

The Weekly

DEVELOPING MATHS WHIZ KIDS

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Making maths fun ... Education MEC Tate Makgoe is leading the initiative to make maths easier for learners in the foundation phase.

Two hundred government schools in the Free State will have classrooms that are specially designed to inculcate mathematics in learners from Grade R to 7.

The first Math Lab, as these classrooms will be known, was launched at the Theha Setjhaba Primary School in Sasolburg last week.

The communications manager of Edusimat, Kholiswa Khoba, said the project came to life after research was conducted into how a country such as India has managed to produce so many engineers, something that South Africa experiences challenges with.

The theme for this lab is “Maths is Fun”. The Department of Education is in partnership with Edusimat, which are offering the technical support to the project. Everything in the classroom, from a carpet to a table and computer, will be maths related to help incorporate and instil mathematics in the children’s lives.

‘The world-class Maths Lab will be the first of its kind in the country. It will help improve learners’ performance, demystify maths as a difficult subject, and attract more learners to choose the subject,’ said a spokesperson for the provincial Department of Education, Howard Ndaba.

He added that the lab is a classroom with a strong mathematics feel – the furniture fittings have mathematical shapes, there is state-of-the-art computer equipment, the carpets display indigenous games, and tools stimulate learners to think and talk the language of mathematics.

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“The teachers will be trained to help them use the classroom. The principal of the school is appointed a CEO of the project because he will be responsible for familiarising the parents and allowing them to experience the classroom. This will also help the parents to know how to assist their children at home,” Khoba said.

The principal of Theha Setjhaba Primary School, Mahalio Tlou, is excited about the department’s decision to choose her school for this kind of a lab.

She told The Weekly she is following her passion, because her main objective is to educate the nation – and this is the purpose of this lab. The school has 1 219 learners from Grade 1 to 7 and is a no fee school.

“We know this lab does not replace the teacher, but enhances and assists them to teach our children. The computer classroom was identified and converted into a lab. There are six tables in a normal classroom that can accommodate 40 to 45 learners,” said Tlou.

She added that the only challenge they are facing is to involve parents in this programme. She said, however, this is a national challenge that can be overcome by hard work and perseverance.

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