



GAUTENG PROVINCE

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GDE launches plan to improve language and maths skills for grades 4-7

Gauteng Education MEC Ms Barbara Creecy this weekend launched a strategy to improve the teaching of mathematics and languages in grades 4 to 7.

The Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) completes the interventions to strengthen teaching of these subjects in primary schools.

Last year, the GDE launched the literacy strategy in grades 1 to 3. Learners are already improving their understanding of phonics, reading and writing. They are also beginning to enjoy mathematics as they grasp key counting and computational skills.

The GPLMS is being expanded to 811 priority primary schools. These are schools that obtained less than 60% in the Annual National Assessment in 2010/11. Nearly 5000 teachers will participate in the programme and it will benefit 480 000 primary school learners in the province.

MEC Creecy announced that grade 4 to 7 educators will be provided with lesson plans for each term as well as quarterly learner assessments. This will reduce the workload of educators and allow them to spend more time with learners.

Learners from grade 3 will participate in a catch-up programme to get them up to speed with the knowledge they will require in grade 4. They will also receive graded readers and phonics programme.

Towards the end of last year, the department appointed youth who passed matric to support learners in priority schools with homework. They assist learners for one hour of each day after school.

“Educators alone cannot help learners to improve their reading and writing skills. That is why last year we ran parental workshops so that families can also support learners at home as well,” MEC Creecy said.

The department will recruit 460 coaches to support literacy and numeracy in primary schools. These coaches will visit educators in classrooms at least twice a month.

“I would like you to think of a coach as a critical friend. They are not there to supervise you. You will still report to your HoD or principal. They are not there to performance manage you. They are there to assist you with applying the training you have received into your classroom situation with its own particular complexities such as overcrowding or learners who have not eaten breakfast,” MEC Creecy said.

The 2010/11 Annual National Assessment results showed that in grade 6, 23% of learners had the necessary knowledge of mathematics and 29% had achieved language skills. This means that between 70% and 80% of learners go to secondary school having partially achieved or not achieved language and mathematics skills. The target is to raise this to 60% of learners by 2014.

A deputy principal at a school in Ekurhuleni Steve Maropa said this programme emphasised the basics of teaching – the ability to count and basic computational skills as well as understanding how to build up, develop and pronounce a word.

MEC Creecy urged over 2500 educators gathered at Ellis Park to prepare for their classes, work with coaches, and share their success and challenges with each others. The programme will be integrated and aligned with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

For more information contact the Gauteng Department of Education’s Head of Communication, Charles Phahlane on 011 355 1530 or 071 860 4496.

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