

DBE puts final touches on coding curriculum

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga says government is putting the final touches on the coding and robotics curriculum developed for Grades R-9, which is due for completion by the end of July.



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Motshekga said this on Wednesday when she tabled the department's 2020/21 adjusted budget vote during a virtual plenary session.

The initial overall 2020/21 budget allocation for the DBE (before adjustments) was just over R25.3 billion, and this was reduced to over R23.2 billion following budget cuts and adjustments due to coronavirus spending.

"The DBE has developed the coding and robotics curriculum for Grades R-9, which is currently being repackaged to ensure proper sequencing and seamless progression from one phase to the next.

"We are planning that the repackaging process will be completed by the end of July 2020," said Motshekga.

After putting the final touches on this curriculum, it will head to the quality council authority, Umalusi, for approval.

The rollout of this curriculum forms part of the department's strategic implementation of a curriculum with skills and competencies for a changing world in all public schools.

Once approved, teachers and subject advisors will receive training for this curriculum online because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Motshekga, the Education, Training and Development (ETD) sector and Skills Education Training Authority (SETA) has availed R7 million for this training.

DBE strengthens skills development

To strengthen its skills development initiatives through the three-stream curriculum model, the DBE has partnered with Ford Motor Company. This partnership will see 240 engines donated to technical schools offering Automotive as a subject.

"In our efforts to provide every school with ICT devices, loaded with digital content, the DBE, in partnership with mobile network operators, has completed the audit of all 477 special schools.

"We have also finalised the implementation plan with the mobile network operators to provide all these schools with devices, connectivity, digital content, as well as ICT integration training for teachers," said Motshekga.

In a bid to digitise schools around the country, the DBE, in partnership with the Communications and Digital Technologies Department, has identified 152 sites in 76 education districts, to equip them with virtual classroom infrastructure.

Through this initiative, the sector will fully embrace the digital revolution of remote learning. Districts will be able to benefit through curriculum specialists' streamed lessons on digital platforms.

In line with government's decision to relocate Early Childhood Development (ECD) from the Department of Social Development to the DBE, the department is in the process of amending the Basic Education Law Amendment (BELA) Bill.

The amendment of BELA caters for compulsory attendance – first, in Grade RR by learners turning five (5) years of age; and second, Grade R by learners turning six (6) years of age.

To assist in finding solutions to some of the challenges facing the ECD sector, and to provide guidance on how government can achieve a transformed ECD sector, the department has established an ECD think tank, comprising a group of experts from government, academia, NGOs and civil society.

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