

# Twinning of Schools Programme gets underway

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The management of schools piloting the Twinning of Schools Programme in Gauteng say they are excited about sharing facilities and human resources amongst their schools to help learners achieve more in education...

On Thursday, Gauteng Education MEC Panyaza Lesufi was at Lyndhurst Primary School in Johannesburg with the school Principal, School Governing Body (SGB) Chairperson and their counterparts from Bovet Primary School based in Alexander.

The MEC was giving an update about the Twinning of Schools Programme which he announced towards the end of last year.



Image credit: [GautengOnline.gov.za](http://GautengOnline.gov.za)

Speaking to media on the day, Bovet Primary School Principal Edward Makasane said the school is very excited about the programme.

"We don't have enough facilities at our school, so we will be using the facilities of Lyndhurst Primary School," said Makasane.

Makasane was accompanied by Bovet Primary School Governing Body Chairperson, Mukatuni Gumani, who said learners struggle to unleash their full potential if they are in an uncondusive environment to exploit that potential.

"I see a new environment that will allow learners from Alexander to exercise their potential. Possibly we will see learners getting used to laboratory work. Either than that, I also see best practises being shared.

"The future looks good, I don't think we will be turning back. We have agreed that we will be continuing with the programme moving forward," said Gumani.

Lyndhurst Primary School Principal Wellington Shaw said teachers and the community had a responsibility to ensure that all children enjoy the same opportunities.

"We have lots of programmes in our school. We have resources given by the Department of Education and we feel that the school belongs to government.

"The resources should be shared accordingly because there are communities which don't have the facilities that we have," said Shaw.

Lyndhurst school, unlike Bovet Primary school, has sports grounds and the principal feels that it is good to share the facilities with other schools.

He said human resources will also be shared amongst the two schools, to ensure that the results of both schools improve.

He said teachers are excited about exchanging visits to each school and they regard their schools as one school with two campuses.

"We support this programme and the vision of the MEC whole heartedly," he said.

The Twinning of Schools programme is aimed at achieving an optimal level of performance in all schools in the province.

The MEC said a notice of intention is soon to be published for Cultura High School and Zithobeni Secondary School, as well as Sandown High School and Alexander Secondary School.

He said he was also excited that Sandton High and Alexander High Schools have also agreed to be twinned.

"This schools are going to be twinned until the end of June next year," he said.

He said about eight schools have agreed to pilot the programme.

He said the twinned schools will be provided with additional focus and support in respect of Curriculum and Assessment Development; Teacher Provisioning and Support; Leadership and Management; Infrastructure Development and Maintenance; Planning, Finance and resourcing; Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Education; Social Cohesion; School Functionality, Community Involvement, Skills Development and access to Quality Early Childhood Development.

MEC Lesufi said the programme has been carefully structured with the best interest of the schools and its learners in mind.

"Research and consultations with all of the affected stakeholders have preceded the process to ensure that the programme yields a favourable outcome for all schools involved," said the MEC.

MEC Lesufi said the department is aware of the challenges faced by schools in the province such as insufficient infrastructure and resources and a lack of social cohesion due to the low levels of integration and interaction between learners at different schools.

## **Single Medium Schools convert to Parallel Medium Schools**

The MEC said the department has taken a decision to convert 124 single medium schools to parallel medium schools as a way of addressing overcrowding in most of the schools in the province.

"Gone will be the days that children will be segregated purely because of the medium of instruction that the school chooses to go with," he said.

The MEC said this was necessitated by the increasing demand for space in schools and the influx of learners from other provinces into Gauteng.

"The department has taken a decision to utilise available space to accommodate learners," said the MEC.

The MEC said the whole process will be done within the confines of the law and the department will soon start consultation processes with all affected schools.