

22 SEPTEMBER 2025

MINISTER GWARUBE ANNOUNCES 10 000 BRONZE ECD REGISTRATIONS AS THE BANA PELE MASS REGISTRATION DRIVE ACHIEVES ITS FIRST MAJOR TARGET

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) is proud to announce that the Bana Pele Early Childhood Development (ECD) Mass Registration Drive has achieved a major milestone: 10 000 ECD centres have been registered and approved – three months ahead of the 31 December 2025 deadline set by the Minister of Basic Education, Ms Siviwe Gwarube, at the start of the year.

When launching the national ECD registration clinics, Minister Gwarube committed the Department to a bold and ambitious target – registering 10 000 ECD centres by year-end. Achieving this milestone ahead of schedule signals the strong momentum behind the campaign and reflects the dedication of practitioners, communities, and partners to placing South Africa’s youngest learners at the heart of development.

The success of the drive is credited to the DBE’s robust advocacy and outreach efforts, including a nationwide radio campaign and the hosting of Bana Pele ECD registration clinics across five provinces. These initiatives have lowered barriers to registration and brought essential government services closer to communities.

This achievement comes at a time when evidence highlights the urgency of improving access to quality early learning. The recently released Thrive by Five Index and other studies show that many of South Africa’s children are not developmentally on track, with 80% lacking foundational literacy skills. Expanding access to ECD is therefore critical to laying the groundwork for lifelong learning, social development, and improved school outcomes.

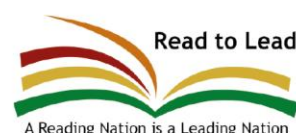
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Minister Gwarube expressed her appreciation to all stakeholders who made this milestone possible:

“This success is a testament to what can be achieved when government, the private sector, civil society, and communities join forces. But we cannot take our foot off the pedal – much work remains to ensure every child has access to quality early learning opportunities.”

The Department is now accelerating the next phase of the Bana Pele ECD Mass Registration Drive, focusing on the remaining four provinces. The Minister will personally lead provincial visits to encourage more ECD practitioners to register. Registered centres gain access to DBE support, including a daily subsidy of R24 per child, as well as learning and teaching materials such as educational toys, colouring books, and reading resources.

The DBE remains resolute in ensuring that every child in South Africa can thrive by five.

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