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THE YEAR IN REVIEW **Highlights of 2017**

By Bernice Loxton

As 2017 draws to a close, it is essential that we reflect on the developments of the year, particularly in relation to collective bargaining in the ELRC.

The Council concluded two collective agreements to improve management and strengthen accountability in public education at district management level.

The two agreements concluded are also aligned with the National Development Plan's (NDP) vision and policy proposals on the reform of the education sector in South Africa. This is specifically in relation to Chapter 9 of the NDP on the establishment of a results-oriented framework of mutual accountability, where districts are accountable for supporting schools.

The agreements provide clear job descriptions for office-based educators and a revised performance management system for educators. This will ensure improvement in the system as performance management would now be standardised across the nine provinces.

Collective Agreement No. 3 of 2017:
Education Management Service (EMS):

The Agreement provides a revised framework for managing the performance and development of office-based educators.

Sections A to D of the Agreement provides essential information on key result areas; personal development plan and performance monitoring, review and assessment.

Templates are also provided on performance agreements and work plans.

Collective Agreement No. 4 of 2017: *Job descriptions for Office-Based Educators*

The Agreement replaces the job descriptions of office based educators as contained in Collective Agreement 1 of 2008 and the PAM Chapter A.

The Agreement clearly outlines the job purpose, key performance areas as well as knowledge and skills requirements for Chief Education Specialists; Circuit Managers; Deputy Chief Education Specialists and Senior Education Specialists.

The two agreements serve as effective tools for district management to ensure that the NDP goals are realised.

Agreement on picketing rules

The Council also concluded Collective Agreement No. 1 of 2017 on Picketing Rules. This Agreement is of great significance as it provides a procedure for picketing during industrial action in an effort to ensure peaceful and organised picketing.

The vital principle of the Agreement is to protect the teaching and learning process. While the Agreement seeks to protect the rights of union members to strike peacefully, it similarly strives to preserve the rights of the child to education and to ensure that learning and teaching is not affected by strike action.

Provincial Agreements

Two provincial agreements were concluded in 2017.

The KwaZulu-Natal ELRC Chamber concluded Collective Agreement No. 1 of 2017: *Procedure for the staffing of all schools under the control of the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department in three years cycles.*

The purpose of the Agreement is to establish a procedure for the staffing of all schools under the control of the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department within the framework of the ELRC Collective Agreement No. 4 of 2016, to ensure stability in the staffing of schools within the Province.

The Eastern Cape ELRC Chamber concluded Collective Agreement No. 1 of 2017: *Conversion of educators on contract into employment on a permanent basis in Eastern Cape Education Department.*

The purpose of the Agreement is to provide for the conversion of educators on contracts into employment on an indefinite basis in the Eastern Cape Education Department as outlined in section 6B of the Employment of Educators Act (EEA) 76 of 1998.

The aim of the Agreement is also to provide for an equitable dispensation for the prevention of less favourable treatment of educators employed on contracts into employment on a permanent basis in public education, as outlined in the EEA.

This Agreement seeks to strengthen the stability established in the Eastern Cape Province over the past two years.

Link to collective agreements on the ELRC website: <http://www.elrc.org.za/collective-agreements/national>

Education Indaba

The ELRC hosted the first Education Indaba in June 2017, which brought together all stakeholders in education to deliberate on the many challenges that confronts the public education sector, specifically issues concerning education provisioning and related matters.



The outcome of the Indaba was a Declaration that represents the consensus achieved among participants at the Indaba and forms the basis of future dialogue, with the aim of informing policy direction in line with the perspectives of Government and the combined teacher unions in public education.

The Indaba resolved that Workstreams would be established under the stewardship of the ELRC to execute the tasks emanating from the 2017 Education Indaba. These are the

Early Childhood Development (ECD)/Grade R and Post Provisioning Norms (PPN) Workstreams.

Post provisioning in particular is a pertinent matter that has become one of the vexing issues in the different provincial education departments.

The short-term goal of the PPN Workstream is to ensure that there is common understanding on how PPN is managed across the provinces. This will be in the form of a standardised manual on the PPN model and adequate training provided to provinces.

Another essential national concern is (ECD)/Grade R provisioning. This matter prompted the research commissioned by the ELRC in 2016 on the *Policy and Conditions of Service for the Institutionalisation of Grade R Practitioners*.

The recommendations from this study as well as the issues raised at the Indaba in relation to ECD, forms the basis of the matters addressed in the (ECD)/Grade R Workstream. The short-term goal of the (ECD)/Grade R Workstream is to address policy implications to universalise Grade R by 2019.

The two Workstreams are to present recommendations and working papers at the 2018 Education Indaba. These implementable solutions will greatly assist in the collective endeavours of education stakeholders to realise the goals for education as outlined in the NDP.

Facilitation and Intervention

The ELRC provided facilitation in the Eastern Cape from December 2016 on the PPN Management process in the province.

For the first time in the history of the Council, an invitation was extended to School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in the province to be part of the facilitation process. This gesture had a positive impact in Province, as

the SGBs challenged this process through the courts in the past.

To date, the residual issues in relation to PPN 2017 have been concluded, with clear plans for the 2018 PPN process.

In addition, facilitation was also provided on displaced educators. The Province has 325 displaced educators, of these, 105 educators were dealt with during the facilitation process. A total of 69 educators were placed and 29 were offered early retirement.

The envisaged outcome of the facilitation in the Eastern Cape was to emerge with a consolidated Management Plan on the identification and movement of additional educators. This was achieved in 2017 and the facilitative process is ongoing to maintain stability in the Province.

The 2017 academic year commenced with no incidents of unrest reported in the Eastern Cape.

Honouring teachers

This year's theme for the Teacher Appreciation and Support Programme (TASP) was the year of OR Tambo.



The OR Tambo Centenary Commemoration on 5th October 2017 at the Sheraton Hotel in Pretoria, celebrated the life and times of Oliver Tambo. Oliver the teacher was celebrated and his ability to inspire his

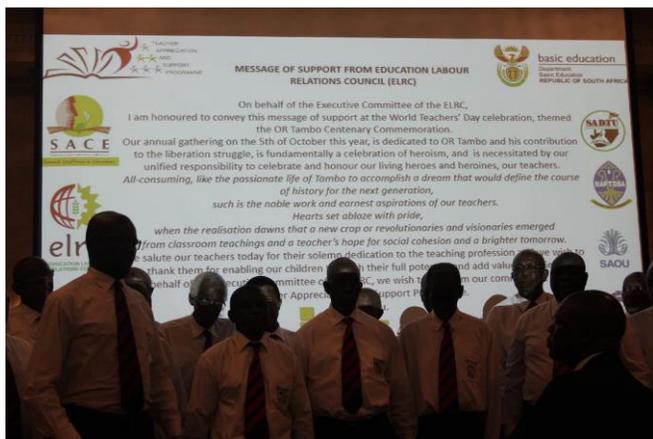
students to learn through innovative teaching methods, also enthused those in attendance.

The panel discussion unearthed the present day struggles that teachers are faced with. The panel, motivated by Tambo as an exemplary educator, also provided solutions to overcome those challenges.

A World Teachers' Day celebration was also held in Polokwane on 27th October 2017. The UNESCO theme for 2017 was observed, "Teaching in freedom, empowering teachers". The Teacher and Appreciation and Support Programme (TASP) theme for this year, "O.R. Tambo Centenary Commemoration", resonated with the international message, which is to commemorate the hard earned freedom, which we enjoy in our country and seek the same liberation in education to allow teachers to fully embrace their profession.

This year dedicated to OR Tambo and his contribution to the liberation struggle, was fundamentally a celebration of heroism.

This annual celebration of teachers on 5th October each year, is necessitated by the unified responsibility of education stakeholders to celebrate and honour the living heroes and heroines of our time, our teachers.



All-consuming, like the passionate life of Tambo to accomplish a dream that would define the course of history for the next generation,

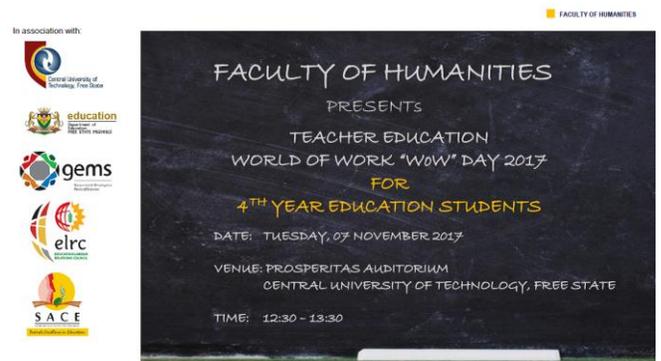
such is the noble work and earnest aspirations of our teachers.

*Hearts set ablaze with pride,
when the realisation dawns that a new
crop of revolutionaries and visionaries
emerged
from classroom teachings and a
teacher's hope for social cohesion and
a brighter tomorrow.*

When we value our teachers and afford them the recognition and appreciation that they rightfully deserve, we elevate the status of the teaching profession. This should be an enduring endeavour, in line with the TASP objective, to honour teachers throughout the year.

Provincial events

The ELRC was invited to the Inaugural Teacher Education World of Work (WoW) Day for the 4th year B.Ed. (Senior Phase & FET) students, which was held on 7th November 2017, in the Free State.



The event was hosted by the Department of Teacher Education, in the Faculty of Humanities, Central University of Technology, Free State. The main purpose of the function was to share information with 4th year B.Ed. students on what to expect in the world of work, especially within the teaching profession.

The ELRC Free State Chamber provided a presentation on the services rendered by the Council in support of educators in the province.



For more information on the core services rendered by the ELRC. Please watch our corporate video on Youtube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_nBEpgYXzA&feature=youtu.be



The **New Negotiator** is published by the Education Labour Relations Council's Research & Media unit

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