EDU NEWS

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT | EDUCATION

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MEC & HOD MONITOR EXAMS

“Now is the moment to realize your dreams, and I know for sure that your success is guaranteed.”



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MESSAGE FROM THE MEC



I am proud to highlight the significant progress we have made together in strengthening education in KwaZulu-Natal through our publication. As we know, education is not merely about teaching academic subjects; it is the cornerstone of our society, shaping our children's lives and paving the way for a brighter future. Today, I am pleased to share some of the critical work we have undertaken in recent weeks to promote and implement the Basic Education Laws Amendment, or BELA Act No. 32 of 2024, as well as other significant initiatives that aim to ensure the well-being and success of our learners and staff.

In October, the Department of Basic Education and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education conducted a series of BELA Act Advocacy Sessions across the province. These sessions brought together Chief Directors for District Operations, Curriculum Development Programmes and Human Resources, Employee Relations, District Directors, Director Legal Services and Team, Governance and Management Team from the Head Office, Chief Circuit Managers, Circuit Managers, Officials responsible for Governance and Management, School Safety, Grade R, Admissions and Home Education to align our vision with the mandates of this vital legislation.

We began our journey in Ulundi on the 9th of October at Masibumbane High School, where the meeting was attended by district directors from uMkhanyakude, King Cetshwayo, and Zululand. Together, we delved into the BELA Act's core principles and explored how these can enhance governance across our schools.

Following this, on 10 October, the second session was held at Port Shepstone High School in the Ugu District, with Mr. Nhlanhla Mthethwa facilitating the session. The focus was on the practical implications of the BELA Act for school governance and education policy examining how the Act will influence daily operations and foster an environment where quality education thrives.

We then moved to Sarel Cilliers High School in Dundee on the 14th of October, engaging district officials from Amajuba, uThukela, and uMzinyathi. Under the expert guidance of Mr. Sikhumbuzo Manganye, Chief Director of Curriculum and Management, we examined how curriculum and management practices can be realigned to meet the Act's new standards, ensuring that our educational approach remains relevant and future-focused.

The final session on 16 October at Dr JL Dube High School in Pinetown brought together officials from the Pinetown and iLembe districts. This closing session was a testament to our shared commitment to equity and excellence in education across the province, underscoring the importance of collaboration and mutual support as we implement these changes.

As we look ahead, the BELA Act equips us to better address the needs of our schools and communities. I am grateful to all who participated and contributed to these sessions. Your dedication to our learners and schools is what makes progress possible, and I am confident that together, we will create an education system that upholds the values and vision of this province.

Turning now to another milestone, our matric examinations are in full swing. I want to reassure our communities that the Department has taken every measure to safeguard the integrity and safety of these exams. Across all our districts, we have put comprehensive safety protocols in place to protect our learners and uphold the examination process. To our matriculants, we wish you the utmost success as you approach this pivotal moment in your academic journey. May these exams mark the beginning of many opportunities as you take your next steps.

Finally, I would be remiss not to mention our observance of Breast Cancer Awareness on 30 October within the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. This awareness campaign is an important reminder of our shared commitment to health and well-being. I encourage all of us to support this cause, as health education is a powerful tool that can save lives and foster a supportive environment for our staff and learners.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to all of you for your hard work, dedication, and continued effort in transforming our education system, Together, we are creating a future where every learner, every educator, and every member of our educational community can thrive.



MESSAGE FROM THE HOD.

I feel honoured to come to you once again through this platform, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education is absolutely thrilled that the examination period has officially began in our schools and educational institutions, we find ourselves amidst this crucial time and we are confident that all is proceeding as planned. The Department of Education takes immense pride in the diligent oversight executed by officials during the NSC examination throughout the province

Senior officials have traveled to several districts to oversee the NSC examination process, additionally we have collaborated with the KwaZulu-Natal office of the Premier led by Honourable Premier Thami Ntuli and members of the Legislature to ensure thorough monitoring of the examination within the province.

To all learners from foundation phase to matriculants let us soldier on, the best is yet to come.

To all educators in our province wishing all the best on your effort in building the nation.

MEC LAUNCHES SHELL BURSARY PROGRAMME

By: Noluthando Zitha

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education launched the 20-day countdown to the NSC Examinations alongside the Shell Bursary Programme, led by DDG of Curriculum Management, Mr Mbongiseni Mazibuko, representing Head of Department Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo. Key attendees included MEC for Education Mr Sipho Hlomuka, Shell Downstream South Africa Chairman Mr Aluwani Museisi, Umlazi District Director Ms Busisiwe Mahlambi, and Ndukwenhle High School Principal Mr Siyanda Mbonambi.

The school principal, SGB, and Ward Councillor expressed gratitude to KZN DOE and Shell SA for their support. Shell's Mr Museisi encouraged learners to view education as essential and affirmed Shell's dedication to aiding driven learners in underprivileged areas. MEC Hlomuka commended Shell's contributions, such as providing electricity, which aids learning environments. He inspired learners to study diligently, aiming for excellence.

Ms Mahlambi called on learners to stay focused and recognized the DOE and Shell's role in learner success. She highlighted the class's potential to elevate the province's pass rate. During the ceremony, MEC Hlomuka lit a candle and rang a bell, marking the countdown start.

Date: 01 October 2024
Venue: Ndukwenhle High School, Umlazi District





























2024 NSC STATE OF READINESS MEDIA BRIEFING

By: Nikelo Dlamini

On 9 October 2024, KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, expressed confidence in the province's readiness for the 2024 matric exams. At a media briefing held at Westville Boys High School in Durban, the MEC highlighted the department's far-reaching efforts to prepare matric learners for their final exams.

These efforts included winter and spring classes designed to enhance learner performance. While the department has set its sights on achieving a 100% pass rate, MEC Hlomuka remains optimistic about securing at least a 90% pass rate, acknowledging potential challenges that may arise.

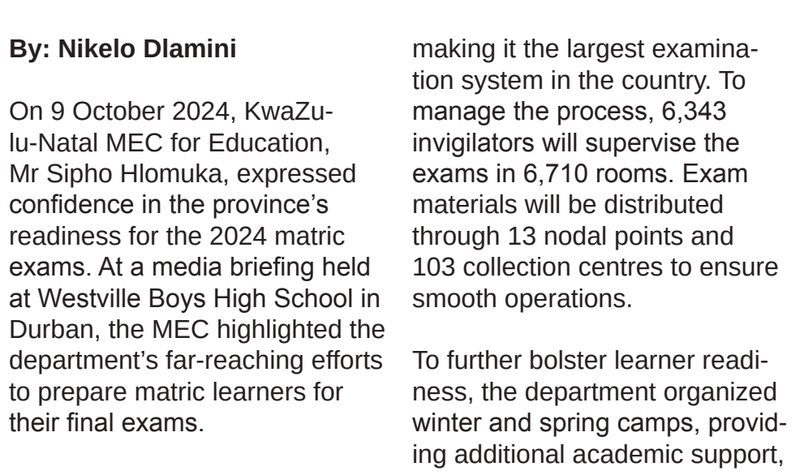
The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education will administer exams for 172,433 full-time and 18,019 part-time candidates, making it the largest examination system in the country. To manage the process, 6,343 invigilators will supervise the exams in 6,710 rooms. Exam materials will be distributed through 13 nodal points and 103 collection centres to ensure smooth operations.

To further bolster learner readiness, the department organized winter and spring camps, providing additional academic support, including weekend tuition sessions. These efforts aim to equip learners for the final push ahead of the exams.

The marking process will commence on 1 December 2024 at 32 marking centres, with 7,614 markers involved. The final NSC results are scheduled for release on 15 January 2025.

MEC Hlomuka expressed his gratitude to teachers, school officials, and parents for their dedication in preparing the Class of 2024, ensuring they are ready for this critical milestone.

Venue: Westville Boys High School, Westville, Durban
Date: 09 October 2024

















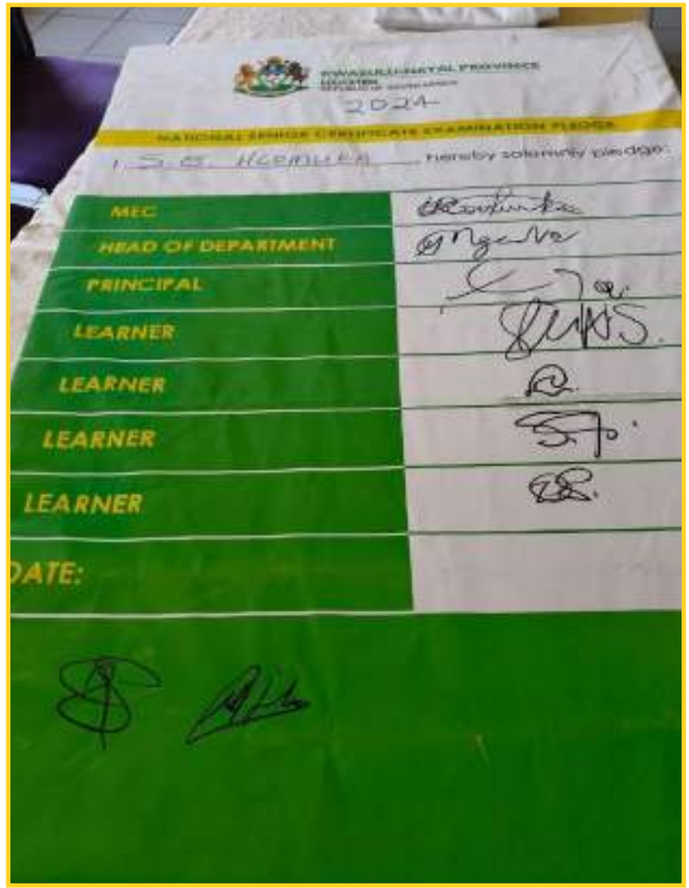
















PROVINCIAL PRAYER AND SIGNING OF THE PLEDGE

























By: Philakahle Ngubane

The MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, accompanied by the Head of Department, Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo, presided over the signing of the pledge and prayer ceremony.

The event follows the national signing of the pledge, a commitment to remain ethical by learners who are to sit for their 2024 NSC Examinations.

The event was attended by the DDG for Institutional Development, Ms Weziwe Hadebe, DDG for Curriculum Management, Mr Mbongiseni Mazibuko, and DDG for Corporate Services, Advocate Bheki Masuku. Over and above the department's Top Management were Councillors (Cllrs), SGB Chairpersons, Traditional Leaders, Organized Labour, Faith-based Leaders, representatives, and a vast representation of matric learners from the Amajuba District.

The signing of the pledge was presided over by the MEC, who was the first signatory, followed by the HOD, the school principal, and learners.

The ceremony proceeded to a prayer session led by faith-based leaders, who offered words of encouragement to the matric class of 2024 and prayed for their success and safety.

The MEC, in his closing remarks, said, "May God bless the class of 2024, and may you remember all that you have learned during the course of the year."

Venue: Siyamukela High School
Date: 18 October 2024





2024 NSC EXAMINATIONS

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has embarked on rigorous monitoring of the 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations across districts to ensure adherence to standards and provide motivation to learners.

On 21 October 2024, KwaZulu-Natal Premier Mr Thamsanqa Ntuli and MEC for Education Mr Sipho Hlomuka monitored the English Paper 3 exam at Isolemamba High School in Umlazi District. Despite heavy rains and warnings from the South African Weather Service, they braved the conditions to oversee the exams and engage with learners. Premier Ntuli, acknowledging the school's strong academic track record, encouraged learners by saying, "Now is the moment to realize your dreams, and I know for sure that your success is guaranteed."

On 24 October, MEC Hlomuka continued his visits, joining senior officials at Ingula High School in uThukela District. Accompanied by Dr David Chonco, Dr Ngogi Mahaye, and District Director Ms Mapaseka Mokoena, MEC Hlomuka motivated the 141 candidates, advising them to "write with confidence" and avoid the pitfalls of cheating. Reflecting on a past incident where misconduct led to withheld results, he emphasized integrity and expressed hope for Ingula High School to achieve a 100% pass rate. MEC Hlomuka's visit is a part of the department's broader programme to inspire matriculants. He further concluded his engagement by affirming the department's commitment to an error-free examination period and wishing all candidates success.

Concurrently, The Head of Department, Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo, also monitored examinations at Mpangeni and Dlangezwa High Schools in the King Cetshwayo District, where he emphasized the stringent examination protocols, ensuring the integrity of the process, and the high level of preparation and remarked that processes were running "like a well-oiled machine."

Further oversight came from the Deputy Director-General for Institutional Development Support, Ms Weziwe Hadebe, who monitored exam compliance at Pinetown District with Acting District Director Ms Sibongile Nkosi-Tembe, reiterating the importance of adhering to protocols.

On 29 October, MEC Hlomuka and the Provincial Legislature's Education Portfolio Committee visited uMzilikazi High School in the Amajuba District. Following the monitoring, they held a debriefing at Dedangifunde High School, where MEC Hlomuka commended educators for their commitment despite challenging conditions and reaffirmed his confidence in the province's academic targets.

Venue: Various Districts
Date: October 2024






















PREMIER FOR KWAZULU-NATAL AND MEC FOR EDUCATION ENGAGE LEARNERS PRIOR TO NSC EXAMINATIONS

By: Philakahle Ngubane

The KZN Premier, Mr Thamsanqa Ntuli, together with the MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, monitored the commencement of examinations at Isolemamba High School.

The pair braved heavy downpours to monitor the writing of the English Paper 3 exam under the Umlazi District. Following the inclement weather warnings issued by SAWS, the Premier and MEC personally oversaw the writing of the exams at the school.

During a brief engagement with the learners, the MEC stressed the importance of honoring the pledge for error-free examinations and wished all matric candidates the best of luck.

In his brief address to the learners, the Premier said, “We came to your school because of your good track record. Now is the moment to realize your dreams, and I know for sure that your success is guaranteed,” remarked Mr Ntuli.

Venue: Isolemamba High School
Date: 21 October 2024




























UMKHANYAKUDE DISTRICT OSS/DDM CABINET DAY

By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

It was all hands on deck as MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka was joined by Acting HOD Champion, Dr Vish Naidoo, along with Ward Councilor and Mayor of Jozini Local Municipality, Cllr. Mfananaye Mathe, at Mjindi Secondary School during the Sukuma Sakhe Cabinet Day that took place on 30 October 2024 in the uMkhanyakude District, Jozini Local Municipality.

MEC Hlomuka and Acting HOD Champion, Dr Vish Govender, were deployed to Ward 6, Siqakatha area. The day started at Mjindi Secondary School, where MEC Hlomuka and his entourage monitored the 2024 NSC examinations. He then proceeded to the Ntenga Tribal Council for a briefing session, where various departments had the opportunity to present profiles of the projects to be visited by MEC Hlomuka and the entire team, such as the War Room Report, Human Settlement Project, and Agricultural Project.

Speaking at the meeting, MEC Hlomuka emphasized, “It is important to work side by side with the community to ensure that service delivery is visible in the area and in the lives of the community. This area is very rich in terms of agriculture,” he concluded.

MEC Hlomuka further stated that uMkhanyakude District is the number one district in the province in terms of matric pass rate, expressing pride in this achievement under the leadership of Mr Thanduyise Motha, a son of the soil. He added that they would soon introduce a construction company at Mjindi Secondary School.

Venue: Mjindini Secondary School, uMkhanyakude District
Date: 30 October 2024



























MOOT COURT AWARD CEREMONY

By: Mbaliyabenguni Zulu

On the 18th of October 2024, the MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, officially handed over the Moot Court Award to Samkelo Zondi, a learner from Siyamukela High School, after excelling at the Provincial and National Moot Court Competitions held at the University of Pretoria and the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg. This prestigious event took place in the school hall during the Provincial Examination Prayer Ceremony.

During the competition, Samkelo had to play the roles of both the defendant and the prosecutor in a case brought by a learner against the Department of Education for not providing rural schools with technology.

Grade 11 learner Samkelo Zondi could not believe her eyes and ears when the programme director announced her name in front of the packed hall. “I had to learn about case law and the Constitution for this competition. I see myself joining the legal profession in the future,” said Samkelo.

Moreover, the award ceremony aims to motivate and encourage learners to take advantage of extracurricular opportunities and activities.

In his address, MEC for Education Mr Sipho Hlomuka mentioned, “Following the Provincial and National Moot Court Competitions, I would like to thank you for the good work. Continue with your efforts; we appreciate you as the Department. With these flowers, we are saying keep shining; only the sky is the limit,” concluded the MEC.











BRINGING EDUCATION CLOSER TO COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME 2024









By: Xoli Thompson

On 19 September 2024, MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, during the NCOP and provincial Cabinet's visit to Mandeni Local Municipality, pronounced that the legislature would convene to address concerns raised by Community members as it has done on the 31 October 2024.

Key Highlights:

- Supporting Matric Success: MEC Hlomuka encouraged the community to create a calm environment for Grade 12 learners during exams, underscoring the role of education in shaping bright futures.

- Creating Safe Schools: The MEC emphasized school safety, fostering cooperation with SAPS and the community to maintain secure learning spaces.

- Infrastructure Improvements:
  - Rhadaroopsing Primary: Tender stage for renovation.
  - Inkosi KW Mathaba Technical High: Window upgrades underway.
  - Madulini High: Renovation priority.
  - Nkwenkwezi Secondary: Planned renovations and new classrooms.

- National School NutritionProgramme (NSNP): The MEC assured that all learners are receiving consistent, nutritious meals through close monitoring of the NSNP.

- Building Teacher Capacity: Schools are staffed per PPN allocations, with any vacancies managed through the HRM circular.

- Supporting Early Learning: ECD centres receive subsidies to maintain educator salaries, fostering a strong start for young learners.

- Expanding Learner Transport: Arrangements with the Department of Transport are underway to provide safe travel for learners of Nombuso Primary School, with plans to expand access.

- Exploring New High School Options: A needs assessment will determine the demand for a new high school in Maphumulo.

Date: 31 October 2024
Venue: Sibusisiwe Community Hall, iLembe District































PREMIER NTULI AND MEC HLOMUKA AFFIRM KZN'S READINESS FOR 2024 EXAMINATIONS



By: Philakahle Ngubane

The Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Thami Ntuli, together with the MEC for Education, Mr Sipho Hlomuka, hosted a media briefing to assure KZN residents and the education sector that the department is wholly ready for examinations.

"We are satisfied with the preparedness of the department to administer year-end examinations," said MEC Hlomuka. MEC Hlomuka and Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo, the Head of the Department of Education, have done a sterling job in preparing for the much-anticipated examinations.

"We will intensify security measures and involve other sectors of government to ensure the safety of teachers, learners, and school property during the examination period," remarked the Premier.

The Premier extended his gratitude to parents, teachers, learners, and the entire education sector for rallying behind the Class of 2024 and wished them well for the examinations.







KZN DOE PAVES THE WAY FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE IN EDUCATION

By Kholeka Keswa

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Education, Mr. Sipho Hlomuka, expressed his gratitude and excitement during the handover ceremony of mobile classrooms to Ngibongeleni High School and Sizathina High School in the UThukela District. On October 10, 2024, the MEC, alongside social partners seeking a temporary solution to the shortage of classrooms, supported the schools by handing over eight mobile classrooms to Ngibongeleni High School and four to Sizathina High School.

“This development is important to us; these mobile classrooms will connect us with the community. We hope that our relationship will grow across the province,” said the MEC. The success of this initiative will enhance the quality of education and inspire learners. The Department of Education’s commitment to delivering these classrooms reflects its dedication to creating a conducive learning environment for all students.

He also stated that the department, in collaboration with the school committee, identified 20 learners in need of assistance and provided food parcels and school uniforms to support them.

Following the MEC’s address, uThukela District Director Ms. Mapaseka Mokoena commended the principals and teams of both high schools for their hard work and dedication. She urged the communities to take care of the schools.

One of the key speakers at the ceremony, Mr. S. Hlatshwayo, the provincial manager from the Red Cross, highlighted their organization’s commitment to supporting education. He mentioned that they had installed over 20,000 mobile classrooms nationwide and hoped to continue working with the department to install more in the future.

Speaking on behalf of the school governing bodies, Mr. Mdakane from Ngibongeleni High School and Mr. Alphaus Mthonti from Sizathina High School expressed their gratitude to the MEC and sponsors for their contributions, acknowledging the positive impact on the learners’ educational environment.

In conclusion, MEC Hlomuka emphasized the importance of maintaining the temporary classrooms and ensuring that they remain in good condition for the benefit of generations to come. He also expressed his anticipation for further developments of permanent classrooms.

















24TH NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS

By: Sbani Ngobese

The 24th Annual National Teaching Awards ceremony, held at Birchwood Conference Centre in Boksburg, celebrated exceptional educators nationwide. KwaZulu-Natal finalists took centre stage, representing their province with pride.

Distinguished guests included President Cyril Ramaphosa, Minister of Basic Education Siviwe Gwarube, Deputy Minister Dr Reginah Mhaule, and Gauteng Premier Panyaza Lesufi. Minister Gwarube delivered remarks before introducing President Ramaphosa.

This prestigious event recognizes teaching excellence, inspiring educators to continue making a positive impact on South Africa's education landscape.

Congratulations to all finalists and winners.

Venue: Birchwood Conference Centre, Boksburg
Date: 05 October 2024











KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BENEFITS FROM THE MTN CSI PROGRAMME

By: Qinisile Mkhize

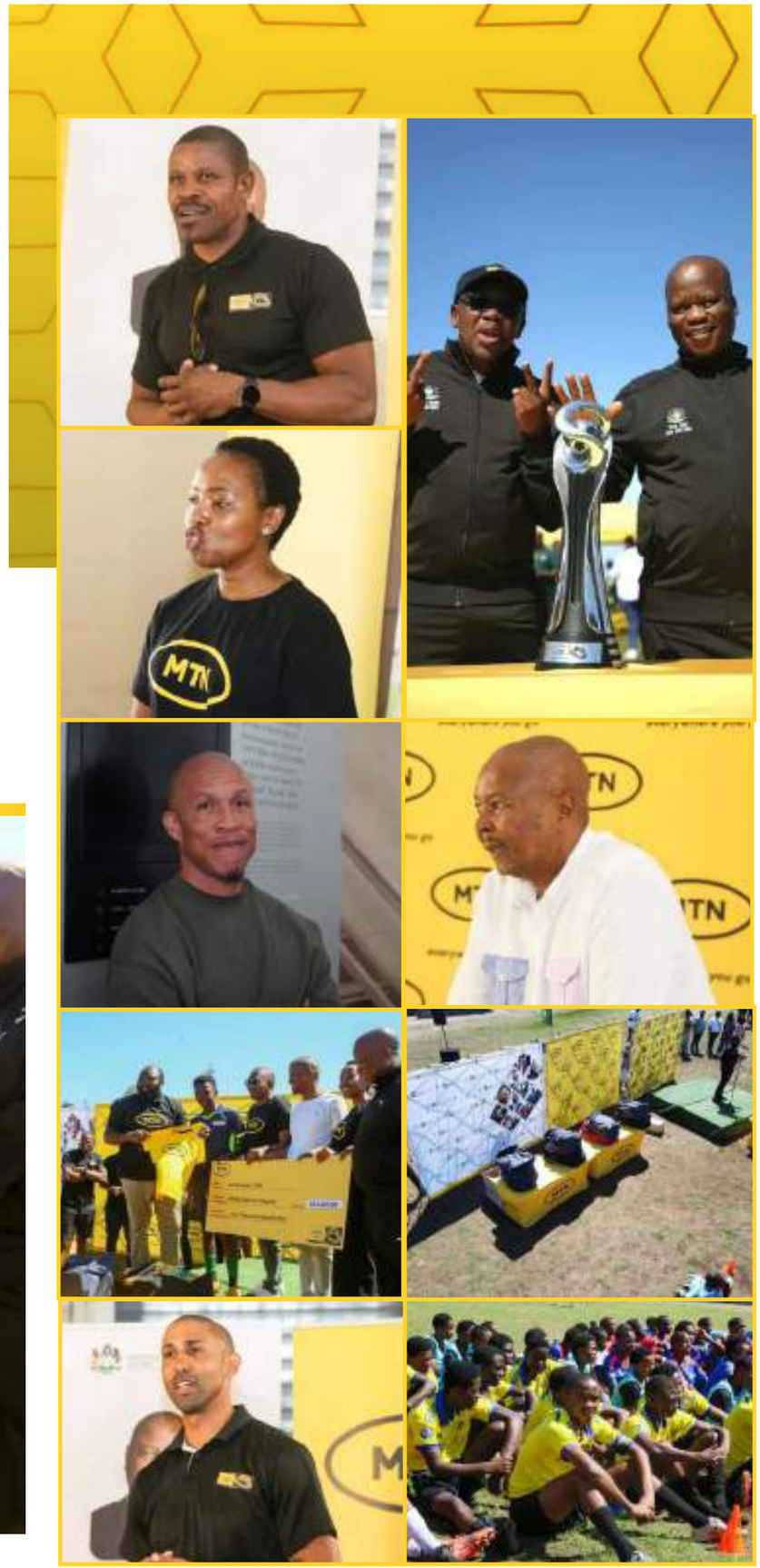
On 04 October 2024, learners from around Inanda and KwaMashu in Durban who aspire to be professional soccer players realized their dream of meeting soccer legends they look up to. These learners were privileged to participate in soccer clinics conducted by former soccer players who had successful careers in the Premier Soccer League (PSL), this was made possible by MTN. As part of its CSI Program, MTN sponsored four schools with soccer kits, training equipment, and a cheque of R10,000 towards the development of sports in these schools.

Siyadlala Thursday, which was recently introduced, seeks to encourage schools to dedicate time to sports every Thursday. This program targets all sporting codes, ensuring that learners participate in various sporting leagues and festivals.

The Head of Department, Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo, speaking at this important occasion, “This partnership that we have developed with MTN will go a long way towards activating our Siyadlala Thursdays. We are quite grateful to MTN for this enormous sponsorship,” remarked Ngcobo.

Date: 04 October 2024











KZN DOE HOSTS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS DAY

By: Nokukhanya Mthembu

In a powerful stand for breast cancer awareness, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, in collaboration with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health and Hilton Life Hospital, held an impactful Health Talk on October 30, 2024. Following a declaration by MEC Hlomuka, the day was celebrated as “Wear Pink” Day, a bold and vibrant symbol of hope, unity, and support for breast cancer awareness.

Radiologist Ms. Sarah Barnett and Ms. Deuneese Smith, Unit Manager at Hilton Life Hospital, opened the event with a powerful message about the critical role of awareness and education in the fight against cancer. “Our mission is to build an empowered community that champions early detection and provides unwavering support to cancer survivors,” Ms. Smith emphasized. She encouraged everyone present to take an active role in their health.

Ms. Nokulunga Mtolo from the Department of Health took the stage next, stressing the life-saving importance of regular screenings. “Annual health checks—whether it’s a mammogram, a prostate exam, or another essential screening—aren’t just appointments; they’re tools of survival,” she affirmed. “Early detection can dramatically improve survival rates, and it’s up to us to prioritize our health.”

The day closed with an inspiring message from Mr. Bongwa Nene, Deputy Director of Bursary Administration and Internships, who expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all involved and emphasized the strength of community in the fight against breast cancer. “This gathering has gone beyond information; it’s given us a renewed commitment to each other and to the cause,” Mr. Nene remarked. “Together, we are a force for change and a healthier future.”

The event concluded on a high note, with attendees proudly wearing pink ribbons, symbolizing resilience and solidarity with those affected by breast cancer. As they departed, participants felt empowered and ready to share the knowledge they had gained, advocating for early detection and promoting a culture of health awareness across KwaZulu-Natal.





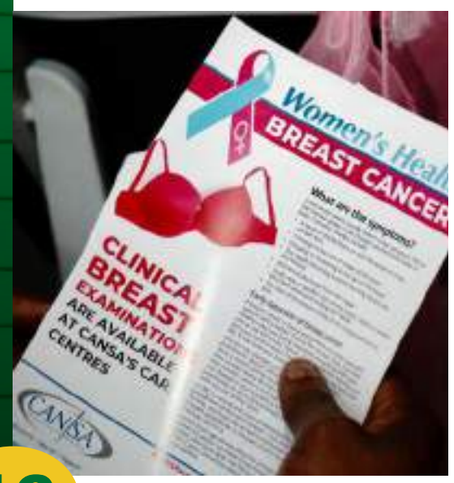














NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION READINESS MEETING











By: Noluthando Zitha

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education recently convened a crucial meeting with school principals, presided over by Dr Raymond Penniston, Chief Director for Examinations, Assessments, and Quality Assurance. Dr Penniston unequivocally addressed the paramount importance of preparedness for the upcoming October/November examinations and underscored the absolute necessity of upholding integrity in examinations and assessments. He left no room for doubt about the critical roles and responsibilities of educators and school principals in ensuring the utmost fairness and credibility of the examinations.

During the meeting, Dr Penniston emphatically elucidated the severe repercussions of misconduct during examinations, emphasizing the justice and fairness theory, which unequivocally dictates that all candidates must face an equal level of challenge, and none should be granted an unfair advantage.

Dr Penniston also voiced grave concerns about substandard invigilation and the escalating prevalence of examination malpractice in South Africa, including KwaZulu-Natal. He referred to specific

circulars, including KZN Circular No. 77 of 2024, KZN Circular No. 119 of 2022, and KZN Circular No. 126 of 2022, which rigorously address seating arrangements, tamper-proof exam papers, and stern warnings against malpractice during examinations.

In conclusion, Dr Penniston confidently underscored the indelible link between integrity, credibility, trust, and enduring success, citing Michael Josephson: “Without integrity there is no credibility. Without credibility there is no trust. And without trust there is no lasting success.”

Date: 14 October 2024
Venue: Alexandra High School, uMgungundlovu District



























UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MENTAL MATHS AWARDS

By Mbali Magwaza

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, uMgungundlovu District, recently hosted the Mental Maths Awards Ceremony to recognize the outstanding achievements of educators and learners.

UMgungundlovu District Director, Mr Siqhamo Mabinza, welcomed educators, learners, and guests. In his address, he reminded everyone that the Department of Basic Education has set a minimum target of 60% for mathematics. “I am pleased to see learners participating in programs like Mental Maths that ensure our learners build a strong foundation, which will enable them to perform well above expectations in the FET phase.”

The District Director thanked educators for their hard work and urged them to keep up the good work. He acknowledged the challenges educators face in ensuring quality education for learners in the district and expressed gratitude to the learners for their dedication and extra effort.

Chief Education Specialist (CES) GET, Ms Lumka Ngcobo, said, “Today we celebrate your achievements and the hard work you put into the competition. As a district, we are striving to improve in mathematics, and this program is one of our initiatives. We aim to increase the number of learners choosing mathematics in Grade 9. Our goal is to encourage mathematics interest, especially starting from foundation phase learners in Grades 4 to 6, to build confidence in choosing mathematics.”

Ms Ngcobo also acknowledged stakeholders such as Illovo Sugar, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and the Vula Project for supporting top-performing learners in mathematics.

Illovo Sugar STEM Project Manager, Ms Nozipho Gumede, delivered a motivational message, emphasizing that mathematics is woven into every aspect of life and fosters problem-solving, critical thinking, and analytical skills. She encouraged learners to embrace mathematics and explore its possibilities to unlock their potential for innovative excellence.

Date: 23 October 2024
Venue: Scottsville Primary School

































UGU DISTRICT EXCELLENCE AWARDS















By: Sphelele Madlala

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education recently hosted a prestigious Excellence Awards event at Marburg Secondary School to celebrate the outstanding achievements of learners from various schools in the uGu District. This event, held on 17 October 2024, aimed to honor the dedication and hard work of learners in the following categories: Mental Maths, Maths Olympiad, EMS, Technology, and IsiZulu.

The awards recognized exceptional performance while emphasizing the importance of academic competition in building strong foundations for future success, both in and out of the classroom.

Ms Thubelihle Mbayi from the General Education and Training (GET) unit delivered the icebreaker and introduced the guests. She emphasized the importance of acknowledging learners' efforts. She highlighted that while teachers play a crucial role in providing information, it is ultimately up to the learners to take charge of their success.

Ms Nozipho Mbotho, Chief Education Specialist for Teacher Liaison Services (TLS) and GET, underscored the significance of allowing learners to participate in educational competitions, stating that these experiences contribute greatly to their overall learning journey. Competitions not only build a love and passion for academics but also help address key challenges such as illiteracy and poor comprehension in reading and mathematics. She encouraged more practice in these areas to ensure learners develop strong literacy and math skills. Mbotho concluded by wishing all the top achievers a bright future.

During the event, two learners from Bongicele Secondary School, Mpendulo Cele, and Sphelele Nxumalo, performed a musical item, captivating the audience with their rendition of "Oprah." This performance highlighted the importance of extracurricular activities in keeping learners focused on building a bright future, free from distractions like drugs and crime.

The Excellence Awards event was graced by Mr Mboniseni Khumalo, a former principal in Ugu District, journalist, and author, who delivered an inspiring speech. He congratulated learners and educators, using the analogy of a heart and oxygen to emphasize the vital role teachers play in nurturing learners' success. uGu District Director, Mr Nkosinathi Madadi, also addressed the attendees, expressing gratitude to the hard-working learners and teachers while encouraging learners to stay dedicated, assuring them that their hard work would be rewarded.

Date: 17 October 2024


















THE FIRST BELA ACT ADVOCACY SESSION

By: Philakahle Ngubane

The Basic Education Laws Amendment Act Advocacy roadshow stems from the widespread misinformation regarding the Act signed into law by His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa, on 13 September 2024.

Basic Education saw it fitting to conduct roadshows to induct relevant officials who are at the forefront of implementing the said Act. This session is one of the four scheduled across the province.

The session saw detailed presentations from the Department of Basic Education officials and was attended by the DDG for Corporate Services, Advocate Bheki Masuku, Ms Ntokozo Maphumulo, Director for Legal Services, Director for Governance and Management, Mr Nhlanhla Mthethwa, and three District Directors from uMkhanyakude, King Cetshwayo, and Zululand Districts.

The myths associated with the Act were dispelled with factual and relevant information. Officials were also given the opportunity to pose questions and received clear guidelines, based on policy and the regulatory frameworks that govern education.

The informative session concluded with DBE officials highlighting that sections 4 and 5 of the Act are currently being deliberated on, and once the pronouncement has been made, it will be all systems go for the sector.

Venue: Masibumbane High School, Ulundi
Date: 09 October 2024

























ADVOCACY SESSION ON THE BELA ACT NO 32 OF 2024.

By: Hlengiwe Mncibi

The informative gathering, expertly facilitated by Mr. Nhlanhla Mthethwa, Director of Governance and Management, brought together key stakeholders led by Senior Officials from DBE (Mr. James Ndlebe- Chief Director- Planning and Monitoring support, who took the delegates through the BELA Act No 32 of 2024, highlighting the importance of common understanding and interpretation of all sections.

Among the attendees were the District Directors from uGu District, uMgungundlovu District, Harry Gwala District, and uMlazi District and Senior Officials from the Head Office to engage in a crucial dialogue on the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act.
Mr. Zukile Motswaki, Director of Legislative Drafting, provided a comprehensive overview of the rationale of the Bela Act, giving background on the sections of SASSA some of which were challenged in court thus leading to the need for amendments to be made.

Mr. Chris Lekers, Acting Chief Director of Legal Services, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the background and rationale behind Sections 4 and 5 of the Act. These sections, currently suspended by President Cyril Ramaphosa, focus on school authority regarding admissions and language policy. Political-level consultations are currently underway.

During the session, attendees had the chance to ask questions and create a collaborative environment to discuss how the BELA Act would impact educational governance at local and national levels. They also discussed the myths associated with the Act. The session emphasized the importance of a unified approach to implementing legislative changes to ensure that education remains inclusive, equitable, and forward-thinking.

Date: 10 October 2024
Venue: Port Shepstone High School, uGu District























RCL LEGACY PROJECT LAUNCH

By: Mbali Zulu

On 08 October 2024, the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal launched the RCL Legacy Project at Tongaat Town Hall, under the Pinetown District.

The RCL Legacy Project aims to be a practice that filters down to the school level and develops into an annual practice, which will culminate in establishing responsible citizenry.

Mr Thami Mbanjwa, Chief Director in the Office of the Head of Department, outlined the purpose of the day, stating, “We are here today because of these young future leaders who initiated this spirit of solidarity. Let us support these future leaders,” said Mr Mbanjwa.

Following the unfortunate incident that occurred earlier this year, the RCL leaders decided to assist the Tongaat tornado victims to restore hope and confidence. In doing so, they also aimed to leave a positive legacy of their time in office.

RCL leaders from various schools, led by the RCL President, Mr Kevin Kalala from Glenwood High School, graced the event with their presence.

Mr Sikhumbuzo David Manganye, Chief Director of Curriculum Development Programmes, delivered the keynote address during the launch. He said, “We are very proud of the wonderful work by our RCL leaders. There is a universal consensus that one of the most defining characteristics of leadership is influence. The South African Schools Act, Section 11, instructs every public school enrolling learners in Grade 8 or higher to establish an RCL. This section further declares the RCL as the only recognized and legitimate representative of the learner body at the school. We are here to witness this donation. These leaders are influential,” said Mr Manganye.

He further added, “Through your influence, you have made a clarion call to KZN citizens to respond to the plight of Tongaat residents whose lives were destabilized by the tornado. These donations attest to this gathering. The Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal will be recognized through this gesture. Also, thanks to DBE for the brilliant concept.”

Venue: Tongaat Town Hall
Date: 08 October 2024

























PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT MEDIATION OF THE BASIC EDUCATION LAWS AMENDMENT ACT

By. Mbali Zulu

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, together with the Department of Basic Education, hosted the third leg of BELA Act advocacy sessions with three districts, namely Amajuba, uThukela, and uMzinyathi, at Sarel Cilliers High School on 14 October 2024, in the uMzinyathi District.

The advocacy campaign was prompted by the need to ensure a common understanding of contentious prescripts of the Act for smooth implementation.

Among the attendees were officials from DBE, led by Mr James Ndlebe, Chief Director of Monitoring and Support in the Department of Basic Education, and senior officials from the Head Office, led by DDG for Institutional Development Support, Ms Weziwe Hadebe. District officials were also present, led by their District Directors.

During the session, Mr Sikhumbuzo Manganye, Chief Director of Curriculum and Management, who was the Programme Director for the day, stated, “It is mandatory that every role player in basic education complies with the provisions of the BELA Act because South Africa is a constitutional state based on the rule of law and the supremacy of the Constitution. Therefore, as KZN-DOE, we welcome the mediation of the BELA Act so that we, in turn, can take this process to our own officials, SGBs, and other important stakeholders in basic education,” he said.

An overview presentation was given, providing insight into the process of mediating the BELA Act and painting a clear picture of its objectives and contents to cascade the information.

In her closing remarks, DDG Hadebe, thanked the DBE officials led by Mr James Ndlebe and his team for making time for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. She also urged the District Operations Chief Directors to start introducing the BELA Act in their respective districts.

Venue: Sarel Cilliers High School, Dundee
Date: 14 October 2024
















UMLAZI DISTRICT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUNDA UDLALE NATHI









The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's Umlazi District, together with the Natal Early Learning Resource Unit (NELRU) and VVOB - Education for Development, hosted the Funda Udlale Nathi (F.U.N) Programme, a vibrant celebration of learning and play for primary school learners and Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres.

Umlazi District Director, Ms Busi Mahlambi, expressed her delight, saying, "I am thrilled to have seen our young learners thrive in this interactive environment. The Funda Udlale Nathi programme embodies our district's commitment to fostering a love for learning, creativity, and social development."

Ms Mahlambi added, "Today, we celebrated the joy of learning and the potential of our young minds. The Department is committed to providing inclusive, quality education that prepares learners for success. I commend Early Childhood Development practitioners, partners, and stakeholders for their dedication to providing quality education."

The Funda Udlale Nathi programme culminated in a spectacular showcase of talent, with Early Childhood Development practitioners and learners delivering captivating performances that made the event an unforgettable success.

Date: 17 October 2024
Venue: Sastri College, Umlazi District.



























INTER-PROVINCIAL LIBRARY INFORMATION SERVICES MEETING

By: Noluthando Zitha

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education recently convened a 2-day meeting of Heads of Education Library and Information Services. The sessions were led by Ms Kulula Manona, Chief Director of Foundations for Learning at the Department of Basic Education, with Mr Dumisani Sibisi, the ELITS Director in KwaZulu-Natal, serving as the program director.

Ms Manona emphasized the critical role of early development in shaping the future of learners, highlighting the importance of reading and writing in this process. She stressed the need to cultivate lifelong learners and acknowledged the challenges, particularly regarding capacity, that the system must address.

Ms Sindi Zakuza-Njakazi, Chief Director for Curriculum Management, spoke on behalf of the Deputy Director-General, Mr Mbongiseni Mazibuko, highlighting the impact of the ELITS MANCO in promoting literacy among 60,000 youths, providing books to over 1,498 schools and 664,000 learners. She emphasized the department's commitment to enhancing learning proficiency and shaping the future of reading and learning.

Partners and suppliers of the Department of Basic Education, including Nal'ibali, A Better Africa Foundation, Room to Read, and Masixhasane, also presented during the session, echoing the sentiments expressed by the DBE.

The meeting concluded with representatives from different provinces engaging in group discussions aimed at identifying key strategies for improving reading and learning for the children of South Africa.

Date: 16 October 2024
Venue: Anton Lembede MST Academy, La Mercy, Ilembe District































ONLINE LEARNER ADMISSIONS PROJECT-ROADSHOW

By: Thabile Dlamini

The start of a New Era
The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education held the online learners' admissions roadshow for the phase 1 implementation plan under four piloting Districts, uMlazi District, Pinetown District, Amajuba District, and uMgungundlovu District. The roadshow presentation targeted Principals and circuit managers in each of these districts.

The District Directors welcomed and addressed all principals and circuit managers in attendance, who arrived at a brief overview of the online learner's admissions project.
Department of Education Director of IT services Mr Simesihle Halimana, addressed and gave an overview on how online admissions will play a pivotal role in the future declaring "As we step into the 4th Industrial revolution, technology is the new age." Furthermore, KZN Doe Mr Lihle Khoza IT Officer, presented the parent and learner registration guidelines for the online admissions.

Mr Sandile Mkhize the Project Manager for the online learners' admissions gave a brief scope of work phase 1, highlighting the Risks and mitigation, walk-in centres, the advantages of online applications, and the strategic impact of online admissions.

Representing Telkom Mr Ruan Van Merve demonstrated a backend system for placing and verification that will be used by circuit managers to either approve or reject applicants.

Deputy Director from Change Management Ms Duduzile Mkhize, proceeded to give a brief overview of the 2024 implementation plan, roles, and responsibilities with the system. Mentioning that One of the responsibilities will be the verification of documents, loaded on the parent registration and final placement of a Learner. She highlighted that there will be training that will commence on the 21st -31st of October 2024.

In conclusion, DDG Mr Mbongiseni Mazibuko conducted a Q&A engagement with the principals and circuit managers who had questions regarding the online learner admissions project.

Venue: Sastri College uMlazi District, Glenhaven Secondary Pinetown District, Amajuba High School, Amajuba District and Alexander high School uMgungundlovu District.

Date: 9 - 14 October 2024



























NATU PRINCIPAL'S SEMINAR

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, represented by Deputy Director-General (DDG) Advocate Bheki Masuku, participated in a two-day NATU Principals' Seminar held at the Imbizo Conference Centre, Empangeni, on the 10th and 11th of October 2024, aimed at tackling the challenges faced by educators within the sector.

Responding to the theme, "Enhancing Quality Education through Strategic Resourcing that Prioritises Adequate Staffing, School Safety, and Effective School Management," Advocate Masuku presented a detailed report on school funding disparities in education as a reflection of prevailing resource disparities in society. This provided a greater understanding of the department's current challenges and outlined the mitigation strategies being implemented to address them.

The message from all presenters was clear: ongoing, healthy engagements between the department and organized labour, as one of the crucial stakeholders, foster openness and transparency. This approach will yield positive and fruitful outcomes, ultimately enhancing teaching and learning.

Venue: Imbizo Conference Centre, Empangeni
Date: 10-11 October 2024


































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