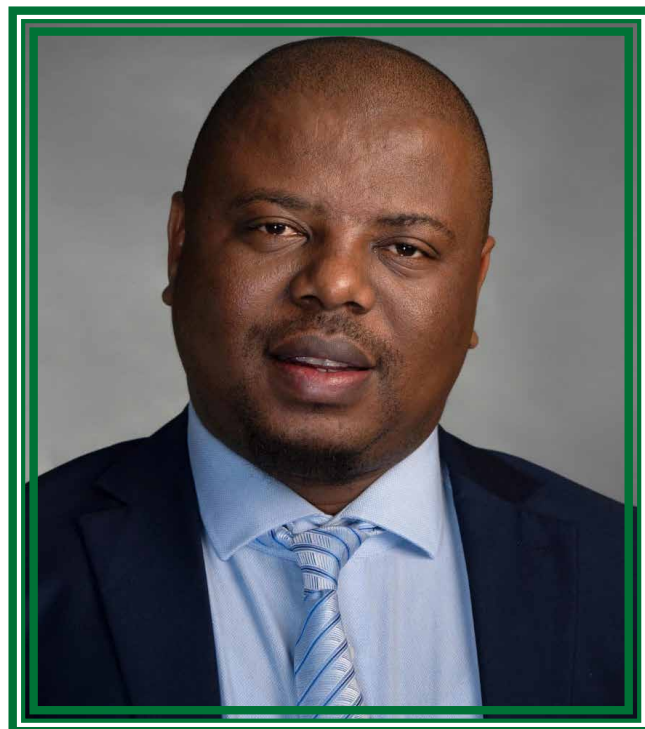
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# MESSAGE FROM THE MEC

## MR. S.E HLOMUKA



KwaZulu-Natal. It reminds us that schools must not only teach knowledge but also cultivate values of service, responsibility, and compassion.

Together with the top management we observed the Nelson Mandela International Day at Vezukusa Primary School in the uMkhanyakude District. This day reminds us of the legacy of our former President, a global icon whose commitment to justice, reconciliation, and education continues to guide us. Mandela's enduring words **"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"** remains the foundation upon which we build our vision as the Department. Mandela Day calls upon us not only to remember but also to act. It is a call for each of us to play our part in improving the lives of others, no matter how small the effort is .

It is my pleasure to be afforded this opportunity to reflect on the events that have recently unfolded in our province. I speak of the SASCE National Championship, that took place at the Rhema Bible Church in Randburg. We are reminded of the extraordinary ability of our learners to inspire and uplift through music. This competition is not only a platform for showcasing vocal talent but also a national symbol of discipline, teamwork, and cultural pride. The performances of our choristers carry the dreams of their schools, communities, and the entire province of KwaZulu-Natal.

I am particularly inspired by the creativity of Mr. Sphokuhle Sibisi, a young composer from the uMlazi District, whose work is being presented with distinction by all the choirs that are engaging with his craft . His contribution demonstrates the remarkable talent that resides in our schools and reflects the importance of creating space within our education system to nurture innovation, self-expression, and cultural identity.

For the Department, this is an opportunity to recommit to our mandate of delivering quality education to every child, in every district of

I extend my appreciation to our dedicated educators, principals, parents, and governing bodies who continue to support the holistic development of our learners. Their tireless commitment ensures that learners shine on international and national platforms as such strengthens our ability to produce future leaders.

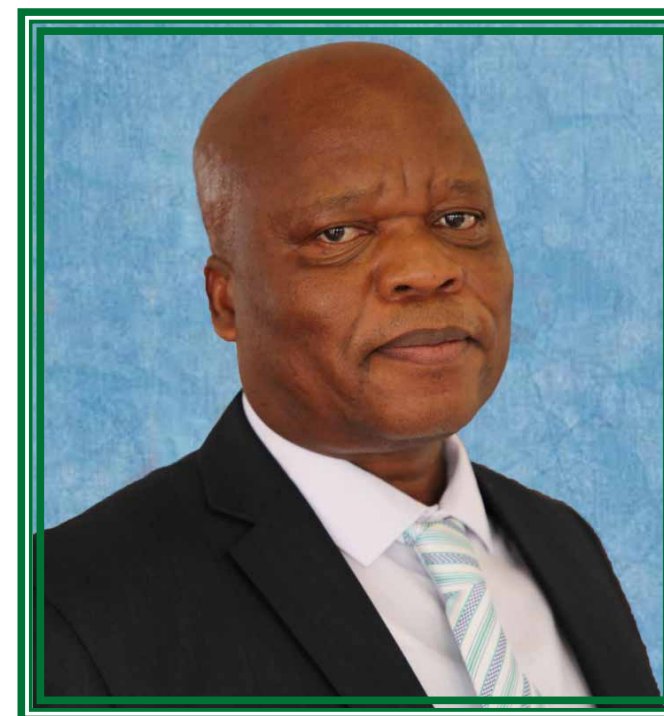
The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education remains steadfast in its mission to deliver an education system that is inclusive, empowering, and transformative. We continue to invest in both academic and cultural programmes, ensuring that our learners become well-rounded citizens capable of contributing meaningfully to the province and the country.

I take this opportunity to wish all our women employees a happy and progressive women's month that is highlighted in the month of August but honoured throughout the year.

I thank you

# MESSAGE FROM THE HOD

## MR. G.N NGCOBO



Indeed, our educators are diligently impacting lives from a young age. Recently, as a province, we held the National Sports Championship at UKZN Howard Campus in Durban, where our schools from different districts excelled, making us extremely proud .

The journey continues; the Department is concentrating not only on enhancing academics but also on upgrading infrastructure by constructing new schools and renovating existing ones to promote a positive environment for teaching and learning.

In conclusion , the Department of Education conveys gratitude to our educators, officials, learners, and stakeholders for their unwavering support. Let's unite to create a winning nation

**Ngiyabonga kakhulu**

It is an honor to gather with you here once more; the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education continually aims to provide a quality education for our learners We thank God for the calm and secure July holidays, and we are now in term three working very hard on stop, as each grade matters. As trailblazers in education, our educators urge you to keep going. We genuinely appreciate your hard work, perseverance, and dedication to developing the nation. We are a few days before the final examinations for the year. We again urge all our learners to stay focused and make every day count.

The Department of Education has provided essential resources such as support materials, winter camps, extra classes, etc, this we do so that level the playing field for the equal opportunity of every learner . We are committed in advancing the nation. Our Department strives to maintain a high pass rate; we aim not for a drop but instead wish to continuously raise our KZN banner. We have witnessed various efforts from the Department of Education confirming that our classrooms are centers of excellence, with educators consistently working to advancecourse.



# KZN SCHOOLS SHINE AT THE NATIONAL CHORAL EISTEDDFOD.



By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

The 2025 ABC Motsepe South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod (SASCE) National Championship concluded recently at Rhema Bible Church in Randburg, where learners from across the country gathered under the theme “Year of the Champs.”

Schools from KwaZulu-Natal delivered outstanding performances, showcasing not only their musical talent but also their dedication, discipline, and passion for the arts.

The event was attended by KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, alongside the Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Dr Reginah Mhaule. MEC Hlomuka also had the opportunity to meet Sphokuhle Sibisi, a talented young composer from Umlazi District, who represented the province with pride.

**“By acknowledging the various cultural, traditional, and indigenous values that define us as a community, the ABC Motsepe SASCE advances the objective of nation-building. In doing so, it plays a crucial role in national development,”** she said.

Empangeni High School from King Cetshwayo District and Zama High School from Majuba District were among the standout performers. Empangeni High School was crowned Champ of Champs, while Zama High School secured second place in the same prestigious category.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education expressed pride in both schools for their remarkable achievements, which reflected months of preparation, resilience, and a strong commitment to excellence in choral music. Their success is a reflection of the artistic talent and dedication fostered in schools across the province.





# UMZINYATHI DISTRICT OPERATIONS SUKUMA SAKHE/ DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL CABINET DAY



By: Qinisile Mkhize

**U**hulumeni waKwaZulu Natali ngaphansi kohlelo l-Operation Sukuma Sakhe/ District Development Model uhambele isiFunda sase Mzinyathi. Lolu hlelo uhulumeni uhlose ngalo ukusondela emiphakathini uzizwele izimfuno zawa, izidingo ngqangi kanye nokuthuthukisa ingqalasizinda.

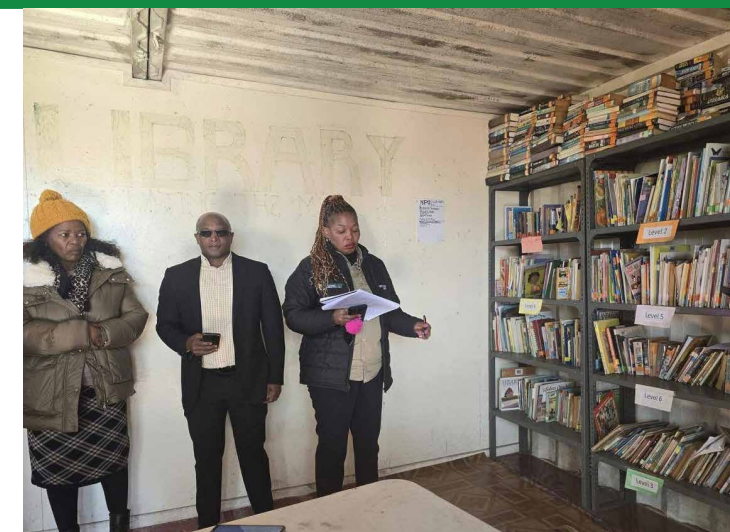
Inhloko yomnyango wezokuHlaliswa Kwabantu KwaZulu-Natal uMnumzane Maxwell Mbili uhole ithimba labasebenzi bakahulumeni ebelijutshwe kuwadi 13 endaweni yase Ngwetshane.

Ithimba liqale eholo lomphakathi nalapho uKhansela uNdlovu ethule umbiko ngesimo sewadi. UNdlovu ukhale kakhulu ngeminyango kahulumeni engeyithameli imihlangano yase-war room, amanzi, imigwaqo engekho esimeni esikahle, ubugebengu, amapitsi angasebenzi ngenxa kagesi, imindeni edinga usizo oluphuthumayo ngezindlu kanye nokunye okuningi.

Ithimbe libe selihambela Intshisekelo ECD center nalapho elikhulume nomphathi walesi sikhungo ngezingqinamba ababhekene nazo, uMnumzane uMbili uthembise ukuthinta iminyango kahulumeni efanele ukuze ungenelele.

Ithimba liphinde lavakashela kwiNquthu Aids Committee nalapho lizwe ngomsebenzi omuhle owenziwayo wokuphakelwa kwezintandane, imikhankaso elwa nokuhlukunyezwa kwabesifazane nezingane, umtapo wolwazi la abafundi abakwazi uhlala khona benze imisebenzi yesikole ngaphandle kokuphazamiseka. Nakuba zikhona izingqinamba ababhekene nazo uMnumzane uMbili uncome umsebenzi abawenzayo wokwehlisa umthwalo kuhulumeni.

Zonke izinkinga ezibikiwe zewadi kanye nezezindawo ezivakasheliwe zizoba ingxenye yombiko ozokwethulwa kuNdunankulu ukuze kusheshe kutholakale izixazululo.





# THE KZN DOE REFLECTS AND PLANS FOR SCALING EARLY GRADE READING IN ISIZULU.



By: Thabile Dlamini

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, in collaboration with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) and VVOB – Education for Development, hosted a three-day workshop on Early Grade Reading Instruction (EGRI) in IsiZulu Post-Orientation Reflection and Planning for Scaling 2026.

This workshop brought together senior management service (SMS) members and teacher development staff from all districts to reflect on the progress of EGRI implementation and to strategise for sustainable scaling across the province.

Over the course of the three days, participants consolidated insights, planned ahead, and strengthened collaboration among education role-players. The workshop included presentations of preliminary research findings, interactive capacity-building sessions, and district planning exercises aimed at enhancing curriculum implementation.

Preliminary findings from ongoing research were shared, offering valuable insights into both the successes and challenges of the current phase of the EGRI rollout. The data confirmed the positive impact the programme is already having on learner performance in priority districts.

Interactive sessions built the capacity of district officials and educators in managing curriculum delivery and early grade reading instruction, ensuring that every child in KwaZulu-Natal receives quality instruction in their mother tongue during the foundational years of learning.

Deputy Director-General for Curriculum Management and Delivery, Mr Mbongiseni Mazibuko, opened the workshop by highlighting its purpose: reflecting on EGRI progress, strengthening collaboration, and charting a path for sustainable scaling of the programme by 2026.

Mr Mazibuko praised the achievements to date, especially the expansion of EGRI into priority districts and early research confirming positive learner outcomes. He also acknowledged the intensified training and support from partners such as VVOB.

“Collaboration remains central to the success of the programme,” he emphasised, expressing appreciation for VVOB’s ongoing partnership.

Ms Thobile Mdlophane from VVOB introduced a monitoring tool to be implemented across districts, circuits, and schools, designed to track improvements among learners and teachers and guide ongoing interventions.

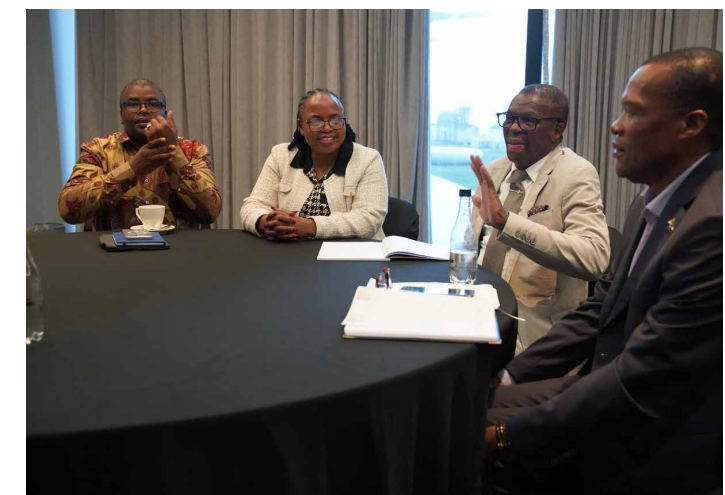
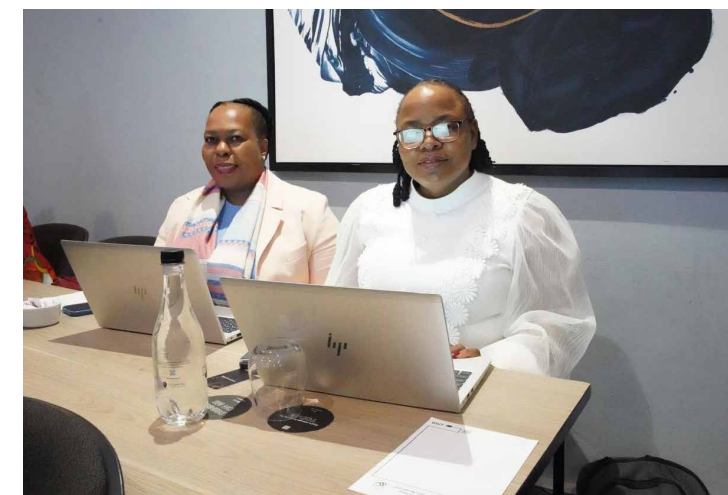
Ms Hanne Huysmans, also from VVOB, clarified the concept of scaling: “Scaling refers to expanding the reach, impact, and sustainability of the intervention beyond its initial pilot or limited implementation.”

Chief Director for District Operations Management, Ms Tembelihle Gumede, addressed participants with a message of unity and shared responsibility. “Embracing the programme and working together will ensure effective implementation in districts. Success depends on understanding relevant policies and prioritising monitoring in the Foundation Phase,” she said. **“We are here for a unified purpose through collaboration.”**

Ms Gumede emphasised that the success of the EGRI programme depends on seamless cooperation among Circuit Management, Teacher Development, and the General Education and Training (GET) Band.

She concluded with a quote from Colin Powell: “There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.”

As the workshop concluded, participants left with a renewed sense of purpose, commitment, and optimism for the future of early grade reading instruction in KwaZulu-Natal.





# THE MEC FOR EDUCATION LEADS DEPARTMENTAL LEADERSHIP AT MINISTERIAL MANAGEMENT MEETING

By: Sibani Ngobese

**T**he KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, led a focused and solution-driven Ministerial Management Meeting at the Archie Gumede Conference Centre in Durban. The meeting brought together senior officials from across the Department to assess progress, align strategic priorities, and enhance coordination across all levels of leadership.

Held as part of the Department's ongoing commitment to effective governance and improved service delivery, the engagement saw participation from heads of directorates, district directors, and programme managers. The platform allowed for robust dialogue on key areas such as district performance, infrastructure development, curriculum coverage, and support to underperforming schools.

In his address, MEC Hlomuka emphasised the importance of accountability, teamwork, and results-driven leadership. He encouraged officials to remain focused on learner achievement and to address challenges with innovation and urgency.

"We must continue to drive excellence in education through collaboration and by delivering practical solutions where they are most needed," he said.

Officials reflected on the Department's performance thus far and reaffirmed their shared commitment to the province's educational goals.

The meeting concluded with clear action points and renewed energy towards improving teaching and learning outcomes across KwaZulu-Natal.

The Department remains committed to creating inclusive, safe, and high-performing school environments, and the meeting served as a reminder of the vital role leadership plays in achieving that vision.





# DBE EDUCATION PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE MEETING BELA ACT

By: Sibani Ngobese

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Education, Mr. Sipho Hlomuka, led a high-level delegation from the province to participate in the National Education Portfolio Committee Meeting on the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act, held at the Southern Sun Cape Sun in Cape Town. Joined by the Head of Department, Mr. Nkosinathi Ngcobo, and Deputy Director-General, Mr. Mbongiseni Mazibuko, MEC Hlomuka took an active role in shaping the national dialogue around one of the most significant education reform bills in recent years. The meeting brought together policymakers, education experts, and provincial leadership to interrogate key provisions of the BELA Bill and its implications for the future of South Africa’s education system.

Earlier in the day, MEC Hlomuka also participated in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) debate on Budget Vote 16: Basic Education, part of the Appropriation Bill discussions in the National Assembly. In his remarks, he reiterated KwaZulu-Natal’s strong support for increased investment in education and emphasized the importance of aligning budget priorities with the needs of learners and teachers on the ground.

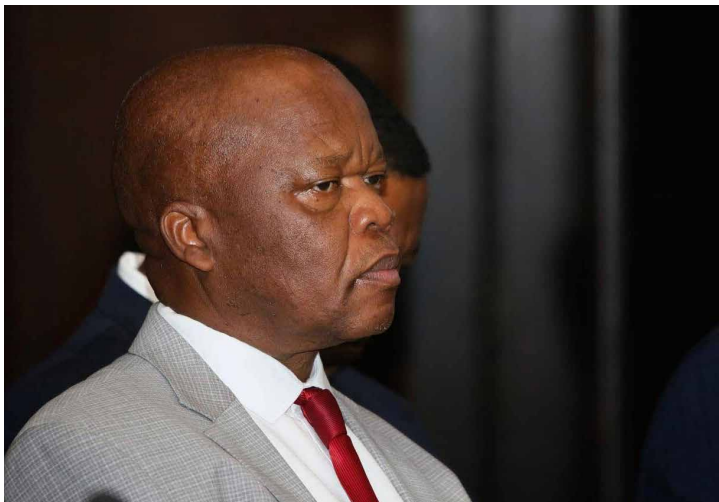
“The BELA Act presented us with an opportunity to modernize and democratize education in South Africa,” Hlomuka said. “KwaZulu-Natal stood ready to implement these reforms and ensured that every child, regardless of background, had access to quality education.”

The BELA Act aimed to amend various aspects of the South African Schools Act and the Employment of Educators Act, focusing on issues such as language policies, admission procedures, home-schooling regulation, and the roles of school governing bodies. Mr. Ngcobo provided critical feedback from the province, highlighting practical considerations for

implementation, especially in rural and under-resourced areas. He stressed the importance of adequate training for school governing bodies and the need for a clear transition plan for proposed regulatory changes.

Deputy Director-General Mazibuko contributed valuable input on administrative readiness and learner data systems, illustrating how KwaZulu-Natal was already leveraging technology to improve school monitoring and accountability. The KwaZulu-Natal delegation’s strong presence at the meeting reflected the province’s commitment to being a proactive stakeholder in shaping national education policy. Their input was expected to influence ongoing deliberations as the BELA Bill moved closer to adoption.

The engagement concluded with a collective commitment from all provinces to work together in ensuring that the legislation, once passed, was implemented efficiently and with the best interest of learners at heart.





# UMBUMBULU CMC RALLIES BEHIND CLASS OF 2025 WITH 100-DAY COUNTDOWN



By: Thabile Dlamini

**W**ith just 100 days to go before the start of the 2025 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations, the uMbumbulu Circuit Management Centre (CMC) hosted a high-spirited countdown event aimed at motivating and preparing learners for the final stretch of the academic year.

The event brought together Grade 12 learners, principals, circuit managers and education officials under one roof to reaffirm their shared commitment to academic excellence. The atmosphere was filled with hope, energy and a clear message: success is possible with focus, support and hard work.

Having achieved an impressive 91 percent pass rate in 2024, uMbumbulu CMC, which includes the Amanzimtoti, Folweni, Mafa and Mbumbulu Central Circuits, has set its sights even higher, targeting a 98 percent pass rate for the Class of 2025. Over 4 600 candidates from 38 high schools across the CMC are registered to write the final examinations this year.

Eight of these schools achieved a 100 percent pass rate in 2024, and the district is determined to expand that success. This year's motivational theme, "Away with Level 1, 2 and 3" is a call for learners to rise above the minimum pass requirements and aim for results that open doors to greater opportunities.

Chief Education Specialist for Circuit Management, Mr Themba Moloi, delivered words of encouragement, urging learners to remain focused and disciplined in the days ahead. "To the Class of 2025, please suspend all other activities and prioritise your studies. Your future depends on the decisions you make now," he said.

District Director for uMlazi, Ms Busi Mahlambi, addressed the learners with heartfelt motivation. "This marks a significant milestone. It is not just a countdown, but a call to action. Your journey to success is entering its final and most critical stage. You have already walked a long road, often filled with challenges. The goal is now within reach," she said.

Stakeholders and school principals echoed a unified message of support, pledging to walk

alongside learners in the final leg of their journey. Learners, in turn, made a collective commitment to academic endeavour and the responsible use of available resources.

The uMlazi District continues to offer structured academic support through several interventions. These include the Teachers Without Borders initiative and a partnership with the University of KwaZulu-Natal, which provides extra lessons and academic reinforcement in high-priority subjects.

These efforts form part of the district's broader strategy to ensure learners not only pass but excel.

As the Class of 2025 enters the final stretch, the message from uMbumbulu CMC is loud and clear: every learner has the potential to succeed, and no one walks this journey alone.





# 2025 WINTER GAMES UNITE LEARNERS THROUGH SPORT AND CULTURE



By: Philakahle Ngubane

**T**he 2025 Winter National School Sport Championships, hosted in Durban, brought together learners from across the country to compete in various sporting codes, including Rugby, Football, and Netball. The event was a collaborative effort between the Department of Basic Education, the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

The week-long tournament showcased not only exceptional sporting talent but also the spirit of unity and cultural diversity among South African learners. The Head of Department for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education expressed appreciation for the opportunity to host such a prestigious event. He noted that the championships provided Mtomuhle Khawulalearners to demonstrate their skills, discipline, and teamwork.

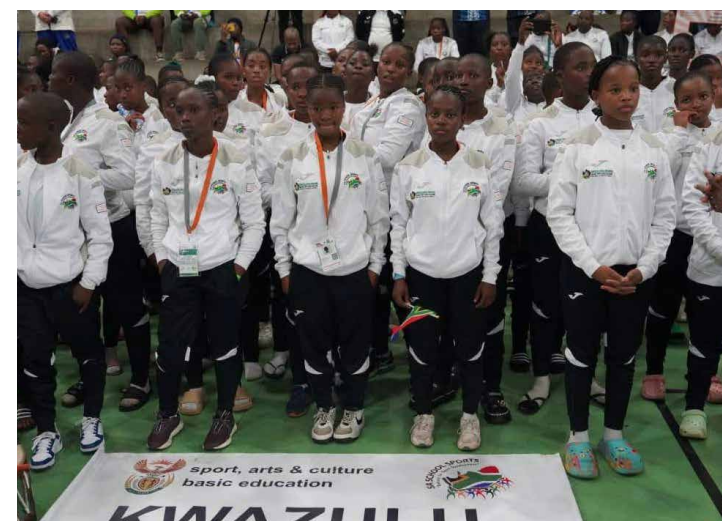
**“A healthy mind indeed resides in a healthy body. The performances on the field proved that our learners are filled with talent,**

**determination, and potential. Well done to all participants, and congratulations to the champions,”** said the HOD.

The MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture, Mr. Mtomuhle Khawula, thanked all stakeholders for honouring the memorandum of understanding between the departments. He praised the learners for their dedication and applauded the smooth running of the games.

“We were pleased with the turnout, the level of competition, and the overall success of the Winter Games. Our learners truly made us proud,” said MEC Khawula.

Beyond the competitions, the event was filled with excitement, team spirit, and entertainment, creating unforgettable memories for participants and supporters alike. The city of Durban came alive as schools, coaches, and families rallied behind the young athletes.





# CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME 2025



By: Theresa Van Niekerk

**T**he Department of Basic Education, in collaboration with VVOB and various partners, hosted a successful three-day Digital Skills Training Programme 2025 from 16 to 18 July at the Coastlands Skye Hotel in Umhlanga. The workshop brought together district officials and educators from across the country, with the shared objective of strengthening digital literacy and promoting the effective use of technology in education.

The workshop opened with welcoming remarks from Ms Ayanda Sithole (VVOB) and Mr Goodman Ndlovu (DBE), both stressing the importance of equipping teachers with digital tools in today's learning environment. Mr Mandla Tshabalala outlined the programme's focus on improving professionalism, digital competence, and lifelong learning among educators.

A wide range of digital tools and platforms were covered. Mr Skhumbuzo Mangaye introduced Microsoft 365 basics, while Mr Richard Ismail presented the AI-powered Reading Coach. Mr Ayanda Khoza demonstrated Microsoft Forms and PowerPoint, and Ms Gugu Mthembu provided training on Excel for tracking learner performance.

Mr Nhlakanipho Madonsela guided attendees through Outlook and Microsoft Teams for communication and virtual classroom management.

Mr Skhumbuzo Mangaye, Acting Chief Director, reminded participants that teaching and learning remain the department's core mission and encouraged educators to make the most of the opportunity to grow their digital skills.

Further sessions included Mr Gerald Roos on DBE's online development platform, and Mr Alberto Lara, who introduced DBEcloud and AI tools for content creation. On Sebothoma Tsamanetion. Ms Tuzana Sophethe (Newsleaders) introduced the DDD App, and Ms Charmaine Nairexplained its impact on district performance. Mr Abel Tsamei (DBE) stressed the value of scalable, well-funded programmes. Mr Sebothoma Tsamanetion. Ms Tuzana Sophethe (SACE) highlighted the importance of submitting proof of completed development activities to earn CPTD points.

On data-driven education, Ms Bongikile Hlela (Newsleaders) introduced the DDD App, and Ms Charmaine Nairexplained its impact on district performance. Mr Abel Tsamei (DBE) stressed the value of scalable, well-funded programmes.

Mr Sebothoma Tsamane (UNISA) provided updates on e-learning labs and Teacher Centre upgrades.

The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks from Mr Goodman Ndlovu, who encouraged all attendees to share their knowledge and empower fellow educators.

"Go expose teachers and learners to methods to improve their reading with meaning and understanding."





# THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HOSTED A MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS DAY TO ENCOURAGE WELLNESS AMONG MALE EMPLOYEE'S

By: Khwezi Mbhele

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education hosted a successful Men's Health Awareness Day as part of its ongoing commitment to employee wellness. The event, held at the Department's provincial offices, formed Gobat of the broader Employee Health and Wellness Programme and focused on addressing health issues affecting male employees.

The initiative created a safe space for male staff to engage openly on matters related to their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Topics discussed included chronic conditions such as prostate cancer, hypertension, and diabetes, as well as mental health challenges like stress, depression, and anxiety.

Assistant Director for Employee Health and Wellness, Ms Happy Goba, welcomed attendees and emphasised the importance of creating platforms where men can learn more about their health and seek support without fear or stigma.

**"Many men are not assessed or treated in time because of fear, stigma, or pressure to appear strong,"** said Gobaa. "This event aimed to break those barriers by promoting awareness, encouraging early detection, and fostering a culture where health is prioritised."

Health professionals were invited to share expert insights and provide on-site screenings, allowing employees to access services and advice that could lead to early intervention. The event also included interactive sessions where men were encouraged to speak freely, ask questions, and take charge of their health.

The programme further highlighted the importance of emotional and psychological wellness, with discussions centred on work-life balance, stress management, and the value of mental health care.

Many attendees expressed appreciation for the initiative, noting that the session provided valuable knowledge and reminded them of the importance of self-care. Some described it as a 'wake-up call' to prioritise their health and seek help when needed. The positive feedback underscored the need for more targeted wellness programmes aimed at supporting men in the workplace.

Through this initiative, the Department reaffirmed its dedication to supporting the overall well-being of its workforce. Men's Health Awareness Day served as a reminder that health education and support are essential to building a resilient and productive workforce.





# MINISTERIAL SCHOOL FUNCTIONALITY AND OVERSIGHT VISIT



By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

On 22 July 2025, marking the start of the third term following the winter holidays, MEC for Education, Mr. Siphso Hlomuka, visited Phoenix Secondary School and Isibonelo High School in the Pinetown District to assess school functionality on the first day back. The purpose of the visit was to ensure that schools resumed smoothly and were fully operational.

Mrs. Thembelihle Gumede, Chief Director of District Operations Management for the Coastal Cluster, emphasized that the initiative was focused on the learner and the classroom where teaching and learning took place.

Phoenix Secondary had 605 learners enrolled, including 63 in Grade 12. Both school principals presented reports outlining their schools' performance, with particular focus on Grade 12 results and readiness for the third term.

In his address, MEC Hlomuka stated that the goal of the visit was to ensure full learner attendance and active teaching from day one.

He stressed the importance of learner presence, especially with fewer than 100 days remaining before the final exams. He commended School Governing Bodies and other stakeholders for their continued support, highlighting that schools were community institutions. He added that the province was aiming to sustain or improve upon last year's pass rate. Schools with pass rates below 70% were engaged earlier this year to uphold educational standards.





# STRENGTHENING READINESS PLANS FOR THE MARITIME SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE



By: Noluthando Zitha

**T**he KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education convened a critical Task Team meeting to assess progress and finalise preparations for the upcoming intake of Grade 8 learners at the Maritime School of Excellence.

The meeting, chaired by Deputy Director-General Mbongiseni Mazibuko from the Department's Curriculum Management and Delivery branch, brought together leaders from key workstreams to present updates, resolve outstanding matters from the March 2025 engagement, and evaluate a detailed readiness checklist.

Workstream leads reported steady progress across various focus areas. Infrastructure, ICT, and boarding facilities were said to be on track, with ongoing upgrades to classrooms, improved accessibility, and the rollout of ICT resources. Human Resources confirmed the recruitment process for educators was underway and that the school's staff establishment had been finalised, with appointment timelines firmly in place.

Further updates highlighted community engagement initiatives and the alignment of subject offerings with regional needs, as shared by the Stakeholder Relations and Subject Packaging team.

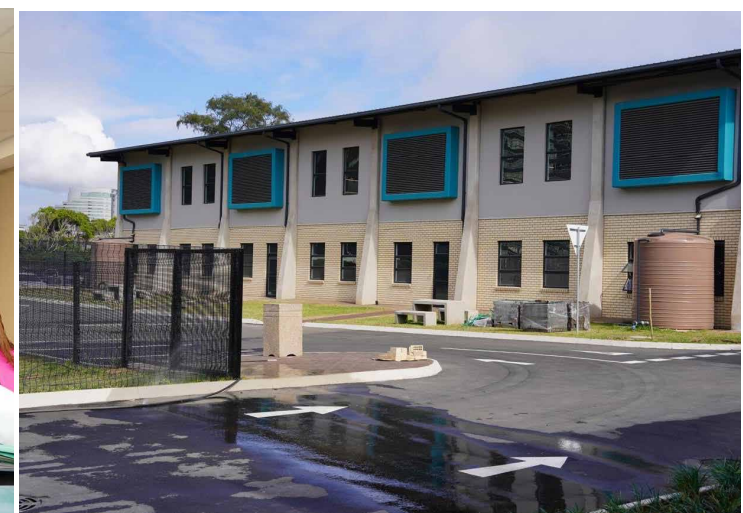
The Curriculum and Learning Support workstream indicated that subject packaging and learning materials met national curriculum standards. Meanwhile, the Governance, Legal Services, and Admissions team addressed developments related to admissions policy, school classification, and governance models.

Communication and Publicity teams outlined strategies aimed at strengthening public awareness and visibility of the school. Financial readiness was also discussed, with reports on budget allocations, fee structuring, and available learner support measures for those qualifying for financial assistance.

A comprehensive readiness checklist was reviewed, covering curriculum approval, recruitment, infrastructure completion, budget

finalisation, and compliance with admissions requirements. Specific responsibilities were assigned to team members, with further progress expected ahead of the next scheduled meeting.

Closing the session, Deputy Director-General Mazibuko emphasised the importance of meeting all set targets in preparation for the 2026 academic year. With focused coordination and consistent momentum, the Maritime School of Excellence is positioning itself to become a leading institution in maritime education within the province.





# PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION SCRIPT CONTROL WORKSHOP



By: Khanyi Mthembu

**T**he KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education hosted a workshop to strengthen Provincial Examination Script Control.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, through the Directorate of Examinations and Administration, held a pivotal workshop aimed at refining the Provincial Examination and Administration Script Control Manual. The workshop brought together delegates from all 12 Districts to discuss, develop, and align strategies that would enhance the security, management, and administration of examination scripts across the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Presiding over the session was the Director of Provincial Examinations and Administration, Mr Edwin Sbusiso Khanyile, who emphasized the critical role that proper script management played in the integrity and credibility of the examination process. "Script management was crucial, as it played a key role in ensuring learners received accurate marks," said Mr Khanyile.

He urged all delegates to prioritize accountability and precision in script handling, highlighting that any discrepancies whether through script loss or inaccurate marking could severely disadvantage

candidates and tarnished the reputation of the Department of Basic Education and Government at large.

Mr Khanyile further emphasized the need to uphold the principles of security, safety, and confidentiality of the new manual. He assured delegates that the latest version included reinforced measures to prevent misplacement or misdirection of examination scripts.

The session also led to the formation of a Script Control Commission, tasked with monitoring and ensuring the consistent application of the manual across all 12 Districts. Delegates collaborated to develop key resolutions, including the recognition of unique operational methods within Districts and the importance of timely submission of updates and information to the Directorate: Provincial Examinations.

The workshop concluded on a note of unity and shared responsibility, with all district representatives committing to the successful rollout and implementation of the revised script control manual. The Department reaffirmed its dedication to continuous engagement and consultation to strengthen examination administration in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.





# KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ENGAGED PRINCIPALS ON CRITICAL SCHOOL CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIONS

By: Sphokazi Zaca & Sinegugu Singcadu

**T**he KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education recently hosted a pivotal engagement session with primary and high school principals, focusing on pressing administrative and technological challenges within the education sector.

uMgungundlovu District Director, Mr. Siqhamo Mabinza, welcomed the attendees and outlined the purpose of the meeting: to foster collaboration and strengthen support for schools across the district.

During the session, principals openly discussed the challenges they faced, particularly in relation to school management, limited resources, and the evolving demands of educational leadership. A key contributor, Ms. Ntokozo Mlaba, Chief Director for Finance, addressed the escalating issue of rising utility costs in schools.

**“We have observed that municipalities are billing schools like business entities, which makes it challenging for schools to pay using their allocated norms and standards,”** she explained.

Ms. Mlaba reassured principals that the Department was actively engaging with municipalities to seek sustainable, long-term solutions. Turning attention to staff wellness, Dr. Nomcebo Mthembu, founder of Medilution Wellness, introduced a programme focused on supporting the mental health of educators.

She emphasized the importance of emotional healing and self-care in the professional lives of teachers. As part of the initiative, a seven-day mental wellness retreat was presented, offering teachers an opportunity to rest, reflect, and re-charge.

Representing the partnership between Vodacom and Africa Tech Group, Katlego highlighted the importance of preparing learners for a digitally advanced, AI-driven future. She stressed the need for both learners and educators to become digitally literate and adaptable to the fast-changing demands of modern classrooms and workspaces.

In closing, on behalf of District Director Mr. Mxolisi Mncwabe, the Chief Education Specialist extended heartfelt thanks to all guest speakers, including representatives from Vodacom, Gamer, Africa Tech Group, Medilution Wellness, and the Department’s Finance Unit, for their valuable contributions.

Principals were encouraged to implement the insights gained, remain committed to tackling school challenges, and collaborate in building well-managed, future-ready learning environments.





# UMGUBHO WOSUKU LUKADOKOTELA UNELSON MANDELA EMNYANGWENI WEZEMFUNDO



By: Philakahle Ngubane

**U**Mnyango weZeMfundo oholwa nguNgqongqoshe uMnu. Sipho Hlomuka ugubhe usuku lwesikhumbuzo sikaDktl uNelson Mandela oyisihlabani somhlaba ngamagalelo akhe okulwela inkulukeko yezwe laseNingizimu Afrika.

LoMnyango uqoke lokusuku ngokuqonda ukuba inyanga kaNtulikazi isho lukhulu ezweni njengalokhu kuyiyona nyanga azalwa ngayo uDktl uNelson Mandela.

“Imfundo iyona engathuthukisa izwe lethu, ishintshi izimo zobubha ezindaweni zabantu bakithi, besifisa ukugubha lolusuku ngomhlaka-18 kepha izikole bezisavalelwe amaholodi asebusika, bekungeke kubekuhle ukugubha ngaphandle kwenu njengoba iqhawe lethu uDktl uMandela wayezithanda kakhulu izingane ekhuthalele nezeMfundo” kubeka uMnu Sipho Hlomuka. Sijabule kakhulu ukubona ukudla

okunomsoco okuphakelwa abantwana bethu, izindlu ezihlazekile kanye nesikole esizengeni eliphezulu endaweni yasemakhaya, lokhu kunguphawu lokuthi UMnyango weZeMfundo usebenza ngokuzikhandla, kuqhuba uMEC Hlomuka.

Ngesikhathi ithimba lezikhulu zoMnyango zihlola amagumbi akulesi sikole, lincome kakhulu inhlanzeko yamakilasi, izindlu zangasese kanye negceke lesikole nosimo sokuphepha njengalokhu kubiywe kahle kule sikole futhi isakhiwo sisesimweni esisezingeni eliphezulu.

Unhloko yoMnyango uMnu. Nkosinathi Ngcobo ulekelele uNgqongqoshe ngesikhathi bependa indawo yokudlala abantwana balesi sikole, badlulela ekhishini lapho belekele abasebenzi abaphekela abafundi ngaphambi kokuba batshale izithombo.

UMhlonishwa uHlomuka ubephethe izicathulu anikele ngazo kubantwama besikole,

kanye nezinsiza kusebenza zokilima ngokuxhaswa uMnyango wezoLimo okungamageja, imbewu, kanye nezichelelo. Ebonga uSekela Mqondisi Jikelele ubonge kakhulu uThishomkhulu uMnu.

Thokozani Mabuda, uMqondisi wesiFunda uMnu. Thanduyise Motha, uMqondisi ehhovisi lenhloko yoMnyango uNksz Neli Mhlongo, uMqondisi Omkhulu uDktl uDavid Chonco, iNhloko yoMnyango ebiqokwe njengoshayeli wohlelo ikakhulukazi ubonge ubuholi obuqotho buka Ngqongqoshe uSipho Hlomuka.





# UNITY FOR SAFE SCHOOLS: A DAY OF ACTION IN KZN



By: Noluthando Zitha & Qinisile Mkhize

The Department of Basic Education, led by Chief Director for Media Liaison Mr Elijah Mhlanga, in partnership with the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education and the South African Police Service (SAPS), rolled out a major school safety campaign as part of the KwaZulu Natal Implementation Action Plan.

The campaign was implemented across two districts, Pinetown and uMgungundlovu, and focused on tackling school-based challenges such as substance abuse, gender-based violence, bullying, the possession of dangerous weapons, and gang-related activities. The initiative also aimed to empower schools to create safer and more nurturing environments for learners.

In the uMgungundlovu District, the delegation visited Smero High School and Nyonithwele High School, while in Pinetown, Siyathuthuka High School, Inanda Newtown Comprehensive School and Iksasalentsha Secondary School were also part of the programme. These visits were supported by key stakeholders, including SAPS, the Department of Social Development, Community Policing Forums (CPFs), and other partners from the education and safety sectors.

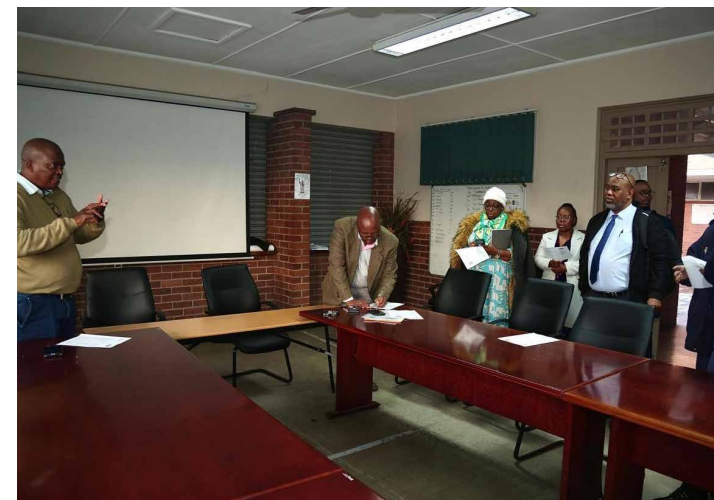
School leadership teams warmly welcomed the delegation, which took part in safety briefings,

learner engagement sessions, and inspections focused on promoting respectful, drug-free, and secure learning environments. A notable highlight was the participation of the SAPS K9 Unit, which conducted thorough searches of learners and school premises to ensure no prohibited items were on site, reinforcing the message of proactive safety enforcement.

School management and safety committees also took part in strategy sessions aimed at embedding safety messaging into school culture through assemblies, peer-led initiatives, and classroom discussions.

The programme was coordinated by a joint task team consisting of representatives from national, provincial, and district levels. Communication units from both SAPS and the Department of Basic Education ensured the campaign received wide media coverage and community engagement. Neighbourhood watch groups, CPF structures, and spiritual crime prevention teams also participated, underscoring the collaborative nature of the initiative.

This Action forms part of a broader national effort to improve safety in priority schools. Through sustained multi-stakeholder collaboration, the Department of Basic Education and its partners reaffirmed their commitment to protecting learners and fostering school environments that are safe, inclusive, and supportive.





# OSS/DDM CABINET DAY FOR KING CETSHWAYO DISTRICT



By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

**U**Ndunankulu wakwaZulu - Natali umhlonishwa Thamisanqa Ntuli uhole ithimba lakhe loNgqongqoshe kuMasipala waNthonjaneni ngaphansi kwesifunda sase King Cetshwayo ukuyohlola ukusebenza kukahulumeni okuwuhlelo lukaSukuma Sakhe

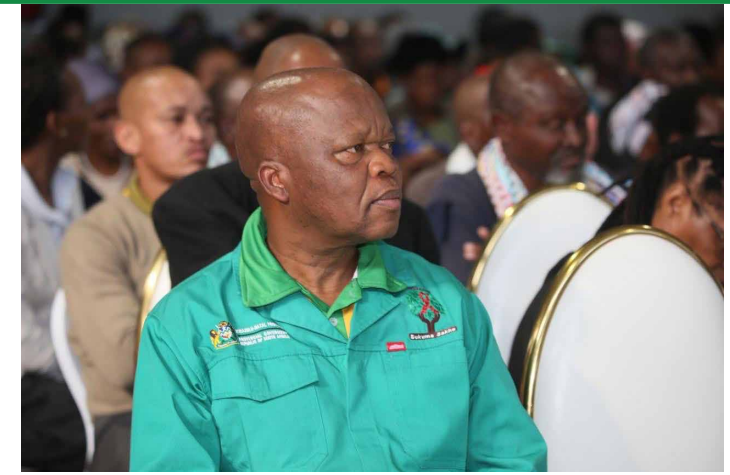
Uhlelo lukaSukuma Sakhe uhlelo kukahulumeni lokuhlolisisa ukusebenza nokuhlola ukuthi intuthuko iyafinyelela kubantu nasemphakathini ukuze kube khona uzinzo emphakathini. Uhulumeni uhlose ukuthi ukusebenza kwakhe kufinyelele ebantwini.

uMasipala waaeMthonjaneni uhanjwelwe oNgqongqoshe bevakashele amawadi ahlukahlukene. uNgqongqoshe weZemfundo uMnumzane Sipho Hlomuka yena ubejutshwe ku Ward 4 endaweni yakwa Magwaza lapho baqale khona usuku lwakhe ekseni ngokuyovakashela Waroom ngennhloso yokuthola ukuthi isebenza kahle futhi iMinyango kahulumeni iyahlanganyela emihlanganweni ukuze zonke izikhalazo ziye eMnyangweni efanelekile.

Ward khansela Sbhongiseni Mthimkhulu wethulele uNgqongqoshe ummbiko ngewadi lonke lapho abalule khona ukuthi awekho amanzi anele endaweni kanye no gesi awukaxhunywa kuyona yonke imizi imigwaqo ehamba phakathi emakhaya eminye mimbi ngendlela emangazayo phinde wabalula nokuthi izingadi zabo ziyalimala izitshalo ngenxa yokuthi izingadi azibiyelwe ngaleyondlela kulula ukuthi izilwane zingena kalula emasimini bese kufa izitshalo

UNgqongqoshe nethimba lakhe babesebedlulela ekhaya lakwa Sibiya khona ward 4 kwa Magwaza lapho umndeni wakwa Sibiya uhlomule ngokwakhelwa indlu ohlelweni lokwakhwa kwezindlu olungaphansi koMnyango wokuhlaliswa kwabantu

Umndeni wakwa Sibiya ujabule kakhulu ukuthola usizo lwendlu ngoba sebezizwa bebuyelwe isithunzi bazizwa benekhaya elihle elinesithunzi. Eohendula uNgqongqoshe uthe “kuyinto enhle ukubona umsebenzi ka Uhulumeni ubonakale namhlanje silethe ithimba emndenini wakwa Sibiya siyabonga kakhulu” kunaba uNgqongqoshe Hlomuka





# KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HOSTS 3-DAY DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME

By: Theresa Van Niekerk

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, in partnership with VVOB – education for development, successfully hosted a three-day Digital Skills Training Programme from 16 to 18 July 2025. The workshop brought together district officials, subject advisors, ICT committee members, and school leadership teams from all 12 districts with the aim of strengthening digital transformation in the education sector.

This strategic initiative is aligned with the Department’s commitment to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning through the effective use of digital tools and resources. Over the course of three days, participants engaged in intensive, hands-on training designed to build their digital competence and confidence.

The sessions focused on a wide range of Microsoft Office tools, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, Outlook, and Forms. Participants were introduced to innovative platforms such as Reading Coach and the DDD Dashboard, which provide support for data-driven instruction, learner monitoring, and targeted interventions.

Beyond the technical skills, the training addressed the integration of digital tools into everyday teaching practices. Topics such as blended learning, digital citizenship, online safety, and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education were discussed in depth. Facilitators encouraged open dialogue and teamwork, creating a space for educators to reflect on current practices and explore new methods of engaging learners in the digital age.

One of the key outcomes of the training was the emphasis on cascading information to schools. All attendees were encouraged to share what they had learned with their colleagues at district and school level. In addition, participants were reminded to register the training with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) to receive Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) points.

The Digital Skills Training Programme forms part of the broader drive by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education to future-proof the province’s education system and bridge the digital divide. As technology continues to shape the world, the Department remains committed to ensuring that both educators and learners are equipped to thrive in a tech-enabled learning environment.





# RISK MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP EMPOWERS BERGVILLE CMC PRINCIPALS



By: Qinisile Mkhize

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, in partnership with the Durban University of Technology (DUT), recently hosted a Risk Management Workshop for principals in the Bergville Circuit Management Centre (CMC) under the uThukela District. During the opening of the workshop, Mr. Mbongwe, CES Circuit Management at Bergville CMC, reminded principals of the importance of professionalism, setting the tone for a constructive and engaging programme.

The workshop was designed to strengthen school leadership by equipping principals with the skills to identify, understand and manage risks that may hinder the delivery of quality education. It also highlighted how a lack of knowledge in certain areas can expose schools and the executive authority to potential litigation, making such training both timely and necessary.

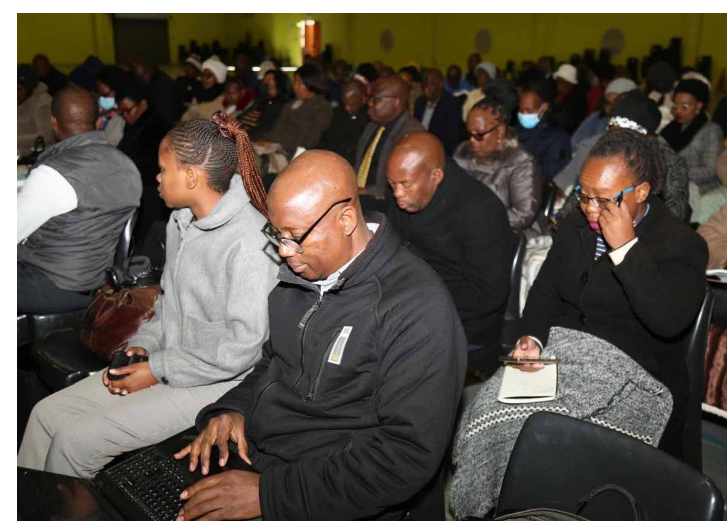
Presentations covered a wide range of topics including Typical Catastrophic Risks, Innovation and Creativity, Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Basics, Outcomes of Good Governance, Critical Risks, the Department of Education's Perspective and the Impact of Risks in Litigation. Importantly, principals were encouraged to

recognise that not all risks are negative as some can create opportunities for growth, innovation and meaningful engagement within schools. Dr. Sikhuthali Nyangintsimbi from DUT provided practical guidance on how principals can begin with the basics of risk management and gradually develop risk registers tailored for their schools.

Reflecting on the workshop, Ms. Dudu Mkhize from the Department's Organisational Development Directorate commended the principals for their participation and positive response. She also expressed gratitude to DUT for their collaboration. "We appreciate DUT for working with us to present this workshop, and we hope that it can be extended to other principals across the province," she said.

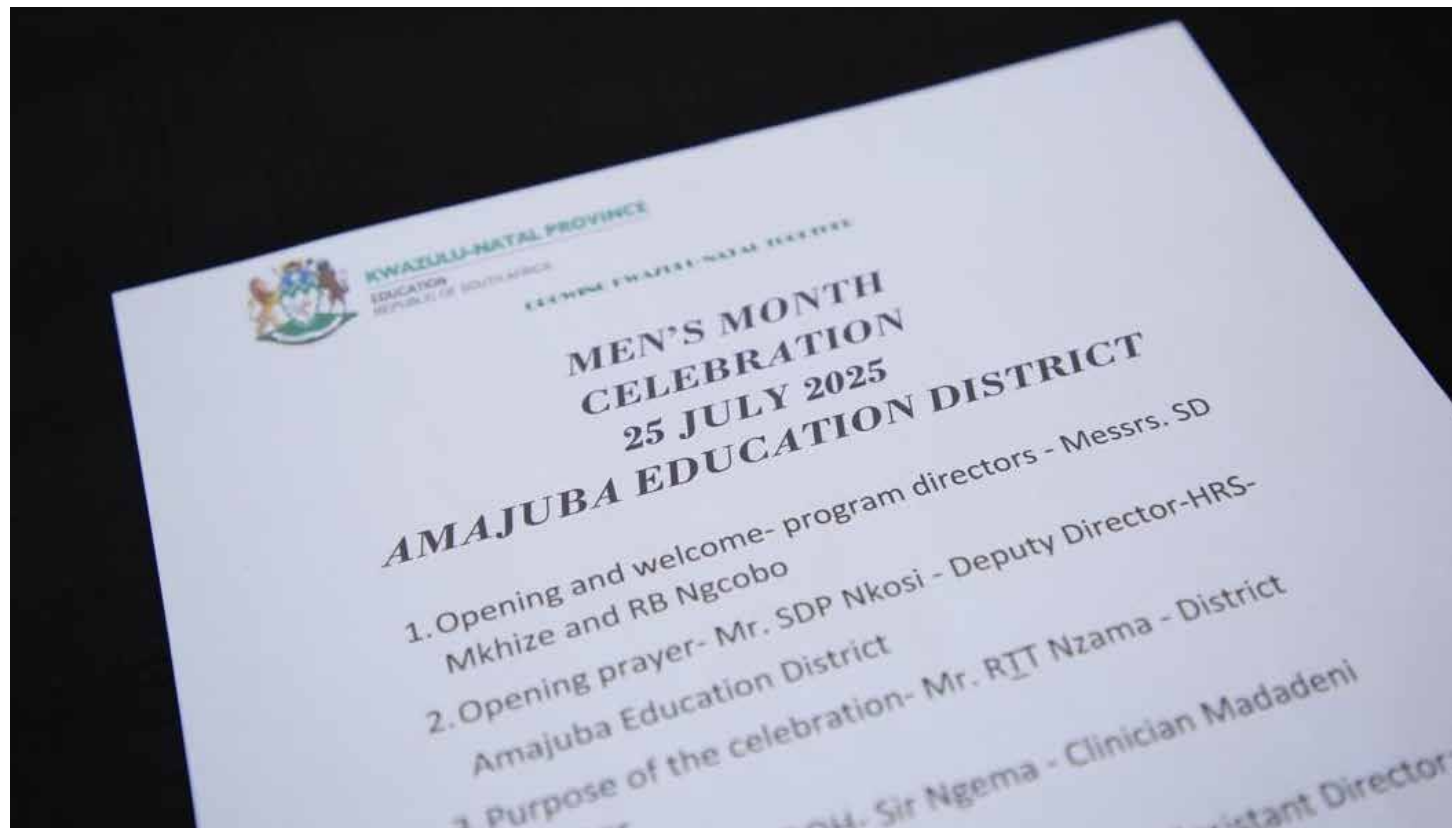
For the Bergville CMC principals, the workshop served as an eye-opener. They committed themselves to strengthening compliance, upholding integrity, maintaining open communication with educators and embracing diverse perspectives, all to ensure the consistent delivery of quality education to learners.

To mark their participation, principals were awarded certificates of attendance.





# CELEBRATION OF MEN'S MONTH IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT



By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

On 25 July 2025, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education organized the Men's Month Celebration event at Ferrum High School within the Amajuba District.

This year's celebration revolves around the theme **"PUSHING TOWARDS BEING A BETTER MAN,"** with participation from several stakeholders, including Sir Ngema, a clinician at Madadeni Hospital; Ms. PT Kunene, Assistant Director of Families from the Department of Social Development; Mr. Sibonelo Zondi, a social worker and Secretary of the Newcastle men's sector; and Mr. Kwanele Dilizo, the Metropolitan Regional Manager.

The Amajuba District Director, Mr. Themis Nzama, expressed the event's intent in his opening statements, stating that "Today, we come together as men to contemplate our roles, responsibilities, and relationships. Let us take this chance to explore topics such as fatherhood, the challenges fathers face, ways to promote positive

parenting, and the effects of mental health on men, along with strategies for managing stress and anxiety," concluded District Director Mr. Themis Nzama.

The celebration ended on a positive note as all participants united in saying "QINA NDODA," which translates to being strong in the face of every challenge.





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