

## Investing in education



business in education: The business sector in South Africa is showing a keen interest to support education. picture: Gallo Images  
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### **SIHLE MAVUSO**

The South African business sector has shown an increasing interest in supporting an integrated education intervention that comprises a cost effective and sustainable model for school improvements.

About 600 schools in the uThungulu district are part of the first wave of schools in the country to receive assistance for improving pupil's academic performance.

The Jika iMfundo ("change education situation") programme focuses primarily on improving curriculum coverage in English, mathematics, science and IsiZulu.

The programme was launched by KZN education MEC, Peggy Nkonyeni at Umfolozi College in Richards Bay on Tuesday.

Nkonyeni said the programme will really speak to the power of a collaborative process to address the challenges in the education system.

"Everybody is accountable for the results of our learners and failure is not an option as we work towards a better future for our children. The endorsement and support by the country's teachers unions is a crucial component of the programme's success. We are very pleased to be working with the unions along with business and civil society to ensure that the future leaders of South Africa achieve their potential," Nkonyeni said.

The programme is funded both by the National Education Collaboration Trust and the department of education.

The programme was to be initially implemented in two districts in the province (uThungulu and Pinetown) reaching more than 1200 schools. It will be rigorously monitored so that it can be improved before being implemented across the remaining 10 districts of KwaZulu-Natal.

Also present at the launch was Murphy Morobe, the chairperson of the Programme to Improve Learning Outcomes (Pilo) who said that the programme being implemented in uThungulu was

designed to overcome the challenges that schools face.

“In all our consultations with teachers and officials we have been inspired by their determination to improve learning in schools. We need to constantly support our teachers and learners and remind them that what they do every day matters.

“We are working across the system, and schools will be supported as the model reduces the burden on officials through technical support, change in management approaches and capacity building,” Morobe said.

Mary Metcalfe, the former Director General at the Department of Higher Education and Training, now stakeholder and change director at PILO said this programme would assist district officials, teachers, school management, learners and parents to improve learning.

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