

Keynote Address- MEC Mac Jack

Handing over of Edukite Hard-and Software

Northern Cape High School

Friday, 2 August 2019

Senior Management of the Department of Education;

Educators present;

Distinguished guest;

Ladies and Gentleman;

Members of the media

It gives me great pleasure to officiate this auspicious occasion which will equip educators with 21st century technology as we prepare learners for the 4th industrial revolution.

The premise of our input this afternoon is a question that revolves around the 4th industrial revolution. “What do steam, science and digital technology have in common?” These are the first 3 industrial revolutions that transformed our modern society.

With each of these advancements the steam engine, the age of science, mass production and the rise of digital technology fundamentally changed the world around us.

And right now, it's happening again, for a fourth time. Each of these first 3 industrial revolutions represented profound change. We are talking major societal transformation. So where are we now? Well at this moment, many of the technologies people dreamed off in the 1950's and 1960's have become a reality.

Maybe we don't have flying cars yet, but we have robots, plus there's genetic sequencing and editing, artificial intelligence, miniaturized sensors and 3D printing too mention a few. And when you put all these technologies together, well, let just say the innovations are unexpected and surprising. This is the beginning of the next great industrial revolution, the 4th industrial revolution.

The Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr Zamani Saul, during his Acceptance Address in May 2019, committed to making the Northern Cape Province a Modern, Growing and Successful Province.

During his Inaugural Speech on 29 May 2019, the Premier communicated what he perceives to be attributes of a Modern, Growing and Successful Province.

Among these, and critical to the Northern Cape Department of Education (NCDoE), is the prioritization of quality education to ensure the province remains “at the cutting-edge of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. In response to the Premier’s vision for the Northern Cape, the NCDoE has procured Edukite hard and software for Mathematics and Physical Sciences for Grade 12 and Natural Science for Grade 9 to enrich and vary the understanding and expression of subject content. The provision and utilisation of this Edukite ICT resource will provide an invaluable platform for educators to strengthen content knowledge and classroom pedagogy and, ultimately, stimulate and enhance learners’ grasp of especially abstract and problematic content.

Identified educators will receive a laptop loaded with digital CAPS-aligned curriculum content in the form of Multimedia 2D and 3D animations, interactive simulations, virtual experiments, assessments, opportunities for prior learning and consolidation of the relevant subject.

These educators will all undergo rigorous two-day training from 2-3 August in Kimberley and 16-17 August in Upington to enable them to understand the benefits of this resource as a lesson enhancer and utilise it correctly and optimally in the classroom. The Edukite resource will also transform the role of the educator in the learning space and teaching time will be maximised through an easy-to-use and time-saving tool.

The department deemed the investment in an off-line resource prudent to negate the lack of connectivity. The investment in the off-line Edukite resources was first introduced in 2016 where approximately 750 educators received hard- and soft-ware packages. A number of teachers also received data projectors to enable the utilisation of the resource.

The current expansion of the Edukite will provide resources to 400 educators across three subjects, namely Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Physical Sciences.

Reflecting on successes of Edukite

With the introduction of Edukite in Life Sciences in 2016, the National Senior Certificate (NSC) performance in this subject improved from position 9 to position 6 in the country. The subject pass rate also improved with a significant 11%. Performance in Geography also improved in 2017, taking the province to number 3 in the country with a pass rate of 85.9%

The following are some of experiences and comments of Life Sciences, Geography educators who are making use of the Edukite software during their daily teaching:

- “Edukite makes my lessons more interesting”,
- “Edukite makes my lessons more diverse”,
- “Edukite has improved the presentation of materials for my lessons”,
- “Edukite gives me more confidence”,
- “Edukite makes the lessons more fun”.

Our expectation as a Department with the expansion of Edukite is that it will:

- Provide immediate support to novice educators;
- Increased learner outcomes in problematic subjects;
- Enhanced the confidence of educators;
- Variation of pedagogy in the classroom;
- Opportunities to introduce blended learning;

In conclusion, we are excited as a Department about the new era we are entering, which involves technology to enhance the classroom experience for both learners and education.

As we are entering the 4th industrial revolution, it is my plea that educators accept and embrace the change that we as a Department will be embarking on to prepare our learners and improve our learner outcomes across all Grades.

I wish you all of the best with the two day training session ahead and trust this new technology will reignite your love, passion and energy for the teaching profession. I thank you!