

24 JANUARY 2026

## DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION COMMEMORATES INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION AND REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO AN INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT AND FUTURE- READY EDUCATION SYSTEM

Today, as South Africa joins the global community in commemorating the International Day of Education under the theme “**The power of youth in co-creating education**”, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) reaffirms education as a fundamental human right, a public good, and a cornerstone for social justice, economic development and national cohesion. This year’s observance underscores the imperative of recognising young people not as passive recipients of education, but as active partners whose voices, creativity and agency are essential to shaping education systems that are equitable, relevant and future-ready.

This year’s commemoration coincides with a period of reflection and progress for the basic education sector. The release of the 2025 National Senior Certificate (NSC) results, which recorded a strong national matric pass rate, once again demonstrated the resilience of the schooling system and the determination of learners, educators and communities across the country. Notably, continued improvements in learner performance in rural and historically disadvantaged schools underscore the impact of sustained investment, targeted support and community-centred interventions in ensuring that no learner is left behind.

At a global moment where education systems are being challenged to respond to widening inequality, rapid technological change and growing social pressures, South Africa continues to champion a clear and deliberate trajectory: ensuring that even the most marginalised communities have access to meaningful educational opportunities that enable personal growth, economic participation and social mobility. Education remains a critical pathway through which young people can improve their life chances and contribute to national development.

The Department’s priorities remain firmly anchored in strengthening the foundations of learning. Early Childhood Development continues to receive focused attention, recognising that access to quality early learning is essential for long-term success in schooling and beyond. In parallel, improving foundational literacy and numeracy, particularly in the early grades, remains a central driver of learner achievement throughout the system.

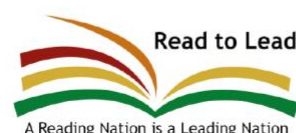
**Acting Director – Communication and Research:** Terence Khala – 081 758 1546

**Media Liaison Officer:** Lukhanyo Vangqa 066 302 1533



**basic education**

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Inclusive education is a cornerstone of the DBE's mandate. The Department is committed to building an education system that is responsive to diversity, supports learners with varying needs and circumstances, and promotes equity, dignity and meaningful participation. Schools must serve as spaces that unite society and expand opportunity, not deepen exclusion.

Educators remain the backbone of the education system. On this International Day of Education, the DBE acknowledges the unwavering commitment of teachers and education support staff and reiterates its focus on teacher development, professional support and wellbeing as essential conditions for quality teaching and learning.

As the education landscape continues to evolve, the Department is strengthening digital learning, skills development and innovation to prepare learners for further education, employment and active citizenship in a changing world. The DBE calls on parents, communities, social partners and all sectors of society to work together in advancing education as a shared national responsibility. Only through collective effort can South Africa build an equitable, resilient and future-ready education system that delivers opportunity for every learner, in every community.

## ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

**Acting Director – Communication and Research:** Terence Khala – 081 758 1546

**Media Liaison Officer:** Lukhanyo Vangqa 066 302 1533



**basic education**

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

