

Motshekga sets pace for new school year

By [Gabi Khumalo](#)

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Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga has reiterated the call for educators and learners to use the time allocated for learning and teaching effectively during school hours, and to ensure that nothing interferes with teaching time.



(Image: GCIS)

"Protect teaching time! Nothing should happen between 8am and 2pm except for teaching and learning," Motshekga said on Wednesday as schools across inland provinces reopened.

Motshekga, in partnership with Nedbank, handed over school uniform, including shoes, bags and stationery, to 100 learners at N'wa Mhinga Primary School in Atteridgeville, in Pretoria, as part of the Nedbank Back to School campaign.

Initiated in 2011, the campaign helps learners in rural communities and informal settlements across the nine provinces with basic learning resources. This year, Nedbank is aiming to invest R6.5m towards school uniform and stationery, benefiting over 6,000 primary and high-school learners.

Speaking to members of the school governing body (SGB), Motshekga urged them to have more discussions with parents on the importance of improving education in the school.

"We have to focus on learning and teaching, and I expect the SGB to get the ANA [Annual National Assessment] results, use them as an indicator of your performance and use them to develop an improvement plan.

"During your meetings, motivate parents to open their kids' school bags and support them; know what is happening in the classrooms, the challenges and difficulties facing teachers ... and children with learning barriers, and begin to deal with them. These are the things I expect you to know," Motshekga told SGB members.

She stressed the importance of sticking to the basics regarding maths and literature.

"We are starting from a low base and it's possible to improve by doing the basics... Let's get the basics right [with] reading and writing."

Education is key

Managing executive for Consumer Banking at Nedbank Retail, Ciko Thomas, said the bank placed particular importance on education as it was the key to unlocking a knowledge-based economy.

"This will help accelerate our country's growth and development. Research shows that effective schools are built on strong leadership, quality teaching, learners having sufficient resources and appropriate academic support, adequate infrastructure and effective community involvement," said Thomas.

He encouraged learners to make the most of the opportunities presented to them.

He said the Back to School campaign contributed to the Millennium Development Goal of universal access to education, and eliminating poverty and hunger by alleviating the financial burden and inspiring thousands of learners in rural communities.

The Nedbank campaign aims to raise R500,000 worth of donated items, which will reach an additional 500 learners. The campaign will close on 31 January 2013.

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