

Commission: Curriculum matters

21 June 2017

Areas for discussion:

1. Efficiency and quality – through curriculum delivery
2. How to reduce high failure rate
3. How to ensure curriculum packaging retains learners in the geographical areas they are located (less than 5km radius)
4. Teacher training: to reconfigure; mother-tongue instruction becomes a reality; in UNESCO definition (how does teacher become influential?)
5. Effect that closure of colleges have on inefficiencies related to teacher development (how to ensure that colleges are resuscitated)
6. How to link recruitment to suitably qualified persons?
7. 21st Century skills
8. Enabling environment that facilitates effective learning

Three themes (combination of eight areas of discussion)

1. Curriculum

Intention: Provide systemic framework to support all teachers. Post 1994.

Must ensure continuous feedback to teachers on their performance (IQMS). Is curriculum cause of dropout, lack of retention, etc.?

Recommendation: One of the blockages is that our curriculum is too broad it has to be narrowed.

Recommendation: Some exercises are needed on how we can reduce topics, to increase depth in terms of the syllabus.

Recommendation: The role of subject specialists, their monitoring should be shifted, not in mode of compliance but rather assistance.

Most teachers do not have pedagogical skills needed in classrooms.

Recommendation: That teacher colleges are re-opened.

What is critical areas in teaching and learning? We have been reduced into a system of teaching for testing.

Mother tongue instruction

High failure rate in Grade 4. Transition from mother tongue to English.

Incremental introduction of African Languages, how so we achieve the objective we have set. How do we transition from Grade 3 to 4? English has been introduced at the Foundation Phase (measure the DBE has introduced).

ANC intention was that learners should have a base with mother tongue instruction in the lower grades (grade 1 to 3). What have we done fundamentally about this resolution?

First Additional Language introduced from Grade 4.

Recommendation: IIAL and FAL – there has to be a way to acknowledge that mother tongue instruction is important for the development of learners.

Recommendation: IIAL – How do we manage transition from mother tongue to English?

Recommendation: Educators must come up with a process that will enable learners to appreciate what is taught.

2. Professional Development

How to help teachers identify what they want learners to learn? Teachers do not know how to set up exam papers. We need to come up with strategy to empower teachers to identify what they are teaching (connect between what we are asking teachers to do and what learners have to do).

When teachers come up with success criteria, they come with programme for learning. So learners can extend and take charge of learning.

21st Century Skills is in the curriculum, it has been there since we started with OBE.

Problem: Skills have to be taught.

Recommendation: **21st Century Skills** should be an integral part of teacher development.

Recommendation: Allow learners to be part of process of learning. Assessment must remain function of the teacher, but quality assurance is key. Teachers must be empowered on how to do it.

Recommendation: Empower educators to know what they are teaching.

Teaching should become more learner-centred.

Assessment must not be taken from the teachers. Over assessment – what the DBE is currently doing. Assessors are not assessed.

OBE was learner centred.

Track learners who are coming out of DBE, this will be able to say to system, things are not fine.

There is no alignment between what DBE is doing with Funza Lushaka and how teachers

Proposal: We might need consistent in-service training. The role of teacher Colleges is critical.

Recommendation: Ensure teachers own profession and redefine the profession.

Are induction process suitable for new teachers to adopt culture in schools? If we open teacher colleges, we could achieve this.

Recommendation:

Curriculum coverage: Does not take into account contextual factors of learners. This is where teaching and learning is ignored.

Recommendation: Problem with over intervention. We must stop demoralizing teachers, saying teachers don't have pedagogical knowledge, is demoralizing teachers.

Recommendation: Administrative burden that teachers have, focus is now shifted on assessment and administration and little focus is placed on quality and the curriculum.

Teaching according to pace of learners. Now there is too much focus on the syllabus.

Recommendation: Roles of subject advisors needs to be clearly defined. NECT is giving too much work to teachers.

Recommendation: Exclusion of principals as markers should be reviewed.

3. Enabling environment

Recommendation: Important to have priorities right. Technology to some schools and some do not even have water. Infrastructure should be on an acceptable level for all schools in the country.

Recommendation: Safety, resources, libraries are needed so that teachers are able to teach. The fundamental basics are not yet met. Contextual factors should be considered (e.g. Child headed families). This has to be addressed to make teaching effective. Children are treated as if they are the same instead of cutting down on individual experiences.

Recommendation: Our Welfare programmes should be strengthened.