

23 FEBRUARY 2026

MINISTER SIVIWE GWARUBE TO ADDRESS UMLAMBO FOUNDATION'S READING PANEL CONFERENCE

The Minister of Basic Education, Ms Siviwe Gwarube, will tomorrow, Tuesday 24 February deliver a keynote address at the Umlambo Foundation Reading Panel Conference at Melrose Arch, Johannesburg.

The conference, convened by the Umlambo Foundation in partnership with the Reading Panel under the leadership of former Deputy President Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, brings together stakeholders from government, civil society, academia and the private sector to advance collective national efforts to improve early grade reading outcomes in South Africa.

The address by Minister Gwarube is set to highlight the critical importance of foundational literacy as the basis for all subsequent learning and educational progression. The Minister will outline the Department of Basic Education's targeted reforms to strengthen foundational learning, including expanded investment in Early Childhood Development (ECD), the scaling of system-wide literacy interventions, sustained teacher development and curriculum support, and the phased implementation of structured reading approaches across schools.

The engagement forms part of the Department's broader commitment to improving reading proficiency in the Foundation Phase and ensuring that every child learns to read for meaning in the early years of schooling.

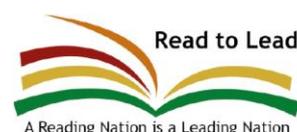
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Media Liaison Officer: Lukhanyo Vangqa 066 302 1533



basic education

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Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA ARE INVITED TO ATTEND AND WILL BE AFFORDED INTERVIEWS AS FOLLOWS:

Event: Reading Panel 2026 Conference

Date: Tomorrow, Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Time: 09:00

Venue: Melrose Arch, 39 Melrose Boulevard, Johannesburg

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

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