

## CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

Normally no one is friendly when the decision is taken to change to survive.

2012 onwards expect of us as educators, to make changes and take challenges to the benefit of education in South Africa and the child.

Hence it is easier to join in if you have the emotional security and are convinced that the changes are in the best interest of the country and the child and that you can depend on support.

It is our intention with this edition to inform you about the ways and means the Department put forward to support us so that it will be easy for us to apply our minds to the changes.

Let us be positive, give our support and work collaborative to quality learning and teaching.

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### Action plan for Teacher Education and Development

**The primary outcome of the Integrated Strategy Plan of the Department is to improve the quality of teacher education and development in order to improve the quality of teachers and teaching and it pertains to all teachers that service the schooling system.**

The Plan addresses the career of a teacher through a number of phases from recruitment through to retirement.

**The Plan recognises** that the ultimate responsibility for recruiting, preparing, inducting, developing and utilising human resources lies in the Public authority, **but** it is the stakeholders, the teachers

who are the contributors to the structure of the Plan and its implementation.

The plan of the Department places teachers firmly at the centre of all efforts to improve teacher's development and enables teachers to take substantial responsibility for their own development with the support of the Department of Basic Education, Provincial Education Departments, Department of Higher Education, SACE, ETDP SETA and teacher unions.

The Plan delinks teacher appraisal for the purposes of development from appraisal for purposes of remuneration and salary progression.

The Plan must be considered by other planning processes such as those related to the IQMS, WSE, NEEDU and CPTD Management System.

In order to achieve its outcome of improving the quality of teacher education and development in order to improve the quality of teachers and teaching- the Plan identifies and describes specific outputs and related activities.

The Plan makes provision for quality teacher development to happen through activities that may or may not be linked to formal qualifications.

The Plan identifies at least **four essential requirements** for it to succeed:

- enhanced collaboration among role-players;
- a coordinated national system for teacher education and development;
- adequate time for quality teacher education and development;
- and sufficient funding for teacher education and development.

The sourcing of funds and the planned allocation of funds to enable the Plan to be fully implemented are the responsibilities of the various lead agencies under the

auspices of the Heads of Education Departments Committee and the Council of Education Ministers.

(Resource: Basic Education. Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-2025)

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### Is Professional Learning Communities (CPLCs) the way forward?

The aim with PLCs are to establish communities that will provide the setting and necessary support for groups of classroom teachers, school managers and subject advisors to participate collectively in determining their own developmental trajectories, and to set up activities that will drive their development.

The key players in the establishment of PLCs are the provinces, districts, teacher organisations; subject- based professional teacher associations and the teachers themselves.

In the initial stages PLCs will require substantial external input through well-trained facilitators (who could be subject advisors or trained mentor teachers who must assist teachers to take control of their own development within a manageable time frame.

Diagnostic self-assessments will help teachers to identify areas that they must address and the PLCs will assist them with appropriate CPD courses in this regard. PLCs will assist teachers to integrate their own professional knowledge with the latest research-based knowledge about content and practice.

PLCs will allow groups of teachers to engage in a

variety of activities including analysis of learner results, curriculum orientation activities, learning how to interpret and use curriculum support materials such as workbooks, working together to learn from video records of practice and learning material.

The National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development (NICPD) will support the work of PLCs by developing activities that can help stimulate their work.

Some of us will say :” Nothing new,” while other will say, ” What a great move” – let us all work together and find pleasure in our work and stop to move away from the pain with short- term results.

Resource: Basic Education. Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-2025)

## **A Turning Point in the History Education in South Africa**

We have started on the road to 2025 with clear signposts and milestones which will measure our progress.

In 2012 the Department of Basic Education will continue to work to strengthen the delivery of quality education by ensuring effective and efficient delivery of the curriculum.

The Action Plan focuses on strengthening learner performances, particularly in literacy and numeracy in the critical foundational grades, performance in mathematics and science and thorough preparation of the system for the implementation from January 2012.

The Department’s aim is to ensure that each child will have a textbook for each subject, therefore they are moving towards the central procurement of quality learning and teaching materials.

Secondly will they remained focused on planned teacher development to improve teacher practices. Priority support will be given in the fields of literacy, physical science, mathematical literacy and English First Additional Language.

Through the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative (ASIDI) which will be administered nationally, the worst physical structures will first be replaced and then systematically the rest.

The Norms and Standards for School Policy has also been put in place and set out clear norms and standards for our schools.

The Department will also promote learner wellness, which will lay emphasise on nutrition and health programmes and the creation of conditions whereby learners and teachers are safe at school.

NEEDU will conduct the monitoring and evaluation of schools, districts, provinces and the national Department to help strengthening delivery of key outputs.

The national Department will be responsible for policy and monitoring the system, while provinces will play a vital role in the delivery of quality education.

Lastly, the Minister of Basic Education will not hesitate to take the necessary steps required to ensure a sustainable turnabout of basic education in a province

(Resource: Basic Education, 31 May 2011. Annual Performance Plan 2011-2012)

## **Did you know.....?**

**Mother tongue:** Refers to the language that the learner acquired in his/ her early years and which normally become his/ her natural instrument of thought and communication.

**Home language:** Refers to the language that is spoken most frequently at home by a learner.

**Language of learning and teaching (LOLT):** Refers to the language medium in which learning and teaching takes place.

**Code switching:** Refers to switching from one language of instruction to another language of instruction during learning and teaching.

**Dual medium of instruction:** Refers to the use of two media (languages) of instruction by a teacher in a lesson, switching from one medium to the other, on a 50:50 ratio.

**Parallel medium school:** Refers to a school that practices parallel medium instruction in all grades.

**Single medium of instruction:** Refers to a school that uses one medium of instruction (language) for all learners in all grades.

**Preferred language of instruction:** Refers to the (preferred) language of instruction indicated by the learner on the time of registration.