

**09 APRIL 2026**

## **Post-Event Media Statement**

### **MINISTER GWARUBE RECEIVES AFRICAN SPELLING BEE TROPHY AS SOUTH AFRICA CHAMPIONS A READING NATION**

The Minister of Basic Education, Ms Siviwe Gwarube, today officially received the African Spelling Bee Championship trophy from South African learners who secured first place at the continental competition held in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Team South Africa competed at the Africa leg of the spelling bee competition, emerging as overall champions, with learner Ashton Singh also achieving second place in the Junior Division .

The Minister congratulated the learners for their outstanding achievement, describing their success as a powerful demonstration of the link between literacy and excellence.

“A reading nation is a winning nation. These learners have shown us that when we cultivate a strong culture of reading, we unlock the full potential of our young people,” said Minister Gwarube.

The Minister emphasised that extra-curricula activities such as spelling bees play an important role in strengthening foundational literacy, encouraging learners to engage deeply with literature, language, to expand their vocabulary, and build confidence.

She further highlighted the importance of partnerships in advancing literacy outcomes, acknowledging the role of A Better Africa and other stakeholders in supporting reading initiatives across the country.

“Government cannot build a reading nation alone. It requires strong partnerships with organisations, schools, teachers, and parents, to ensure that every child has the opportunity to read, learn, and succeed,” the Minister said.

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Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



The Department of Basic Education remains committed to promoting a culture of reading through programmes and collaborations that extend beyond the classroom and inspire lifelong learning.

The trophy presentation ceremony marked a celebration of continental success and a renewed call to action for all South Africans to contribute to building a reading nation and ultimately, a winning nation.

**ENDS**

**ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION**

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