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NATIONAL EDUCATION PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ASSESSES SCHOOL CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS IN UGU AND ILEMBE DISTRICT



PROVINCIAL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT MASS REGISTRATION DRIVE



ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION BEFORE THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (SCOPA)



KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMPLETES BELA TRAIN-THE-TRAINER WORKSHOPS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3. Message from the MEC

4. Message from the HOD

5-6. National Education Portfolio Committee Asseses School Chalanges and Progress in Ugu District

7-8.. National Education Portfolio Committee Asseses School Challanges and Progress in ILembe District

9-10. Umgungundlovu District NSC 2024 Excellence Awards

11-12. Tugela Ferry Circuit 2024 NSC Excellence Awards

13-14 Mkhambathini Municipality NSC Excellence Awards Class of 2024

15-16. World Read Aloud Day 2025 Celebration At Windy Heights Primary School

17-18. The School Sport Memorandum of Agreement and Intergrated Strategic Framework Workshop

19-20. Umzinyathi District Embarks On Strategic Planning Session to Drive Excellence

21-22. Site Visit At Maritime School of Excellence

23- 24. KZN Department of Education Completes Bela Train The Trainer Workshops

25-26. Bela Train The Trainer Gallery

27-28 King Cetshwayo Annual District Excellence Awards

29-30. Umzinyathi District Representative Council of Learners Inaguration Ceremony 2025

31-32. Umgubho Wokusebenza Kahle kuka NSC Ka 2024 Kwisifunda SaseMajuba

33-34. Provincial Early Childhood Development Mass Registration Drive

35-36. King Cetshwayo District on Labour Prohibitions

37-38. Pinetown District 2024 NSC 2024 Excellence Awards

39-40. Amajuba District 2024 NSC Excellence Awards

41-42. Impendle Local Municipality Class of 2024 Matric Excellence Awards

43. Department of Correctional Services Announcements of Results and Awards Ceremony

44. Ilembe District Municipality Class of 2024 NSC Excellence Awards

45. 8th SADTU NSC Excellence Awards

46. Breakfast Meeting for Female Principals

47-48 Kokstad Circuit 15th Excellence Awards Ceremony for NSC 2024

49. Service Delivery Improvement Plan (SDIP) working session

50. uMsinga CMC 2024 NSC Excellence Awards

51-52. Durban Central Circuit Management Center (CMC) Excellence Awards Ceremony

53. Accountability Session Before The Standing Committee On Public Accounts (SCOPA)

54-55. uMgungundlovu District Honours Top-Performing Matric Class of 2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE MEC
MR. S.E. HLOMUKA



As we reflect on the past month, we take immense pride in the strides made in advancing education across KwaZulu-Natal. This edition of our publication captures a series of impactful initiatives that underscore our commitment to excellence, collaboration, and accountability in the sector.

One of the key highlights was the Matric Excellence Awards held across all 12 districts and various municipalities. These ceremonies celebrated the outstanding achievements of the Class of 2024, showcasing the resilience and dedication of our learners, educators, and stakeholders. Their success is a testament to the effectiveness of our collective efforts in improving learner outcomes.

In the realm of school sports, we took a significant step forward by signing the School Sports Memorandum Agreement and Integrated Framework. This partnership will ensure that sports development is prioritized as an integral part of holistic learner growth, fostering discipline, teamwork, and excellence both in academics and athletics.

Additionally, we successfully completed the Bela Train-the-Trainer Workshops across all 12 districts. This capacity-building initiative plays a pivotal role in equipping educators with the necessary tools and methodologies to improve literacy and numeracy skills in our schools.

Accountability and good governance remain at the heart of our operations. This month, the Department of Education appeared before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) to provide a comprehensive account of our financial management and performance Transparency and fiscal discipline are essential in ensuring that resources are utilized effectively for the benefit of our learners.

Furthermore, we welcomed the National Education Portfolio Committee on an oversight visit, demonstrating our commitment to open dialogue and continuous improvement. Their insights and recommendations will further guide us in addressing challenges and enhancing service delivery within the department.

It is such an honor to receive uplifting acknowledgement from the honourable Premier Thamisanqa Ntuli for my leadership and the department's outstanding achievements in his 2025 State of the Province Address. In his speech, the Premier highlighted the department's success, reaffirming the government's commitment to improving school infrastructure, reducing dropout rates, and ensuring access to quality education for all learners. He further commended the matric pass rate which reached a record breaking of 89.5% in 2024, with all districts achieving over 80% which made us maintain position number 2 at National level.

These activities reflect our unwavering dedication to building a robust and dynamic education system in KwaZulu-Natal. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all stakeholders who continue to contribute to the success of our learners and the advancement of education in our province.

Let us remain steadfast in our mission to deliver quality education for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOD
MR. G.N. NGCOBO



I am honoured to convey this message through our communication platform at a pivotal time when our learners are diligently preparing for their upcoming first term assessments across all grades.

As a Department, our vision is to establish ourselves as an innovative hub for quality teaching and learning, producing learners who are well prepared to seize opportunities for lifelong success. In this context, it is imperative to acknowledge the exceptional efforts of the Early Childhood Development Directorate as they launch the Mass Registration Drive Initiative.

This initiative is crucial for ensuring that excellence is cultivated not only in Grade 12 but also in the formative years of our learners' educational journey. It underlines the importance of compliance and addresses the challenges outlined in legislation established by the Republic of South Africa, particularly the Children's Act.

In the KwaZulu-Natal Circular 26 of 2025, the Department has outlined comprehensive guidelines for managing schools and offices during storm or flood events. This circular highlights the Department's commitment to effectively oversee and manage all Public Ordinary Schools, including those that cater to learners with special needs.

The importance of adhering to established protocols during occurrences of extreme rainfall, strong winds, or other natural disasters that could compromise the safety of students, educators, and officials is emphasized.

It is crucial to acknowledge that infrastructure damage may impede access to schools for both learners and educators. This disruption can also affect the timely delivery of essential food items needed for learner feeding programmes.

School principals are encouraged to maintain open communication with parents to promote caution regarding sending children to school during such conditions.

Employees in office settings should exercise prudence prior to departing their homes, and those already present in departmental buildings are advised to remain until it is deemed safe to leave.

In closing, I express my profound gratitude to our learners and educators for their unwavering commitment. Their exemplary dedication reflects the highest standards of professionalism and is instrumental in fostering a successful future for our learners within a supportive and conducive classroom environment.

NATIONAL EDUCATION PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ASSESSES SCHOOL CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS IN UGU DISTRICT

By: Team Philakahle & Xoli

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education recently hosted the Basic Education Portfolio Committee for a series of oversight visits across various educational institutions in the province. Led by MEC for Education Mr Sipho Hlomuka and Head of Department (HOD) Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo, the delegation included Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs), and departmental officials.

The first visit took place at Nositha Primary School in the Margate Circuit with an enrollment of 534 learning, including 48 in Grade R. The school currently utilizes 9 classrooms, supplemented by 2 mobile classrooms. Principal Ms Thembisile Nqoko presented the school's profile
.
Discussions centered on challenges such as overcrowding, infrastructure shortages, and the need for additional classrooms and ablution facilities. Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Ms Joy Maimela raised concerns over the overcrowding in the Grade R classroom and the lack of a library and Coding and Robotics resources. A walkabout was conducted to assess the school's conditions.

The second visit was to Harding Special School, which caters to 132 learners with special needs. Principal Ms Nonkululeko Ngcobo highlighted concerns, including a lack of support staff, inadequate ablution facilities near classrooms, and a shortage of security personnel. The committee emphasized the urgency of addressing these issues to enhance learning conditions. HOD Mr Ngcobo provided insights into the department's financial status and assured that additional ablution facilities would be prioritized. Ms Maimela commended Principal Ngcobo and the School Management Team for their dedication.

The final visit of the day was to Nomnandi Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centre, also in the Ugu District. Managed by Supervisor Ms Thandekile Shange, the centre has 5 staff members and 5 classrooms divided by age groups. The facility, which accommodates 85 early childhood development learners, requires infrastructural support, including fencing, additional buildings, and improved ablution facilities. Ms Maimela inquired about the centre's needs, and Ms Shange noted that while they occasionally experience water shortages, local authorities provide assistance when needed. The visit concluded with a discussion on how best to support the ECD sector.

Following the Ugu District school visits, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Basic Education convened a debriefing meeting at Anthony Lembede MST Academy. The meeting, attended by MEC Hlomuka, HOD Ngcobo, KZN Provincial Treasury HOD Ms Carol Coetzee, school principals, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), Circuit Managers, and Ilembe District Director Dr Musawakhe Madondo, focused on addressing the challenges observed during the oversight visits.

Committee Chairperson Ms Maimela invited HOD Mr Ngcobo to present an overall report on education programmes, budget, and performance, covering key areas such as learner admission, ECD, NSC results, curriculum, ICT integration, rural and inclusive education, SGB functionality , and Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) provision. This was followed by a budget presentation from Treasury HOD Ms Coetzee, outlining financial allocations and strategies for improving resource distribution across the province.

The debriefing marked a crucial step in ensuring that identified challenges are addressed through strategic planning and budgetary considerations. The committee reaffirmed its commitment to working with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education to enhance learning conditions, improve infrastructure, and strengthen inclusive education initiatives.















NATIONAL EDUCATION PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ASSESSES SCHOOL CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS IN ILEMBE DISTRICT

By: Mbaliyabenguni & Qinisile

From 26 to 27 February 2025, the National and Provincial Education Portfolio Committee conducted oversight visits to schools in the iLembe District. The visits aimed to assess infrastructure, learning conditions, and overall functionality while engaging with school leaders, educators, and department officials.

At Groutville High School, Principal Mr Simphiwe Gumede highlighted key issues such as overcrowding, infrastructure challenges, school safety, and social ills, including bullying and substance abuse. The Honorable Joy Maimela emphasized the importance of monitoring the education system and commended schools for excelling despite budget limitations. MEC for Education Mr Sipho Hlomuka acknowledged the sector's challenges while praising educators for their dedication.

Stanger Training Center (LSEN), catering to 243 learners with special needs, presented its challenges, including a shortage of support staff and transport issues affecting attendance. The Portfolio Committee commended the school's maintenance and efforts to secure donations for infrastructure and learning resources.

At Stanger Manor Secondary School, discussions focused on learning and teaching materials (LTSM), the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), and concerns such as overcrowding, safety, and social ills. Acting Principal Mr Anstel Francis led the engagement, while MEC Hlomuka and HOD Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo emphasized the collective responsibility in addressing education challenges.

The committee also visited Thokozani Early Childhood Development Centre (ECD) and Chief Ngonyama Technical High School. Thokozani ECD, managed by Ms Lungile Zulu requires additional infrastructure support, including fencing and more ablution facilities. At Chief Ngonyama Technical High School, Principal Mr Laurance Vusimuzi Ncube presented issues related to curriculum, infrastructure, learner transport, and school resources.

Concluding the oversight, the committee visited Esidumbini Primary School, where Principal Mr Morgan Ximba highlighted its academic success and the need for a library, media center, and laboratory to enhance learning. Chairperson Mr Futsepo Louw urged financial discipline and emphasized that addressing learners' needs requires collaboration and empathy.

The committee's findings will be compiled into a report for Parliament to inform future interventions and improvements in KwaZulu-Natal's education sector.















UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT 2024 NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS



By: Qinisile Mkhize

On 4 February 2025, the Department of Education under uMgungundlovu District, in partnership with the uMgungundlovu District Municipality and the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council, hosted an awards function to celebrate the district's achievement of 89.3% in the 2024 NSC.

The event was graced by His Worship, the Mayor of uMgungundlovu District Municipality, Cllr Mzi Zuma, and the Department of Education uMgungundlovu District Director, Mr Sqhamo Mabinza.

Learners had the pleasure of being addressed by their sponsors and received motivation from the KZCC.

Cllr Zuma thanked all the sponsors for their concerted efforts in ensuring that the awards ceremony was a great success in recognizing excellence and hard work. "We, as leaders in government, might have a vision of emancipation, but we do not have all the resources to see it through. Hence, partnerships with various stakeholders are important," said Cllr Zuma.

He further urged all the learners to remain focused and disciplined and wished them well in their future endeavors.

The top 10 learners of the district received laptops and registration fees, while others were awarded full bursaries to study at institutions of their choice.

















TUGELA FERRY CIRCUIT 2024 NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS



By: Philakahle Ngubane

Tugela Ferry Circuit, under uMsinga CMC in uMzinyathi District, hosted an awards ceremony in celebration of the 2024 matric results.

Mr Zitha Buthelezi of the Tugela Ferry Circuit, in his delivery of the purpose of the day, highlighted the need to celebrate excellence and recognize good results. “The overall pass percentage for the 2024 NSC results in Tugela Ferry is 87.6%, which is a steady improvement from the previous year. We appreciate the good work done by both teachers and learners,” he said.

Cllr. Doctor Myeza of the uMsinga Local Municipality thanked the teachers for working beyond the call of duty and dedicating their time to offering extra tuition to learners during holidays and weekends.

In attendance were Mr Bongani Ntombela, CES for uMsinga CMC, Inkosi Thokozani Mabaso of the Baso Traditional Council, district officials, local municipality officials, teachers, organized labor representatives, SGBs, sponsors, and parents.

The glamorous event awarded top achievers and teachers under Tugela Ferry Circuit with trophies, certificates, and gifts, which were gratefully received by the proud awardees. Among those honored was Nkosi Siboniso from Mawele High School, who excelled in Mathematics and Physical Science. Mbatha Mzuvele from Maweleni High School was recognized for his outstanding performance in Accounting, while Myeni Nokubonga from Mabaso Secondary received an award for excelling in First Additional Language. Shezi Alwande from Mabaso Secondary School was celebrated for achieving top results in Life Science and Agricultural Science. The highlight of the event was the recognition of Mzuvele Mbatha from Maweleni High School as the Overall Top Achiever for the 2024 NSC results.













MKHAMBATHINI MUNICIPALITY NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS CLASS OF 2024



By: Mbali Magwaza

On 5 February 2025, the Mkhambathini Local Municipality, under the leadership of its Mayor, Clllr. Nhlakanipho Ntombela, together with the Department of Education, hosted the Matric Awards Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of the Mkhambathini and Mid-Illovo Circuits for achieving the pass rates of 84.7% and 88.8%, respectively.

The aim of this prestigious awards ceremony was to honour and acknowledge the outstanding contributions of educators and learners from the Class of 2024.

“We give recognition to the learners who achieved outstanding results and to the teachers who ensured that they reached their full potential. The hard work and perseverance of the learners have finally paid off. The municipality has also assisted over 25 learners with registration fees,” said Mr Ntombela.

Top-performing learners received laptops and trophies, while 3 learners were awarded book vouchers valued at R22,000.





















WORLD READ ALOUD DAY 2025 CELEBRATION AT WINDY HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

By: Silindile Zungu

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, through its Education Library and Information Technology Services (ELITS) Directorate, in partnership with Nal'ibali, Room to Read, the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), and Windy Heights Primary School, proudly led the World Read Aloud Day (WRAD) 2025 celebration at Windy Heights Primary School in the Umlazi District under Isipingo CMC.

This annual global reading initiative promotes reading for meaning and understanding while enhancing learners' language proficiencies in KwaZulu-Natal. The event reaffirmed the department's commitment to promoting a culture of reading and ensuring that learners have access to literacy resources that support their academic growth.

Representing the department, ELITS official Mr Thandanani Mavundla emphasized the fundamental role of reading in shaping young minds. He highlighted that literacy is not only an academic tool but also a powerful instrument for personal development and success. "Reading can do many things for a person. It is important for every one of us to feed our minds, and that is done through reading," he said. He further encouraged schools to actively promote reading and embark on literacy programmes that engage learners beyond the classroom. Drawing from an African proverb, he remarked, "When kings lose direction, they become servants," underscoring the idea that knowledge empowers individuals to lead and shape their future

Principal Ms Thembekile Makhanya expressed her gratitude to the Department of Education for choosing Windy Heights Primary School as the host of this significant event. She acknowledged the department's continuous support in strengthening literacy initiatives and ensuring that schools are equipped with reading materials.

The celebration also featured a special moment when Cambridge donated a collection of library books to Windy Heights Primary School in honor of the official opening of their school library, scheduled for February 14, 2025. This donation highlights the importance of nurturing a passion for reading and education within the community, especially as the school takes a crucial step in enhancing resources for its learners.















THE SCHOOL SPORT MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT & INTEGRATED STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK WORKSHOP

By: Xolisile Tshezi

The Department of Basic Education, together with the Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture, hosted a 2-day School Sport Memorandum of Agreement & Integrated Strategic Framework Workshop.

Speakers included the HOD for Education, Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo; MEC for Sport, Arts, and Culture, Honorable Mntomuhle Khawula; HOD for Sport, Arts, and Culture, Ms Thobile Sifunda; President of KZN Sport Confederation, Mr Thami Mchunu; Chief Director for Active Nation, Teboho Thebehae; Chief Director for KZN DOE Co-Curricular, Ms Gugulethu Madlala; Former Chief Director for School Enrichment, Mr Vijay Baram; and Empangeni High School Principal, Mr Sizwe Zwane.

The workshop began with Dr Thobile Sifunda, HOD for Sport, Arts, and Culture, welcoming all attendees and outlining the workshop's purpose, which was to develop the most functional and productive strategy for integrating sports and arts and culture in schools. KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's Head of Department, Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo, expressed excitement about the partnership, emphasizing the importance of sports, especially as Thursdays are marked as Sports Day in all schools.

MEC Khawula also emphasized the importance of supporting learners in sports. He stressed that every child in the province should have access to sports and cultural activities, including special schools, which also play a key role.

Mr Thami Mchunu, President of the KZN Sport Confederation, shared his personal experience of getting involved in sports as a child.

He encouraged everyone to seize the opportunity to be part of strategic sports planning, highlighting how sports can positively change one's life. He also emphasized that identifying talent at a young age, supporting the child, and closely monitoring their development not only enhances their potential but helps keep them out of crime.

Teboho Thebehae, Chief Director for Active Nation, presented the School Sport Roadmap, focusing not only on the province but on a national level. He highlighted the government's priority of rolling out sports equipment and attire for minority sports in rural areas. He also mentioned Project 350, where South Africa will send a contingent of 300 athletes and 50 Paralympic athletes to the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in the USA.

A school in the King Cetshwayo District, Empangeni High School, was recognized for its exceptional extracurricular activities, making the school highly sought after for admissions due to its participation in sports and culture. Mr Zwane, the school principal, shared strategies for success in both academics and sports, emphasizing the crucial role of leadership in schools. Additionally, the school offers subjects like marine studies, economics, and robotics coding. The school's success is driven by discipline and proper uniform attire.

The workshop concluded with a discussion on the outcomes of the commissions, each presented by its facilitator. The key topics covered included the coordination of an integrated Sport, Arts, and Culture Programme in schools, the establishment of leagues through the Mass Participation Programme, the role of federations and school structures in implementing school sports programmes, and talent identification, development pathways, and progression. Emphasis was placed on linking School Sport Academies, club development, and high performance.











UMZINYATHI DISTRICT EMBARKS ON STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION TO DRIVE EXCELLENCE



By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

The uMzinyathi District recently hosted a two-day planning session, themed "Continuous Improvement Operational Excellence." The event, organized by the Department of Education, aimed to drive the district's performance to 100%, with no results below 95% quality.

On Day 1, February 10, 2025, notable participants, including Chief Directors and Directors from various departments, gathered at the uMzinyathi District Teachers Development Centre. The District Director, Mr Siphiwe Kheswa, welcomed all attendees and emphasized the significance of collaboration among stakeholders.

Mr Kheswa highlighted the district's exceptional performance over the past three years, with pass rates of 79.8% in 2022, 86.6% in 2023, and 89.1% in 2024. He attributed this success to effective planning, teamwork, and the commitment of educators, learners, and parents.

The Chief Director of District Operations overseeing the Midlands Cluster, Dr David Sibonakaliso Chonco, expressed appreciation for being part of the meeting and applauded the district for its endeavors in achieving favorable and high-quality outcomes in the 2024 NSC Examinations. Dr Chonco noted that the district had observed a 100% increase in schools throughout the district, with educators achieving positive outcomes despite challenges.

The meeting featured informative presentations from various stakeholders, including the Strategic Planning Monitoring and Evaluation section, the Curriculum Management and Human Resources Directorate at Head Office, representatives from unions, and the business sector.

On Day 2, February 11, 2025, the focus shifted to commissions addressing a wide range of topics, including examinations, curriculum support, leadership, management, communication, governance, relations, quality in teaching and learning, educational development, curriculum implementation, resources, student success, school safety, school facilities, and parental involvement.

In his closing remarks, Mr Kheswa thanked everyone who played a part in the successful organization of the planning meeting. He stressed the importance of working together to drive growth in the district, emphasizing that collective efforts are necessary to achieve the desired outcomes.

The uMzinyathi District is committed to providing quality education and driving excellence in all aspects of its operations. The strategic planning session marked a significant milestone in the district's journey toward achieving its goals and improving the lives of its residents.













SITE VISIT AT MARITIME SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE



By: Noluthando Zitha

Ms Weziwe Hadebe, the Deputy Director-General of Operational Services for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, led a crucial meeting and a detailed site visit with the contractors of the new Maritime School of Excellence, located in the heart of KwaZulu-Natal. The purpose of this visit was to thoroughly assess the current status of the infrastructure, the procurement of furniture, and the overall commissioning of the project, ensuring that every aspect is on track for completion.

Mr Buyani Ndungane, the implementing agent from the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), represented Mr Vusi Khumalo and shared his enthusiasm about the work accomplished by the contractors. He emphasized that the Maritime School of Excellence is not just another educational facility; it is a pioneering institution, the first of its kind in KwaZulu-Natal, aimed at transforming maritime education and training in the region.

The GVK project manager provided an insightful report on the construction challenges encountered, which included local community unrest and severe weather conditions that delayed progress. These issues, however, have been met with resilience

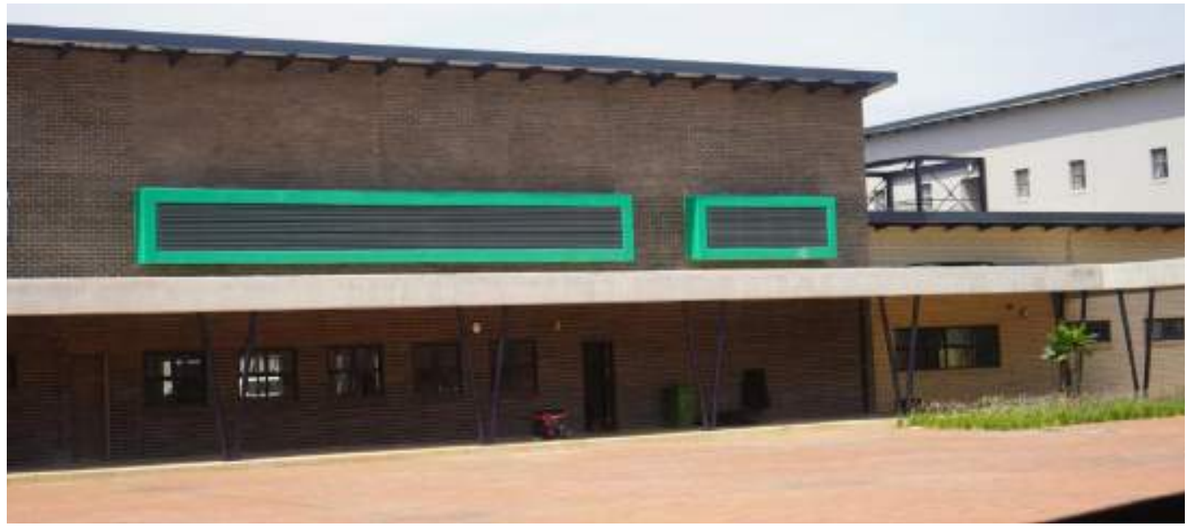
Mr Ronald Sithole presented an encouraging progress report, highlighting that the project is currently at 92% completion. He detailed how challenges regarding the procurement and delivery of furniture have been effectively resolved. The project has generated a significant positive impact, creating 182 job opportunities since its inception. Notably, it has inclusively employed five individuals with disabilities and engaged 13 different contractors to foster local economic growth. The anticipated opening date of the school is set for July 25, 2025, promising a new chapter in vocational training.

Director Ms Lindelwa Sithole elaborated on the extensive procurement plans for furniture, detailing that a total of 720 pieces will be acquired. Each classroom will accommodate between 20 to 30 multipurpose desks, and specialized furniture will be provided for 10 special classes, which includes equipment for a state-of-the-art computer lab, ergonomic lab chairs, and essential items for the media centre. Moreover, the dormitories will be furnished with beds, refrigerators, and other necessary a menities to create a comfortable living e nvironment for learners.

The site visit was rounded off with an informative walk-through of the completed dormitory rooms, the spacious dining hall, and the advanced simulation room, all of which have been finalized and commissioned, marking significant milestones in the project's journey and reinforcing the vision of excellence in maritime education.











KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMPLETES BELA TRAIN-THE-TRAINER WORKSHOPS

By: Nokukhanya Mthembu; Silindile Zungu; Qinisile Mkhize & Xoli Thompson

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has concluded its series of Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act Train-the-Trainer workshops. These workshops were designed to equip officials across the province with the knowledge necessary to understand and implement the Act. The initiative consisted of four strategically located workshops to maximize reach and impact.

The first session, held on February 14, 2025, simultaneously trained officials from the Umlazi, Ugu, and Pinetown Districts. A second workshop followed on February 18 in the King Cetshwayo District, with participants from Zululand and uMkhanyakude also attending. On February 19, Ixopo Primary School hosted the third session, serving officials from the uMgungundlovu, Ugu, and Harry Gwala Districts.

The final workshop took place on February 20, 2025, at Sarel Cilliers Secondary School in Glencoe. This session brought together officials from the uMzinyathi, uThukela, and Amajuba Districts, underscoring the department's commitment to comprehensive and widespread training.

These workshops prepared government officials, circuit managers, educators, and employee relations personnel to understand the Act's key changes and their implications for school management. Participants will now disseminate this knowledge to principals and School Governing Bodies (SGBs), ensuring that all schools in the province are aligned with the new legislation.

BELA training focused on key amendments to the South African Schools Act, impacting learner affairs and school governance.

The session featured insightful presentations by Mr Sikhumbuzo Mangaye, Acting Chief Director: Curriculum Development Programs, Advocate Dlamini, DCES: Learner Affairs, and Mr Sfiso Mthethwa, Director: Governance and Management.

BELA training focused on key amendments to the South African Schools Act, impacting learner affairs and school governance. The session featured insightful presentations by Mr Sikhumbuzo Mangaye, Acting Chief Director: Curriculum Development Programs, Advocate Dlamini, DCES: Learner Affairs, and Mr Sfiso Mthethwa, Director: Governance and Management.

Key Definitions Impacting School Management

The amendment now explicitly defines basic education as including Grade R to Grade 12, reinforcing the state's obligation to provide education at all these levels.

To enhance transparency in employment benefits, the Act now formally defines non-monetary benefits provided to educators under the Employment of Educators Act. These include exclusive private use of a vehicle, free accommodation, cell phones (including personal use), holiday benefits, and groceries and garden services. This ensures that all financial and non-financial benefits received by educators are properly regulated to prevent misuse and conflicts of interest.

Strengthening Learner Protection – Ban on Corporal Punishment

The BELA Act reinforces the ban on corporal punishment, explicitly listing prohibited disciplinary practices such as hitting, smacking, slapping, kicking, shaking, or pushing learners, forcing learners into physically uncomfortable positions, and denying meals, shelter, or toilet access as punishment. "This amendment leaves no room for misinterpretation. All forms of corporal punishment, including indirect physical or psychological abuse, are illegal," said Mr Mangaye.

School Admissions Policy

Mr Mangaye elaborated on the amendments regarding school admissions, emphasizing that the Head of Department now has final authority over learner admissions, ensuring schools cannot implement policies that unfairly exclude learners. Key provisions include that SGBs must align their policies with the community's educational needs, admissions policies must be reviewed every three years, and learners cannot be unfairly excluded based on outdated policies.

Language Policy: Adapting to Community Needs

Building on landmark cases like Hoërskool Ermelo, the Act requires schools to adjust language policies where necessary to accommodate diverse learners. Schools must consider equity, available classrooms, and community demographics, ensure changes follow a fair consultation process, and recognize that no learner should be excluded due to language barriers.

Strengthening Education Administration

Additional key definitions introduced under the BELA Act include defining an 'Education District' as a specific administrative area within each province to improve service delivery, 'Home Education' as a structured learning program outside formal schooling ensuring parents meet curriculum requirements, and 'Required Documents' for learners, which now clarifies the exact documents needed for South African, foreign, refugee, and asylum-seeker learners to standardize admissions across all schools.

Strengthening School Discipline & Safety

Following Mr Mangaye's presentation, Advocate Dlamini outlined critical amendments to Section 8A of the South African Schools Act, 1996, addressing learner discipline and safety.

The Act prohibits dangerous objects and drugs on school premises unless authorized by the principal for educational purposes. Principals may conduct random searches for dangerous objects, drugs, or alcohol, and non-invasive testing (such as urine tests) may be used if there is a fair and reasonable suspicion of substance use. A learner may face disciplinary action if found in possession of banned substances. Any search or test must be fair, reasonable, and aligned with constitutional principles.

Strengthening Information Management in Schools

Following Advocate Dlamini's presentation, Mr S.W. Mthethwa, Director of Curriculum Management, addressed the critical amendments to Sections 16 to 32 of the BELA Act, highlighting their role in ensuring a smoother flow of information transfer during teaching and learning. The amendments include streamlined information transfer, with schools required to follow standardized guidelines for reporting, record-keeping, and data sharing. There is a compliance mandate where failure to adhere to these provisions could result in disciplinary action. Enhanced communication protocols have been established for curriculum changes, learner performance, and resource allocation. Schools will also undergo audits to ensure compliance with the new regulations. "These amendments are not optional; they are mandatory. Schools must comply to avoid finding themselves in trouble. The goal is to create a seamless flow of information that supports effective teaching and learning," said Mr Mthethwa.

Reflecting on the two-day training, Advocate Dlamini emphasized that the BELA Act is not just about legal compliance; it is about ensuring fairness, inclusivity, and effective school governance. These amendments provide clearer regulations to strengthen the education system and protect learners' rights. The workshop successfully equipped district officials with the knowledge and tools to implement the BELA Act effectively across KwaZulu-Natal.

























KING CETSHWAYO ANNUAL DISTRICT EXCELLENCE AWARDS

By: Noluthando Zitha

The King Cetshwayo District recently convened its annual District Excellence Awards to recognize the exemplary achievements of the class of 2024 in the National Senior Certificate Examinations.

District Director Ms Weziwe Nzama expressed her gratitude for the accomplishments achieved during the year. The academic year concluded on a notable note, with 19,000 NSC candidates and 146 out of 200 schools surpassing the district's overall pass rate. The Circuit Management Centres recorded pass rates exceeding 90%, while the percentage of learners achieving bachelor passes rose from 40% in 2022 to 54% in 2024, contributing positively to the provincial and national pass rates.

Ms Nzama emphasized that this event c elebrates the dedication exhibited by learners, educators, and parents alike. She also u nderscored the significance of establishing a robust foundation for learners during the Early Development stage, critical for their future success.

During the ceremony, the Empangeni High School Musical Band entertained the audience and received an award. Representatives from the Department's social partners, including CTU: ATU (Ms Liesl Hastings), NATU (Mr Sibusiso Mzobe), and SADTU (Ms Hlengiwe Mchunu), conveyed their support and congratulated the learners and educators for achieving a 5.6% increase in pass rates for 2024.

The ceremony was attended by school founder Mr.Madushu Samuel Mthethwa, who commended the learners and the department for their efforts and praised the advancements in school infrastructure that have created a conducive learning environment.

Chief Director of District Operations Management, Ms Thembelihle Gumede, expressed her appreciation, stating, "We are filled with joy as we celebrate the achievements of our district, recognized as the most improved." She noted that the district's initiatives significantly contributed to the province's overall achievement of an 89.5% pass rate, positioning KwaZulu-Natal second nationally.

Ms Gumede discussed the department's strategy to address T40 schools, mentioning that 4 out of 12 T40 schools in the province are located within the King Cetshwayo District. The district excelled in academic performance and cultural pursuits, with Empangeni High School emerging as a leader.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education congratulated Mevamhlophe High School for attaining 120 distinctions within the district and acknowledged the top 10 achievers who received certificates and financial sponsorship from private sector entities. Notably, a learner from Old Mill High School achieved a remarkable 100% in Mathematics and Physical Sciences and gained admission to the University of Cape Town.















UMZINYATHI DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL OF LEARNERS INAUGURATION CEREMONY 2025

By: Silindile Zungu

The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) Inauguration and Passing of the Drum Ceremony for 2025 marked a pivotal moment in the leadership journey of newly elected learner leaders in the uMmzinyathi District. The event, held at Dundee High School, brought together 185 schools, each represented by their chairperson and secretary, reinforcing strong l eadership across the Endumeni/Nquthu, Msinga, and Umvoti Circuit Management Centres (CMCs).

The ceremony, led by uMzinyathi District Director Mr Sphiwe Kheswa, reaffirmed the importance of l earner voices in shaping the future of education. As the “voice of the voiceless,” the RCL is entrusted with the responsibility to advocate for their peers, ensuring that every learner is heard and represented.

With a clear focus on leadership, Mr Kheswa reminded the incoming RCL members of their pivotal role in steering their fellow learners towards success. In his speech, he stressed that leadership goes beyond titles, seniority, or position. He defined leadership as the ability to influence and guide others, emphasizing that it is a skill that anyone can develop over time.

He pointed out that leadership is vital in all sectors of society business, religion, and community organizations like schools. He also highlighted the role of effective leaders in making sound and sometimes difficult decisions, articulating clear visions, and equipping others with the necessary tools for success.

His insights were a call to action for the new RCL members to embrace their roles with integrity, focus, and dedication. Mr Kheswa took a moment to personally shake the hands of each incoming RCL member, symbolizing his full support and recognition of their responsibilities as learner leaders.

The Passing of the Drum Ceremony, a tradition symbolizing continuity, responsibility, and representation, was a defining moment. The drum highlighted the seamless transition of leadership from the outgoing to the incoming RCL members, with the new leaders now entrusted to advocate for their peers and create a lasting impact on the learning environment in their schools.

Under the guidance of Mr Phumlani Lushaba, Principal of Ndlangamandla High School, the newly inducted RCL members took a solemn pledge to serve their fellow learners with dedication and integrity. The pledge underscored their commitment to uphold the values of the RCL and work towards creating a positive and enriching learning environment for all.

With Mr Kheswa’s leadership at the forefront, the ceremony concluded with a sense of hope and optimism for the year ahead. Energized by the inspiring speeches and the symbolic passing of the drum, the newly inaugurated RCL members are now prepared to embark on their leadership journey.

Fully equipped with the tools to amplify the voices of their peers, they are ready to drive positive change, contribute to the growth of their schools, and shape a brighter future for education in the uMzinyathi District.











UMGUBHO WOKUSEBENZA KAHLE KU NSC KA 2024 KWISIFUNDA SASEMAJUBA



By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

Umnyango weZemfundo KwaZulu-Natali, ngaphansi kwesifunda saseMajuba, ubungaze ukuphumelela okuhle kakhulu nokusebenza ngokuzikhandla, okuholele ekutheni isifunda siphumelele ngo 89.8% futhi sibekwe endaweni yesithathu esifundazweni sonkana.

Phakathi kwabaphathi ababungaze lolusuku olubalulekile bekukhona abaqondisi abavela eNhloko-hhovisi, okubalwa kubo uDDG we-Corporate Services, u-Advocate Bheki Masuku, kanye noDDG we-Curriculum Management and Delivery, uMnu Mbongiseni Mazibuko. Kuphinde kwaba khona abanye abaphathi abahlukene ezifunda ezahlukahlukene. Lo mcimbi ubuhlosiwe ukwazisa othisha ngomsebenzi omuhle abawenzile ekulungiseleleni abafundi ukuze bathole le miphumela emihle.

Ethula inkulumo yakhe, uDDG Advocate Bheki Masuku uthe, “Ukuphumelela kwesifunda saseMajuba kusijabulise kakhulu ngoba akuphelelanga nje ekufinyeleleni leli zinga eliphezulu, kodwa kubonakala nasemiphumeleni yezifundo ezifana neMathematics nePhysical Science. Siyababonga kakhulu othisha nabazali ngeqhaza elikhulu abalibambile. Yingakho sithola imiphumela emihle kangaka. Siyakubongisa, Wosiyane, sithi nje qhubekani nindizise phezulu igama laseMajuba.”

Umqondisi wesifunda saseMajuba, uMnu Themi Nzama, naye uveze ukwethaba kwakhe ngalokhu kuphumelela, waphinde wabonga ithimba lakhe abambisene nalo ekusebenzeni kwalesi sifunda. Uthe, “Kubalulekile ukubambisana emsebenzini. Namhlanje sijabula sonke ngenxa yokubambisana nokusebenza ngokuzikhandla.”











PROVINCIAL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT MASS REGISTRATION DRIVE



By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu, Nikelo Dlamini & Noluthando Zitha

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's Early Childhood Development Directorate conducted a comprehensive 4-day provincial onboarding session, known as the Mass Registration Drive (MRD), under the leadership of ECD Director Ms Nozipho Mkhize, in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education. The objective of this session was to prepare ECD officials and other stakeholders for the forthcoming implementation across the province.

KZN DOE Early Childhood Development Director, Ms Nozipho Mkhize, underscored the critical importance of this initiative, stating, "We are on a journey to ensure quality learning not only in matric but starting from the early stages of childhood and guaranteeing that quality early childhood development programmes are in place by 2030 ."

The primary focus of the event was to emphasize the necessity of registering ECD programmes in accordance with the Children's Act, which delineates the requirements and expectations for individuals operating ECD centres.

The Department of Education operates in alignment with its 2030 strategy, designed to assist the Directorate in accomplishing its objectives. This strategy is informed by the six social justice principles espoused by the Department of Basic Education.

Mr Tebogo Chake and Ms Ivy Rapoo from the DBE presented insights regarding the MRD and highlighted the significance of compliance, detailing the challenges this programme aims to address, specifically in relation to the legislation established by the Republic of South Africa in the Children's Act.

The pair also presented the provincial success indicators, which are based on five foundational pillars. The first is legitimacy and trust, ensuring that every ECD programme is registered. The second focuses on access to registration, facilitating a user-friendly online registration system. The third pillar, process ownership, encourages provinces (Education Departments) to adopt the MRD framework as registration entities. The fourth is scholar partnership, which promotes collaboration with partners to elevate ECD programmes to meet compliance standards. Lastly, the fifth pillar focuses on addressing the needs of the child by ensuring quality learning and fostering safe and monitored learning environments.

Director Ms Nozipho Mkhize concluded the 4-day cluster by reiterating that the primary objective of this session is to ensure quality learning from the earliest stages, beginning with the registration of ECD centres.











KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MEETING WITH KING CETSHWAYO DISTRICT ON LABOUR PROHIBITIONS



By: Thabile Dlamini

The Deputy Director-General for Corporate Services, Advocate Bheki Masuku, convened a meeting to discuss the status of the King Cetshwayo District office buildings. The meeting was attended by the Head of Communications, Mr Muzi Mahlambi, the Acting Director for Facilities and Auxiliary Services, Ms Jabu Mcineka, and the Director for King Cetshwayo District, Ms Weziwe Nzama, accompanied by relevant officials from the Department.

Ms Nzama provided a detailed summary of the progress concerning the No. 8 Union Street building, which was inspected by the Department of Labour on 20 January 2025. Following their assessment, the Department of Labour issued directives regarding Occupational Health and Safety matters, resulting in the temporary closure of the offices.

She stated, “The closure of the District Head Offices has already resulted in employees evacuating the building due to its condition, as per the orders. This has left uncertainty about the future, and the district’s operations have been severely hampered. My main concern is the safety of our employees and the long-term impact on our work efficiency.”

Advocate Masuku acknowledged the concerns, emphasizing, “Your concerns are valid, and it’s clear that the buildings are no longer stable enough for a work environment. That’s why experts from Facilities Management and Occupational Health and Safety have taken measures to prevent further deterioration of the building.”

Ms Mcineka highlighted that the matter would be resolved with proper guidelines from Occupational Health and Safety, Facilities and Auxiliary Services, and Facilities Management. She also noted that frustrations and miscommunication may have been barriers to progress.

The meeting was a success, as significant progress and pressing matters were discussed. Mitigation factors and strict timeframes were mandated to restore district functionality.











PINETOWN DISTRICT 2024 NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS



By:Nokukhanya Mthembu

Pinetown District hosted the 2024 NCS Awards of Excellence, celebrated the district's outstanding 89.4% pass rate, placing it in the top 5 districts in the province. District Director, Ms Sbongile Nkosi-Tembe, in her opening remarks, highlighted the district's performance and acknowledged the collective effort evident from the Circuit Management Centres.

Special recognition was given to three Circuit Management Centres (CMC): Mafukuza Gandhi CMC with a 93% pass rate, Durban North West CMC achieving 92%, and uMhlathuzana CMC with 82%.

Ms Nkosi-Tembe emphasised that the journey does not stop here, stating, "We are focused on progress and excellence. This celebration marks a step forward in the district's continuous pursuit of educational excellence."

The awardees were recognised in the following categories: schools with 100% pass rates, Top 10 public schools that performed consistently over the last three years (2022 to 2024), subject performance, Top 5 most improved schools, best performance per quintile schools, highest number of bachelor passes per quintile schools, National Teachers Awards of Excellence, and special recognition schools of excellence.

Furthermore, Ms Nkosi-Tembe acknowledged the female principal from Machobeni High School for her overall outstanding performance. She highlighted that this will be a roving trophy awarded based on the best achievement.















AMAJUBA DISTRICT 2024 NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

On 20 February 2025, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's Amajuba District hosted the Matric Excellence Awards Ceremony at Ferrum High School. The primary goal of this esteemed event was to honor learners and teachers who excelled in the 2024 National Senior Certificate and to celebrate exceptional accomplishments in the Amajuba District.

In attendance were the school's principal, Amajuba District officials such as District Manco, Chief Director: District Operations Dr David Chonco, Amajuba District Director Mr Themi Nzama, and Acting Mayor of Amajuba District Municipality, Cllr Thembelihle Mthembu.

Amajuba District Director, Mr Themi Nzama, clarified the objective of this esteemed event while addressing the attendees. He noted, "Amajuba District achieved 89.9% in 2024 NSC Examinations and secured the third position in the province." Over 10 high schools in various CMCs within the Amajuba District achieved 100% in the NSC. "We aim to encourage cooperation and strengthen partnerships among schools, educators, and community stakeholders to improve educational outcomes," stated Mr Nzama.

He additionally presented the summary of NSC 2024 circuit performances:
Normandien achieved 95.3%, Ebuhleni 92.84%, Phumelela 92.81%, Osizweni 89.6%, uMzinyashana 89.5%, Madadeni 88.28%, Masakhane 87.68%, and B Flats 86.4%.

Chief Director of District Operations, Dr David Chonco, addressed the attendees, stating, "We congratulate Amajuba District on achieving high-quality results; you are truly performing at 100%. Organizations like the African Union and CEM have urged us to guarantee quality in our education system as we progress towards Vision 2030. We are beginning to witness this in Amajuba District, demonstrated by the quality of bachelor passes and language. You exemplify our educational efforts as you align with Vision 2030."

Mr Jabulani Ngcobo, Director of Inclusive Education at the National Department of Basic Education, delivered the keynote speech, stating, "We are gathered here to honor the dedication and outstanding achievements of our learners and educators. It was not simple, but here we are, celebrating achievement and recognizing excellence with awards. Today should not signal the end of your efforts; I urge you to keep pushing for the best," said Mr Ngcobo.













IMPENDLE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY CLASS OF 2024 MATRIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS



By: Qinisile Mkhize

On 20 February 2025, the proud community, learners, educators, and district officials gathered at the Presbyterian Church to celebrate the outstanding performance of the Class of 2024.

In attendance to congratulate the awardees were the District Director of uMgungundlovu, Mr Sqhamo Mabinza, Cllr Buyisani Mlaba, Mayor of Impendle Local Municipality, and uMgungundlovu District Mayor, Cllr Mzi Zuma.

Sharing words of appreciation and encouragement, Mr Mabinza stated, “To the learners heading to tertiary institutions, you are about to embark on a journey filled with sharp curves, bumpy roads, and speed humps. Soldier on—there is light at the end of the tunnel. Your parents’ teachings will sustain you.”

The Impendle and Lions River circuits performed exceptionally well in the 2024 NSC, achieving 92.1% and 92.86% respectively, with Luthando and Matomela High Schools attaining a 100% pass rate.

Cllr Zuma, taking the podium confidently, stated, “We are proud to be part of this ceremony as leaders in government. The results of the Class of 2024 renew our commitment to support the department in every possible way. We also pledge R10,000 to each school that achieved 100%. Additionally, the municipality will ensure that all learners in the Class of 2025 receive learner’s licenses.”

Educators and learners were awarded trophies, laptops, and tablets, some of which were sponsored by Metropolitan, in recognition of their outstanding efforts.













DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS & AWARDS CEREMONY



By: Qinisile Mkhize

The Department of Correctional Services is today honoring inmate matriculants who despite their circumstances have performed well in the NSC examinations of 2024.



53 learners who sat for the 2024 exams, 48 obtained bachelor passes while 4 obtained diploma passes converged at the Westville Correctional centre to celebrate. Mrs Smangele Dlamini, Chief Education Specialist: District Operations remarked on behalf of the KZNDOE, “We are here celebrating because of your discipline and commitment. Let this be the beginning, there are endless opportunities”, said Mrs Dlamini.

Regional Commissioner for the KwaZulu-Natal Regions, Mr Mnikelwa Nxele took the podium proudly, “educators you are making an important contribution in the rehabilitation of offenders for





ILEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY CLASS OF 2024 NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS



By: Qinisile Mkhize

The Department of Education in Ilembe district together with Ilembe District Municipality hosted the much awaited awards for the class of 2024.



Dr Musa Madosndo, District Director for Ilembe, The class of 2024 made history, of over 9100 candidates that sat for the NSC exams in the district, 8200 passed recoding a 89,5 % achievement.

Cllr Thobani Shandu, District Mayor who delivered the main address today, “ the contribution by educators doesn’t go unnoticed. We need to work together to ensure that the district does not regress. We take pride in all your efforts”.





8th SADTU NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS



By: Qinisile Mkhize

The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) is today recognizing and honoring its members for excelling in the 2024 NSC.

Celebrating with the Union today is the provincial leadership of SADTU, president of SADTU Mr Magope Maphila, Head of Department, Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo, MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka and the Minister of Defence Ms Angie Motshekga.

The Provincial Secretary, Ms Nomarashiya Caluza sharing the purpose of the day, “celebrating is a good source of transformation, our districts have come a long in the NSC performance, it’s the dediction and commitment of members of this union who have worked tirelessly”.

Let’s support organized labour’s in their quest to ensuring that we deliver quality education. Congratulations to all our educators for outstanding results, I urge you to double your efforts to ensure the province’s performance improves,” said MEC Hlomuka.





BREAKFAST MEETING FOR FEMALE PRINCIPALS



By: Qinisile Mkhize

The Durban North West Circuit Management Centre (CMC) hosted a Breakfast Meeting for Female Principals under the theme, “Empowered to Lead: Inspiring Excellence in Female School Leadership.”

Female in Leadership and Management (FILM) was launched on 23 August 2013 by the then-Minister of Education, Ms Angie Motshekga, to ensure meaningful representation of women in leadership positions and recognize their contributions in the workplace.

This gathering aimed to provide female principals with a platform to engage, receive support, and be strengthened in different areas.

In attendance were CES: Teacher Development, Ms Charmaine Nair, CES: Circuit Management, Mr Phumelela Nkosi, and SADTU Provincial Secretary, Ms Nomarashiya Caluza, who d elivered the main address.

“Women, we must always self-cultivate in building partnerships and collaborations, and in various branches of scientific knowledge,” said Ms Caluza.

The Durban North West circuit has made significant strides in recognizing women leaders, with 18 high schools led by women achieving pass rates of 83-100% in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations.







KOKSTAD CIRCUIT 15th EXCELLENCE AWARDS CEREMONY FOR NSC 2024

By: Kholeka Keswa

Kokstad Circuit, in the Harry Gwala District, hosted the 15th Excellence Awards Ceremony in celebration of the 2024 NSC matric results.

Councillor Zodide Tshazi warmly welcomed everyone to the event, setting a positive tone for the occasion. She expressed heartfelt gratitude to the 2024 awardees for their remarkable achievements, acknowledging the support and guidance they received from their loved ones and the community.

Building on the theme of excellence, Dr M. Mlaba emphasized the importance of dedication and commitment in achieving academic success. “This ceremony celebrates excellence in learning and teaching, made possible by the hard work and commitment of teachers, who are deeply appreciated.”

In his address, Mr S. Zwane, Municipal Manager, highlighted the importance of determination and striving for greatness, encouraging learners to aim high and never give up. He believes rewarding excellence inspires learners to chase their dreams. “Always remember the power within you and use it to achieve greatness.”

Furthermore, Mr Muzi Mahlambi, Head of Communications and Publications at the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, delivered keynote remarks at the celebration. He inspired learners to embrace their identity and recognize their potential as the “Generation of Excellence.”

Councillor B. Nozaza emphasized the importance of community involvement in supporting schools.

“Regular school visits enable the municipality to identify areas of assistance and provide support where needed.”

Kokstad Circuit achieved outstanding NSC results, with no school scoring below 70%. This remarkable achievement is proof of the hard work and dedication of learners, teachers, and the community.

In closing, the awards ceremony recognised top achievers in various categories, including Early Childhood Development Centres, primary schools, teachers, and top achievers in the overall NSC results.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education congratulates all the winners on their outstanding achievements.

















SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SDIP) WORKING SESSION

By: Qinisile Mkhize

The Department of Education through the Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation (SMME) directorate held the SDIP working session. The team identified to be part of this vital session, Mr Sunil Mahabeer, Director for Organisational Development, Mr Bafana Zwane, Director for Performance Management, Mr Ntokozo Mpanza, Director for Budget and Expenditure, representative from Rural Infrastructure Support.

A directive was issued by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) to departments to compile Service Delivery Improvement Plans and submit them no later than 31 March 2025.

The objectives of the SDIP is mainly for departments to able to assess themselves, identify areas of improvement and come up with solutions that will be realistic and achievable. There should also be an alignment of the departmental Annual Performance Plan (APP) and the SDIP. SDIP should also entail mechanisms for continuous incremental service delivery that promotes efficiency and effectiveness. They enable departments to to focus on critical services identified in the intergrated complaints and other matrix reports. SDIPs must be credible and effective and are intended to service delivery based on beneficiaries' priorities.

The committee delibarated on the methods that can be used to identify areas that need improvement and activities that will need funds. The reporting and monitoring of the SDIP will be crucial to ensure there is an impact realised by the service beneficiaries. The committee is agreed to report on a quarterly basis to ensure consistency and gradual improvement.







UMSINGA CMC 2024 NSC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

By: Roshan Rambarran

The uMsinga Municipality hosted the Msinga Matric Excellence Awards Ceremony to celebrate the academic achievements of the top-performing matriculants (class of 2024) in Msinga CMC.

The event recognized students who excelled in their final exams and awarded teachers and SGBs for their support and encouragement.

The ceremony emphasized the importance of education and collective effort in supporting learners and was filled with pride and encouragement. Students were reminded of their potential and the importance of believing in themselves.

The event was graced by the presence of local traditional leadership (Nkosi yakwa Mabaso, inkosi yakwa Majozi), and His Worship, Cllr Dr F. J. Skhakhane, delivered the keynote address









DURBAN CENTRAL CIRCUIT MANAGEMENT CENTRE (CMC) EXCELLENCE AWARDS CEREMONY

By: Nokukhanya Mthembu

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's Umlazi District proudly hosted the Class of 2024 Excellence Awards Ceremony, a grand occasion filled with pride, gratitude, and inspiration. This special event celebrated the achievements of exceptional learners and schools who excelled in their academic pursuits. It was a day to honor those whose hard work and perseverance had truly paid off.

The ceremony commenced with a heartfelt address by Ms N.P. Shamase, Chief Educator Specialist, who spoke passionately about the importance of striving for greatness. She highlighted how each achievement reflected commitment, vision, and the relentless pursuit of excellence. "These awards honor those who push boundaries, inspire others, and set a remarkable example for future generations," she said, reminding the audience that such dedication makes a lasting impact on both individuals and communities.

Ms B.N. Mahlambi, Umlazi District Director, expressed her deep appreciation for the exceptional performance of Durban Central CMC. She proudly acknowledged the circuit's top achievement of being number one in the district. "This success is not just about numbers it's about the unwavering dedication of our principals, teachers, and most importantly, our learners," she shared with heartfelt pride. "Your sacrifices today are the building blocks of a brighter future for both our district and our country."

The keynote address was delivered by Ms Sindi Zakuza-Njakazi, Chief Director for Curriculum Development Management, who eloquently celebrated the remarkable achievements within the education sector. "Today, we gather to recognize the incredible dedication, hard work, and perseverance that have shaped the future of our learners and schools," she said. She emphasized that the day was about more than just awards, it was about honoring the journey of improvement, growth, and success. From the top 10 learners in public schools who had made impressive strides in their development, Ms Zakuza-Njakazi praised the relentless efforts of all involved. "These schools continually raise the bar, creating environments where learners thrive and academic excellence flourishes," she said, inspiring all present to aim higher and reach further.

The ceremony was a powerful reminder of the importance of perseverance, innovation, and commitment in education. It showcased the true spirit of teamwork and dedication that led to the achievements being celebrated. Congratulations to all the learners and schools recognized that day—you have set the standard for excellence, and your efforts will inspire future generations to follow in your footsteps.

The Umlazi District and Durban Central CMC stand as shining examples of what can be accomplished when we come together to support and uplift one another in the pursuit of knowledge and success. The spirit of unity and collaboration was evident in every corner of the UMkhumbane Circuit, a milestone that represents resilience, commitment, and the circuit's determination to rise above challenges and achieve greatness.













ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION BEFORE THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (SCOPA)

By: Hlengiwe Mncibi

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education appeared before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) as part of its ongoing commitment to transparency, sound financial management, and adherence to public accountability principles.

The session, held at the Provincial Legislature Precinct in the Ngcugce Boardroom, Pietermaritzburg, provided an opportunity for the Department to respond to financial performance queries, expenditure trends, and audit outcomes.

Led by senior officials, the Department presented reports on budget allocations, expenditure patterns, financial irregularities, and corrective measures implemented to enhance fiscal discipline. The engagement also addressed prior SCOPA recommendations, financial controls, and strategies to mitigate unauthorised, irregular, fruitless, and wasteful expenditure.

Members of SCOPA posed critical questions regarding the Department's financial accountability, seeking clarity on key areas of concern, including infrastructure spending, procurement processes, and budgetary constraints impacting service delivery in schools.

The session reinforced the Department's obligation to uphold good governance and ensure that public funds are utilised effectively to advance the provision of quality education across the province.







UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT HONOURS TOP-PERFORMING MATRIC CLASS OF 2024



By: Nokuzola Mahlaba and Nikelo Dlamini

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's uMgungundlovu District, in partnership with the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council, and the South African Youth Council, hosted the Matric NSC Excellence Awards 2024 at Maritzburg College. The event celebrated educators and schools that achieved outstanding results in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations.

The event recognised and rewarded the dedication of teachers and schools that have demonstrated excellence in academic performance. The event also aimed to celebrate and encourage continuous improvement, strengthen collaboration between all stakeholders to strive for even greater success in the years to come. It further served as a platform to acknowledge the role of educators in shaping young minds and the collective effort required to improve the standard of education in the district.

Addressing the attendees, District Director Mr. Siqhamo Mabinza emphasized the importance of humility and the pursuit of quality education. He expressed gratitude to school principals and teacher unions for their involvement in intervention programmes, particularly in underperforming schools. He encouraged broader participation in these initiatives to ensure continued academic improvement in the district.

Communication Manager for the uMgungundlovu District Municipality, Mr. Brian Zuma acknowledged and thanked the sponsors who have consistently supported the district's educational initiatives. He stressed that education is a societal responsibility and commended business sector partners for their ongoing commitment. Quoting Denzel Washington, he remarked, "Success is not measured by the position one holds, but by the obstacles one overcomes."

Provincial Chairperson of the South African Youth Council, Mr. Thabo Tsheme highlighted the role of education in shaping the future of young people. "Education empowers young people to become active citizens and leaders in their communities. It is through education that we can transform society and create opportunities for all," he said.

Bishop Nkosinathi Myaka, Chairperson of the KZN Christian Council, encouraged learners to believe in themselves, think big, and have a clear vision for their future.

Many teachers were recognized for their c ontributions, with special awards given to those who achieved a 100% pass rate in their respective subjects. Seventeen public schools and three independent schools in the district were honored for their outstanding achievements.

Four special recognition awards were presented. Mr. SP Dlamini of Mconjwane High School was honored for his unwavering dedication and selfless efforts in supporting learners. Emzanweni High School was recognized for achieving the most distinctions. Mconjwane High School was acknowledged for outstanding academic progress, and Mazwendoda Secondary School was honored for its exceptional performance. Each of these schools received an HP printing machine which were sponsored by the SBD (Business System) printing, as a token of appreciation.

Delivering the keynote address, Ms. Siphesihle Zungu, Chairperson of the Community Services Portfolio Committee spoke on behalf of uMgungundlovu District Municipality Mayor Muziwokuthula Zuma. She reinforced the district's commitment to empowering youth through education. "We ensure that our youth have a bright future. This is just the beginning," she said. "Through dedication, you can transform your circumstances. The journey may be challenging, but success is achievable."





Looking ahead, the district remains committed to achieving its ambitious goal of a 95% pass rate in the 2025 NSC examinations. This will be realized through the continued dedication of learners, educators, and key stakeholders.







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