

Efforts to improve matric results at Mabalengwe Senior Secondary School

REPORTER

IN a bid to improve matric results in the Libode district in the Eastern Cape, the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) English first additional language (EFAL) specialist visited the Grade 12 class of Mabalengwe Senior Secondary School to sharpen their EFAL skills.

This is one of the schools in the Fresh Start School Programme (FSSP) of the NECT, which is a process of empowering schools whose performance is hindered, by providing them with a new opportunity to

attain more positive learner outcomes.

The FSS programme focuses on languages, mathematics and physical sciences.

It is a collaborative response to the National Development Plan's (NDP) education objective that by 2030, 90% of learners pass maths, science and languages by at least 50%.

In 2014, Mabalengwe Senior Secondary School achieved a 25% matric pass rate.

Last year, the school's matric pass rate improved to 35%. Through this initiative, the NECT is aiming to

further increase the pass rate to 60%.

On the day of the Mabalengwe Senior Secondary School visit, great emphasis was put on English first additional language.

NECT EFAL specialist Thandiwe Mthimunye said: "It is crucial for learners to be skilled in EFAL because this is the language in which they answer all their examinations, excluding the isiXhosa Home Language (XHL) examination. If learners cannot read or write in English, failure is inevitable because all learning areas are written in English."

Reading, interpreting and implementing instructions is a great challenge for learners and it has a negative impact on the overall matric results.

Mthimunye took over the grade 12 class in an attempt to develop learners' instruction-following skills and accentuate their spelling skills.

After completing the successful lesson, she tackled another section that has been proven to be a great challenge – summary writing skills.

"This might seem like an easy section, but learners struggle with it the most.

"They struggle with vocabulary and that hinders their ability to structure sentences in their own words," Mthimunye added.

The EFAL educator was there to observe the lesson.

She said she had also got a few tips that would increase productivity in the classroom and improve learner results.

Among those who visited the school was the NECT Libode district manager Tidimalo Nkotoe.

She declared that she had adopted Mabalengwe Senior Secondary School and would provide the school with intensive support.