



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

Umdibanisi Newsletter

Volume 2

Implementing appropriate and relevant educational
programs through quality teaching



WOMANDLA





Editor's Desk



Another edition of the Communique, your newsletter that seeks to tell our stories and embrace the strides made by employees to contribute towards the improvement of results in the province. We hope this edition will bring more insight about what we, the employees do.

Issuing this inspiring edition coincides with the new inspiring spring season that seeks to beautify the world, as it is characterised by blooming flowers and trees. May we enjoy the season and hope its impact will also be locally felt as its also associated with beautiful colours and happiness.

Lastly, as much as we prepare these stories for us (employees), we would like to hear from you, what you would enjoy being featured. This way, this will also ensure that you own this publication as it is only for employees, by employees.

Happy spring season to all and hope to hear from you soon!
Enjoy

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MEC Message



Fundile Gade

MEC, Eastern Cape Department of Education

A CALL FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, VALID

The clarion call for the prioritisation of youth employment across South Africa, and in particular the rural province of the Eastern Cape, is a valid one. The EC, as the poverty stricken province accounts for the majority of unemployed young people, compared to all the other eight provinces across the country.

What pains me is that many of these young people are unfortunately graduates and diplomats that had been sitting idle in their respective homes, with their degrees and diplomas gathering dust, for many many years now.

President Cyril Ramaphosa, had once described the skyrocketing unemployment figures of young people as a “national disaster”, he had also called for a “co-ordinated solution” from both the public and the private sector. It is no surprise that the president has described such scourge as a disaster, because, stats show that by the end of the first quarter in 2023, 44.7% of people between 15 and 34 years of age remained outside of employment and education and training. Through his Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI), implemented as the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) across all nine provinces, the country has however succeeded in the slight reduction of youth unemployment. The president's programme also has an added value in stimulating the economy of South Africa.

In summary, the PYEI seeks to co-ordinate, accelerate and enhance existing programmes while driving innovation and creating pathways to earning for young people at scale.

In the context of the basic education sector, the initiative has assisted in ensuring that teachers were supported in the classrooms by way of contracting intern educators to assist in needy schools. This initiative has seen more than 320 000 young men and women securing job opportunities in ± 23 000 public schools across the

country. The recent launch and induction of 100 Eastern Cape intern educators speaks directly to the president's initiative. The provincial education department appointed hundred unemployed educators, to be deployed to all provincial education districts and needy schools. This is a drop in the ocean, some may say, but a great opportunity for the hundred young graduates, who had never been inside any classroom or had decent means to put food on their tables, since they had graduated, some years ago.

The youth placed in the initiative were appointed from a pool of unemployed graduates in the department's database, and will be contracted for a period of twenty-four months while some may surely be absorbed permanently in their respective schools.

The sole purpose of this internship programme is to provide work experience to these unemployed educators across the Eastern Cape province, to train, develop and transfer skills, to make them employable. The education department's goal is to transition these young people successfully from learning to earning, with a stipend of over R6000 on the cards. Their presence at these needy schools, will help alleviate the workload from many strained

educators who sometimes had to juggle between teaching and learning duties, to doing administration work. The program will not only help improve the efficiency of teaching and learning at our provincial schools, but will also change lives. It will not only change lives of those over-worked educators and over-crowded learners, but the lives of those intern educators just contracted by the department as well.

As we had just celebrated youth month in June, this will be the department's contribution to the president's initiative, and in the fight against youth unemployment in the province.

This is a drop in the ocean, some may say, but a great opportunity for the hundred young graduates



HoD's Message

As we move closer to the start of the National Senior Certificate examinations in October, let me first recognize the role played by educators, learners and departmental officials in supporting schools that engaged in winter and spring school's activities, to help schools and in particular learners to prepare for the upcoming exams. The various forms of support and assessment tools enable the department to evaluate schools and learning areas that need additional support timeously, as we seek to further improve on the outcomes of the matric class of 2023.

We are intensifying our efforts in ensuring that our learners read with understanding and meaning, through the Reading Strategy and Campaign that we have embarked on as a department. This is part of a national strategy that we as a province have enriched, by focusing on schools developing their own School Reading Policies that speak to their unique environments, for outcomes that are in line with the needs of the learners in each particular school.

During this third quarter, as a department we have also sought to put additional focus on safety in schools, both in infrastructure as well as physical safety of learners and educators. We are partnering with communities to assist schools that have experienced challenges on safety, particularly vandalism of school infrastructure, as well as incidents where learners in communities that experience high levels of crime. We trust that the partnerships we build with communities will result in learning environments that not only benefit learners but community safety broadly.

I would also like to recognize the tireless work done by departmental officials who have been travelling across the province, to give support to schools that have experienced various challenges during this quarter. Collectively we can do more to give our learners the support they need to succeed, not only in their studies but as leaders of the future as well.

ECDOE IN-HOUSE CAPACITY BUILDING SESSIONS

By Siphosethu Zimba



ECDoe's Human Resource Development (HRD) and Human Resource Administration (HRA) collaborated and conducted In-House Capacity Building sessions for all the employees in the department. The program focused on equipping employees on how to prepare for job interviews, how to draft a professional CV and applying on EC – E- recruitment System.

Each year government departments and other private organizations develop an annual recruitment plan for the financial year. This plan is usually implemented through advertising posts on different platforms, giving equal opportunities to all individuals to apply and compete for such vacancies. This is why HRA and HRD decided to embark on this program to assist its employees to be capacitated and ready for as and when the opportunities come.

The session kicked off with a presentation by Human Resource Administration EPS Principal Personnel Officer, Lwazi Cenge, on the E-Recruitment System. He mentioned how this online tool comes as an advantage to job seeking individuals. "We decided to include this in the program as many departments and recruiters use this system to advertise posts to reach a larger audience. The E-recruitment system helps people to reach a larger number

of potential employers and vice versa. It is user friendly and cost effective", said Cenge.

Human Resource Development Director, Lukhanyo Sidiya, who is also the Provincial Skills Development Facilitator, said that she was very impressed with the turnout and enthusiasm shown by the employees as this training initiative deals directly with their needs. "This initiative emanates from the identified gaps during interview processes that some people who have vast experience fail to express themselves in a way that will attract the interviewer", said Sidiya. She further explained that people fail to do proper research and align their experience with the requirements of the post, which is why the department decided to equip its employees with the necessary skills to make sure that they are on par with the standards of recruitment and selection. "We want to make sure that occupational directed learning is happening, considering that the Department of Education is meant for Training and Development", added Sidiya.

"I learnt a lot of things like how to structure your CV and how to conduct yourself in an interview and mostly, to be knowledgeable about the organization that you are applying for"

Logistics Management intern, Zizo Soheni who attended the training said that "it was quite informative".

"I learnt a lot of things like how to structure your CV and how to conduct yourself in an interview and mostly, to be knowledgeable about the organization that you are applying for. I will use this opportunity to implement everything I learnt there and improve on the things that I think I lacked in", added Soheni.

Financial Planning Services Assistant Director, Yola Songqaru who also attended the training said that she felt inspired by the initiative. "It provides me with great pleasure to witness how the department is responding to the challenges of skills, knowledge and competencies of its employees by facilitating support on how to advance our careers in order to contribute to the development of our country", concluded Songqaru.

What Does It Mean To Be A Woman To You?

By Siphosethu Zimba

The Office manager, in the Office of the Director, School Health Safety and Learner Enrichment, Milisa Qhawekazi Mtoto from Phakamisa Township, said “Celebrating women’s month is such a blessing, whilst the fight for rights for women in south Africa is still work in progress, there is still a lot of action waiting to be enforced to realize effective and sustainable outcomes on this matter. Being a woman is a journey of self-discovery and empowerment. It is about recognizing one’s unique identity and embracing it with pride. Women have broken down barriers, shattered glass ceilings, and redefined the boundaries of possibility. It’s a celebration of individuality that encourages women to stand tall unapologetically. It means being strong and purposeful, it means rising above challenges while leaving the door open for those who follow.”



Financial Planning Services Assistant Director, Yola Songqwaru said “Being a woman to me is embracing my feminine energy that brings balance and alignment in a dominating masculine energy world. It is the natural flow of my hair that resembles the tree branches that provides shade to my nurturing brain. It is the softness of my breasts that are a source of nutrition to a newborn for his/her development. It is the ability of my womb to be a portal by transporting a soul from a spiritual realm to the physical world. In essence being a woman to me, is about being compassionate, loving, caring and being soft.”



Salary Payment’s Accounting clerk, Donnah Ngqola from Mdantsane N.U. 9, said “Being a woman means using my voice to empower others to create positive change. Above that, inspire other women to do the same.”



Corporate Strategy Management Intern, Avela Msesiwe from Mount Ayliff said “Being a woman means so many things to different people. To me it means having a strong sense of identity, accepting my body as one that adapts and changes over time, being confident and building up people around me and lastly being a mother.”

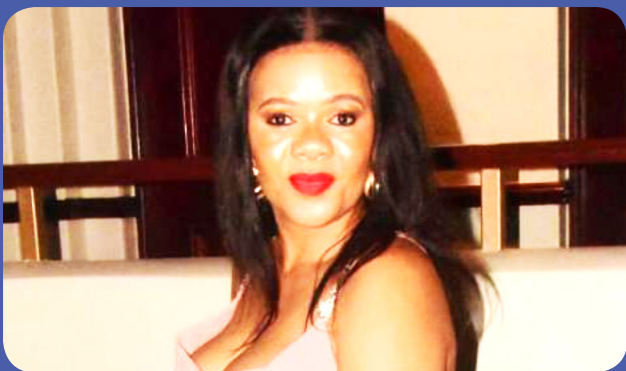


ECD Curriculum Intern, Nelisa Siliziwe Ntsepe from the Ngxwalande Location, said “To me being a woman means EVERYTHING, it means being visible everyday in the space that you are in, it means accepting who you are, embracing your identity because women are powerful, strong and multifaceted. Let’s hold each other and help raise our kids, let’s continue educating ourselves and empowering each other.”



Strategic Planning, Acting Assistant Director, Fikiswa Boo said “A woman is the bearer, the nurture, visionary, the prayer warrior, the nurse. Being a woman means a lot of different things. It means being able to be powerful and assertive, yet very kind at the same time. It means being compassionate and vulnerable towards those we love in our lives without feeling weak for doing so. It means pushing to achieve goals even in the face of the adversity faced along the way. A large part of this is achieved through a strong female support system that encourages us to be our best selves.”

“To me being a woman means EVERYTHING, it means being visible everyday in the space that you are in, in means accepting who you are, embracing your identity because woman are powerful we are strong and multifaceted. Let's hold each other and help raise our kids, let's continue educating ourselves and empowering each other” said Nelisa Siliziwe Ntsepe who is an intern from the ECD Curriculum section.



“To me being a woman means EVERYTHING, it means being visible everyday in the space that you are in, it means accepting who you are, embracing your identity because woman are powerful We are strong and multifaceted”

HIV and HPM Practitioner, Bongiwe Makongolo, born and buttered in Mdantsane said “Being a woman means I am beautiful, compassionate, courageous, intelligent, inspired, confident, strong and gentle. It means you don't always have to make yourself a victim of your circumstances, to look pitiful and point fingers at other people. Being a woman to me means you force through life challenges and with each challenge you grow stronger mentally and emotionally. We sometimes cry ourselves to sleep, we pick ourselves up wipe our tears and get stronger with each situation. A woman overcomes battles most people can't imagine. We are focused and unstoppable and we thank God for that”



Acting Chief Director for Learner Development & Social Support Services, Chulekazi Noziqhamo Xundu-Bula

said “As a divorced mother of 4, -three daughters and one son, I find myself being a provider, a nurse, an advisor, a counselor, a teacher, a protector, a cook, a partner, a cleaner, almost everything with a skill of multi-tasking. I sometimes attend a virtual meeting whilst cooking, but give both my all. I have to have a certain level of emotional intelligence to manage. From the career perspective, one of the experiences as a woman leader is that, almost every time you have to prove a point that you have what it takes to be where you are, and you must work twice as hard as your male counterpart for you to be recognized that indeed you deserve to be where you are. I also feel that it is important to engage in women support networks, mentoring & coaching of women leaders and all kinds of women empowerment programs, for there is no 'shop for purchasing capacity' if we claim women do not have capacity to lead.”



EC YOUNGSTER LUKHANYO STEADILY CLIMBING THE CORPORATE LADDER

By Siphosethu Zimba

Education department's young woman determined to make a change, defies societal stereotypes to claim her space!

Lukhanyo Sidiya is a 36 year old humble female from Marwaqa location in Mount Ayliff, a small developing town in the Alfred Nzo District. Lukhanyo is married and blessed with a sweet 13 year old daughter, Tsoanelo, and a 10 year old son Kamohelo whom she describes as her best friend.

She holds various qualifications, which include National Higher Certificate in Accountancy, National Diploma Internal Audit, National Diploma Public Management and B-Tech Public Management, all acquired at Walter Sisulu University. She has Honours in Public Administration and Masters of Public Administration. She is now studying towards her PhD. Sidiya believes that public admin field is the relevant qualification that should be a prerequisite to all public servants, as it guides and moulds individuals and gives skills on how to implement public policy and ensure service delivery is provided in a structured manner.

Sidiya joined the Department as an intern in 2008 and was permanently appointed in 2010 as a secretary. At the age of 29, she was appointed as the Provincial Skills Development Facilitator, making her the first and youngest female to hold this position in the ECDoE. Sidiya showcased her leadership skills and competence in her work such that two years later, she was appointed as Acting Director HRD. She has had many accomplishments in her career which include receiving a Performance Award (Departmental best performing programme), EPWP (National Award - Best performing province), she was appointed as the PYEI provincial project manager which she is implementing efficiently, serving as a guest lecturer, and serving in committees.

Sidiya has to juggle between being a young leader, a mother and a wife and seems to balance everything effortlessly. She stated that in order to achieve anything in life one needs to balance all key elements that seek to achieve happiness, dreams and aspirations.

"I was also raised by parents who were leaders and one thing they taught me was that I must never delegate my motherly responsibilities no matter what. At work I make sure as I plan to provide strategic leadership in the role I am employed for, I do that with all the efficiency and confidence and monitor realisation of my strategic targets by capacitating my subordinates and delegate them in order to build confidence in them. What helps me most is that I plan and set clear targets on all aspects of managing a warm home and it works for me very well", added Sidiya.

She also expressed that she faces a challenge of being taken for granted because of her gender and my age. "My performance at work should not be measured because I am female. Females find

themselves having to work double for recognition whereas male counterparts are understood when they can not achieve what they have been appointed for", said Sidiya.

Some of Sidiya's dreams and aspirations are to serve 3 years as a permanent appointed Director as she continues to capacitate herself and ensures that the impact of her programme is enjoyed by the people of the EC. "At the age of 40 I must be amongst the executives in the (NSG) National School of Government and be responsible for the implementation of the national HRD strategy. That is why I am an HRD specialist because I am developmental



"At work I make sure as I plan to provide strategic leadership in the role I am employed for"

oriented person. I find peace when I see other people enjoy benefits from the government," she added.

Sidiya expressed that in the next 2 years in the reins, she would like to see ECDoE amongst the Departments who have clean administration. "I personally believe that the only building blocks to clean audit is when we clean our administration first and put systems that will ensure that all strategic activities that are implemented are within the scope of Batho Pele principles and that is what public administration is about.

All our strategic outcomes achieved in an efficient and effective manner. That will lead to the EC province be in the top 5 best performing provinces," concluded Sidiya.

Handling food better

By Dineo Matroko

The Eastern Cape Department of Education recently held a skills workshop for school nutrition monitors in the province. This workshop was to equip monitors with the necessary skills on handling food as learners eat every day at school and the department has to ensure that the food is of quality, and doesn't pose a threat to the health of learners.

Unathi Baleni who is a monitor at Alfred Nzo East District felt that the workshop will ease her work when she visits schools in her district. Baleni said "The workshop will help when we train servers at district level, how they should handle food to ensure that hygiene standards are always maintained" Baleni also felt that the workshop will help with new meal servers saying, "the workshop is good but we need more skills for our food servers as circumstances vary from one school to another."

National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) Director, Verona Witbooi outlined plans going forward on making sure that learners

eat healthy food in a safe and hygienic environment. Witbooi said "using districts as vectors for advocacy, they will further map their training and advocacy plans and will also engage the leadership in various sectors to help make this mission a success. Monitors need continued support of both circuit and district management to convene the food safety committees. The need for safe water, compliant kitchens and storage conditions is a matter of urgency for the safety of our learners." Concluded Witbooi.



Education intervenes on the Enyobeni

By Thando Ngcume



The Eastern Cape Department of Education held a School Music Festival at the Scenery Park Hall, Buffalo City Metro Education District recently. The aim of the Festival was to address the Social-Ills and to create a conducive learning environment for learners around Scenery Park area.

The event was attended by ECDoE Officials, School Governing Body, Community members, Bumb' ingomso Non-Profit Organization, Zwelembundo Primary School, Mbulelo Senior Primary School and Uviwe Senior Secondary School.

Buffalo City Metro, Scenery Park Ward Councillor, Monica Goci welcomed all who attended the event and encouraged learners to be on their best behaviour as the Education Department has done their best to ensure that they return to Scenery Park after the unfortunate tragedy that happened in 2021.

ECDoE School's Health Safety and Learner Enrichment, Acting Director, Pumla Gxuluwe said that the Department has decided to visit the area to show continuous engagement with learners to try and remove them from underage drinking sprees and 'pens down'

parties. Bumb' ingomso Non-Profit Organization Representative Akhona Mbangi said that they honoured the invitation because it is in line with their mandate of empowering young people from diverse communities. "It is time for us to make the right choices to better our way of living rather than wasting our future by using Alcohol and Drugs, therefore as Bumb'ingomso we would like to encourage learners to visit our offices to partake in available projects that are meant to empower them."

"Attending this event was a blessing as I have learned that alcohol and drug abuse do not only affect our school only but the whole nation. I am very touched to see the courtesy that the department has shown and now it is all up to us to choose wisely" said a 13 years old Ayakha Twetwa from Bulela Primary School.

Uviwe Senior Secondary School, Grade 11 learner, Oyama Ndamane (17) said that attending the School Music Festival was very productive. "Starting from now I will attend school with a different mindset and be equipped to make a change in our school and the community" concluded Oyama.



The team of provincial National Teacher Awards winners with their certificates flanked by departmental leadership during the awards ceremony recently held at the East London ICC.

Picture Gallery



VISION

To provide learners with opportunities to become productive, responsible and competitive citizens through an inclusive quality basic education system.

MISSION

To achieve the vision, we will implement appropriate and relevant educational programmes through quality teaching and learning; mobilise community and stakeholder support through participation; and institutionalise a strong culture at all levels of the Department.

VALUES

*High Performance | Responsiveness | Accountability
Empathy | Access | Equity | Integrity*



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**Let's Grow
South Africa
Together.**



• Wash & sanitize
your hands

• Hlamba ucoce
izandla zakho



• Keep your distance
from others

• Gcina umgama
phakathi kwakho
nabanye



• Wear your mask

• Nxiba i-mask yakho