

INFORMATION GUIDE



**National
Teaching
Awards**

Recognising Excellence in Education



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS 2012

Recognising Excellence in Education

Information Guide

Introduction

The National Teaching Awards Scheme was conceptualised and launched in 2000 and now enters its thirteenth year of implementation. Through extensive consultation, the scheme has been refined, sharpened as well as broadened in terms of its frame and categories. This information leaflet welcomes you to the National Teaching Awards 2012.

The Department of Education wishes to salute all schools and teachers who have entered the National Teaching Awards since 2000. The Department acknowledges the extraordinary efforts of teachers which are often made under very difficult conditions. The efforts are a service to our children, many of whom come from poor communities.

The National Teaching Awards scheme is one of the ways in which the Department of Education acknowledges and encourages dedicated and caring teachers in their efforts to develop each learner as a citizen of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa.

The objectives of the Ministry of Education through the National Teaching Awards are to:

- Focus public attention on the positive aspects of Education, thereby raising the public image of the teaching profession;
- Recognise and promote excellence in teaching performance;
- Honour dedicated, creative and effective teachers and schools;

- Encourage best practice in schools, and
- Afford South Africans the opportunity to publicly say thank you to outstanding teams or individual teachers in schools.

Categories and Awards

The categories are:

- Excellence in Primary School Teaching;
- Excellence in Secondary School Teaching;
- Excellence in Primary School Leadership;
- Excellence in Secondary School Leadership;
- Excellence in Grade R Teaching;
- Excellence in Special Needs Teaching;
- Excellence in ICT– Enhanced Teaching, and
- Lifetime Achievement Award.

The awards are:

- District finalists: Certificates of Excellence
- Regional/Cluster finalists: Certificates of Excellence
- Provincial finalists: Certificates of Excellence & prizes
- National finalists: Certificates of Excellence & prizes

Definition of terms

For purposes of this guide the following definitions apply:

- **Excellence**

Maintaining high standards of performance and professionalism and aiming to be the best in everything, including being fair, ethical and trustworthy.

- **Team**

Refers to two or more people cooperating with one another/working as partners in a school/centre, in an open and supportive way to achieve shared organisational goals. A team should be a group of colleagues in a particular grade, phase, learning area or the school/centre management team. A maximum of 5 (five) educators may form a team.

- **Primary School**

From Grade 1 to 7.

- **Secondary School**

From Grade 8 to 12.

- **Grade R category**

Full public schools.

- **Special Needs Teaching**

For public special schools, mainstream and full service schools.

- **ICT-Enhanced Teaching**

Refers to the infusion or integration of ICTs into day to day teaching activities by teachers in public schools, mainstream and full service schools.

- **Teachers or educators** are used synonymously in this booklet.

- **School Community**

This refers to everyone that has relevance in the school/centre setting (i.e. parents, teachers, learners, the business sector and teacher unions).

- **Governance Structure** refers to School/Centre Governing Body (for ECD)

- **Diversity**

Differences in people, taking into account the following aspects: culture, language, geographical background, ability, age, economic and social background, etc.

- **Social Goals**

This refers to matters such as human rights, inclusivity, and environmental and social justice (as described in the National Curriculum Statement).

- **Social cohesion issues**

Among other things, this refers to the following:

- Demographic representation;
- Gender;
- Race relations, and
- Constitutional precepts such as redress and access the importance of teaching in achieving social goals.

- **Context**

This refers to learners' needs, interests and background (social, economic, political, cultural, etc.)

- **PDE**

Provincial Department of Education

- **EWP6**

Education White Paper 6

- **ICT**

Information and Communication Technology

Criteria for nomination

All entries will be assessed against the general criteria and the specific criteria of the category entered for.

General criteria

How the educator deals with the impact and effects of the following social challenges:

- Deals with issues of race relations;
- Applies constitutional precepts such as redress and access;
- Realizes the importance of teaching for social goals;
- HIV and Aids;
- Substance abuse, crime and gangsterism;
- Poor facilities and inadequate resources;
- Diversity, and
- Gender sensitivity.

Implementation of education policies

How the educator understands, interprets and applies current policies and how these policies impact on their teaching practice.

Contribution to the ethos and morale of the school/centre

How the educator:

- Motivates and inspires learners and colleagues;
- Is involved in programmes that unify the school community, and
- Engages in continuing professional development activities, which have a positive impact on classroom activities.

Contribution to extra-curricula activities in the school community

How the educator:

- Encourages learners and colleagues to participate in extra-curricular activities, and
- Succeeds in using extra-curricular activities for the holistic development of learners.

Specific criteria

Excellence in Primary School Teaching

Creatively engaging learners with the curriculum in order to enhance their learning experience

- Using knowledge and skills to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses in order to choose appropriate teaching and learning strategies;
- Using learner-centred techniques that provide for acquisition of basic skills, knowledge, promote critical thinking and problem solving;

- Adhering creatively and innovatively to curriculum outcomes and assessment standards relevant to the learners' developmental levels, and
- Balancing curriculum outcomes and the context of the learner within a learning programme.

Contributing to the personal development of learners by communicating effectively with them about their performance and progress

- Keeping comprehensive records of planning and learner progress (portfolios) and ensuring that these are accessible;
- Actively involving learners in their own assessment in a way that fully supports their needs and the development of their skills, attitudes and knowledge;
- Giving insightful, regular, consistent and timeous feedback, which is built into lesson designs and is available to all stakeholders, and
- Providing opportunities for learners to link curricular activities with real life experiences (such as taking them on excursions).

Adapting learning and teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual learners effectively

- Using inclusive strategies and promoting respect for individuality and diversity;
- Promoting learners' self-esteem so that they are motivated and self-disciplined;
- Using different techniques to promote cooperative learning, and
- Organising space to enable all learners to be productively engaged in learning.

Excellence in Secondary School Teaching

Creatively engaging learners with the curriculum to enhance their learning experience

- Using knowledge and skills to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses in order to choose appropriate teaching and learning strategies;
- Using learner-centred techniques that provide for acquisition of basic skills and displaying excellent content knowledge of relevant learning areas to promote critical thinking and problem solving;
- Creatively and innovatively adhering to curriculum planning that incorporates the use of teaching and learning resources relevant to the learners' developmental levels, and
- Balancing curricular needs and the context of the learner within the suggested time frame.

Contributing to the personal development of learners by communicating effectively with them about their performance and progress

- Keeping comprehensive records of planning and learner progress (portfolios) and ensuring that these are accessible;
- Developing learners who will act in the interests of the society, and whose values will be based on respect for democracy, equality, human dignity and social justice, as promoted in the Constitution;
- Giving insightful, regular, consistent and timeous feedback that is built into lesson designs and is available to all stakeholders, and
- Providing guidance and support to learners using the curriculum for career and life choices.

Adapting learning and teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual learners effectively

- Using inclusive teaching and learning strategies and promoting respect for individuality and diversity;
- Promoting learners' self-esteem so that they are motivated and self-disciplined;
- Using different techniques to promote research skills and independent learning, and
- Organising space to enable all learners to be productively engaged in learning.

Excellence in Primary School Leadership

Demonstrating positive and clear leadership in directing and guiding the school/centre/community

- Using resources optimally and creatively, bearing in mind the vision, mission and goals of the institution, including making resources accessible to the school community;
- Mentoring, supporting and providing staff development initiatives and ensuring that staff training and mentoring programmes are implemented and evaluated to encourage educators to do more than is required, with enthusiasm;
- Keeping comprehensive and up-to-date records that meets requirements in terms of accepted practices and/or developmental requirements, and
- Delegating tasks appropriately to colleagues for the purpose of capacity building.

Creating and sustaining a stimulating and supportive learning and teaching environment at the school/centre

- Translating strategic objectives into action plans, thereby inspiring colleagues and engendering trust;
- Keeping monitoring mechanisms in place in order to promote the implementation of strategic objectives and policies;
- Working with colleagues and consulting with all stakeholders to effect improvements on an ongoing basis;
- Remaining approachable, sharing information and providing support, while encouraging independent thinking and innovation, and
- Showing active awareness of transformational issues and responding positively to social cohesion issues within the context of the school/centre/community.

Creating and fostering links between the school/centre and real life situations for the benefit of the school/centre/community

- Actively seeking solutions to school/centre/community problems and leading in carrying out suggested solutions;
- Providing leadership in creating partnerships with relevant external organisations/ institutions;
- Encouraging and motivating others (colleagues) to take leadership roles within and beyond the school/centre, and
- Consistently showing leadership by dealing with issues of diversity, personal attitudes and the beliefs of others with tact, consideration, sensitivity and understanding.

Excellence in Secondary School Leadership

Demonstrating positive and clear leadership in directing and guiding the school/centre/community

- Using resources optimally and creatively, bearing in mind the vision, mission and goals of the institution, including making resources accessible to the school community;
- Providing staff induction, mentoring and coaching to encourage educators to do more than is required, with enthusiasm;
- Keeping comprehensive and up-to-date records that meet requirements in terms of accepted practices and/or developmental requirements, and
- Delegating tasks appropriately to colleagues for the purpose of capacity building.

Creating and sustaining a stimulating and supportive learning and teaching environment at the school/centre

- Translating strategic objectives into action plans, thereby inspiring colleagues and engendering trust;
- Keeping monitoring mechanisms in place to promote the implementation of the strategic objectives and policies;
- Working with colleagues and consulting with all stakeholders to effect improvements on an ongoing basis;
- Remaining approachable, sharing information and providing support while encouraging independent thinking and innovation, and
- Showing active awareness of transformational issues and responding positively to social cohesion issues.

Creating and fostering links between the school centre and real life situation for the benefit of the school/centre/community

- Actively seeking solutions to school/centre/community problems and taking a lead in carrying out suggested solutions;
- Providing leadership in creating partnerships with relevant external organisations/ institutions;
- Encouraging and motivating others (colleagues) to take leadership roles within and beyond the school/centre;
- Consistently showing leadership by dealing with issues of diversity, personal attitudes and the beliefs of others with tact, consideration, sensitivity and understanding.

Excellence in Grade R Teaching

Creatively engaging learners with the curriculum in order to enhance their learning experience

- Using knowledge and skills to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses in order to develop teaching strategies;
- Using learner-centred techniques that provide for the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge and promote critical thinking and problem solving;
- Creatively and innovatively adhering to curriculum outcomes and assessment standards relevant to the learners' developmental levels, and
- Keeping an excellent balance between the clear goals of the teaching programme and the expression of learner needs, interests and backgrounds.

Encouraging young learners to become independent and confident

- Using developmentally appropriate communication approaches to enable learners to express themselves with confidence;
- Teaching various memory skills to help learners to recall experiences;
- Applying learner-centred approaches so that learners are capable of carrying out simple life skills instructions;
- Creating a supportive and caring environment that helps children to manage their own behaviour, and
- Using an inclusive and unbiased approach to promote learners' self-esteem so that they are motivated and confident.

Fostering links between the school/centre and the community

- Actively seeking solutions to school/centre/community problems and taking a lead in carrying out suggested solutions;
- Establishing respectful and cooperative relationships with co-workers and families;
- Consistently showing tact, consideration, sensitivity and understanding in dealing with issues of diversity, personal attitudes and the beliefs of others, and
- Using/involving partners and services in other sectors to the benefit of the learner, school, centre and/or community.

Creating and sustaining a stimulating and supportive learning and teaching environment at the school/centre

- Using resources optimally and creatively to the benefit of the school/centre and the community;
- Keeping outstanding records of planning and learner progress (portfolios) and ensuring that these are accessible;
- Keeping comprehensive and up-to-date records that meet requirements in terms of accepted practices and/or developmental requirements;
- Showing active awareness of transformational issues and responding positively to social cohesion issues within the context of the school/centre/community;
- Giving insightful, regular, consistent and timeous feedback, which is built into lesson designs and is available to all stakeholders;
- Planning in a way that reflects the teaching and learning process in relation to content, infusion of values, skills, and the use of resources for learning activities, and
- Organising space to enable all learners to be productively engaged in learning and development, as well as creating a safe and healthy environment.

Excellence in Special Needs Teaching

Creatively engaging learners with the curriculum in order to enhance their learning experience

- Using knowledge and skills to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses in order to choose appropriate teaching and learning strategies;
- Using learner-centred techniques that provide for the acquisition of basic skills, and displaying excellent content

knowledge of relevant learning areas in order to promote critical thinking and problem solving;

- Planning for resources that are relevant to the learners' developmental and special needs (and improvising where necessary);
- Adapting the curriculum to suit the needs of the learners within the confines of EWP6, and
- Responding appropriately to barriers to teaching and learning by incorporating multi-modal strategies relevant to the needs of the learners.

Communicating learners' progress effectively to both learners and their families, and listening and responding constructively to their views

- Keeping comprehensive records of planning and learner progress (portfolios and profiles) and ensuring that these are accessible;
- Giving insightful, regular, consistent and timeous feedback, which is built into lesson designs and is available to all stakeholders;
- Providing guidance and support informed by the curriculum for career and life choices to learners and parents;
- Using appropriate language for teaching and learning to the benefit of the learner, and
- Recognising the involvement of parents in the school/centre.

Adapting learning and teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual learners effectively

- Using inclusive teaching and learning strategies and promoting respect for individuality and diversity;
- Promoting learners' self-esteem so that they see themselves as part of society;
- Using different techniques to promote skills and attitudes that lead to independent learning;
- Organising space to enable all learners to be productively engaged in learning, and
- Displaying appropriate knowledge of relevant policies and legislation and how to implement them.

Creating and fostering links between the school/centre and other organisations to the benefit of the school/centre/community

- Actively seeking solutions to school/centre/community problems and taking a lead in carrying out suggested solutions;
- Providing leadership in creating partnerships with relevant external organisations/institutions;
- Creating opportunities for the school to be a resource to the community and other organisations;
- Identifying challenges and making referrals to appropriate support services for intervention and placement, and
- Identifying the special skills and knowledge required by learners for them to obtain employment when they leave school.

Excellence in ICT-Enhanced Teaching

Creatively planning an ICT- enhanced learning environment that provides learners with the opportunity to acquire a broad spectrum of learning outcomes

- Aligning the learning activities to the curriculum (objectives, outcomes),
- Using teaching methodologies that can be supported by the available ICT infrastructure,
- Facilitating the acquisition of 21st Century skills (Knowledge building, critical thinking, collaboration, extending learning beyond the classroom and innovative use of ICT for learning),
- Involving others in developing and using the ICT- enhanced learning environment (Teacher, group of teachers, group of schools, principal or learners), and
- Selecting the appropriate target group for the ICT- enhanced learning environment (Immediate class, group of classes, group of teachers, group of schools, parents or community).

Positively influencing teachers, learners, teaching and learning process as well as classroom management through the use of ICTs

- Being a role model to others in their personal use of ICT,
- Being creative and bringing flair to the way he/she teaches and uses ICT, both in and out of the learning environment,
- Constantly re-examining and redefining his/her role as a teacher,
- Using ICTs in more than just the classroom setting e.g.

for assessment, administration, recording, reporting and research,

- Using ICTs to promote learner autonomy,
- Using ICTs to give learners greater responsibility for their own learning,
- Using the communications tools of ICT to promote dialogue and collaboration among teachers/learners, and
- Using ICTs to encourage learners to be more reflective of their work as well as working towards targets/deadlines.

Using innovative teaching practices and ICTs in instrumental ways to change how learners learn

- Using ICTs to create a learner-centred learning environment that promotes the acquisition of basic skills, knowledge, critical thinking and problem solving,
- Using ICTs to accommodate the different learning styles of learners;
- In what ways is the teacher's ICT- enhanced learning environment exemplary? (Number or age group of target group, efficiency gains and overall effectiveness), and
- In what ways is the teacher's ICT- enhanced learning environment innovative? (Teacher/student/school context, creativity, previous practice, limited resources)

Lifetime Achievement Award

Fostering links between the school/centre and community

- Contributing to the social, cultural and economic development

of the school/centre/community;

- Actively seeking solutions to school/centre/community problems and taking a lead in carrying out suggested solutions;
- Providing leadership in creating partnerships with relevant external organisations/institutions, and
- Encouraging and motivating others (colleagues) to take leadership roles within and beyond the school/centre.

Sustaining a high level of achievement and commitment throughout a long teaching career

- Receiving results, awards and recognition over a long period of time, e.g. awards from PDEs and other organisations;
- Showing endurance, commitment and perseverance to the benefit of the school and the education sector in general (e.g. starting and sustaining a school/centre/community project);
- Facing and overcoming challenges in and outside the school, and
- Having tangible proof of high performance and achievement in teaching and how this affected other people's lives.

Encouraging learners to expect the best from themselves in the face of negative socio-economic conditions

- Promoting learners' self-esteem, encouraging active participation in school and community activities, and motivating learners to excel;
- Making efforts to retain learners from different backgrounds in the school/centre;
- Using knowledge and skills to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses and providing appropriate interventions, and

- Taking sustainable initiatives to support learner interests and needs.

Earning the respect of learners and colleagues

- Showing appropriate human relation skills in communicating with the school community;
- Receiving and responding to constructive feedback from learners, colleagues and parents, and
- Consistently showing leadership by dealing with issues of diversity, personal attitudes and the beliefs of others with tact, consideration, sensitivity and understanding.

Demonstrating positive and clear leadership (not limited to school management teams) in directing and guiding the school/centre/community

- Setting attainable goals and expectations for the school/centre/community (strategic leadership);
- Delegating tasks appropriately to colleagues for the purpose of capacity building, but still accepting accountability;
- Providing staff induction, mentoring and coaching to encourage educators to do more than is required, with enthusiasm;
- Managing change innovatively and minimising unnecessary uncertainty, and
- Responding positively to social cohesion issues.

Eligibility

The team or nominee must:

- Be a serving educator in a public school registered with the Department of Education in South Africa;

- Be employed by the Department of Education or a School Governing Body;
- Have been working for at least two years in any of the above institutions in South Africa without a break of service (except for the Lifetime Achievement Award, a minimum of 30 years without a break of service in a public school/centre in South Africa is an eligibility);
- Be registered with SACE;
- Those who have previously won the National Teaching Awards at provincial and national level will only be eligible for nomination after five years from the year of receipt of the award, and
- School Principals and Deputy Principals are the only candidates eligible for nomination in the leadership categories.

Rules Pertaining To The National Teaching Awards

Each school/centre shall receive booklets, which contain the following:

General Information

Rules Pertaining to the National Teaching Awards 2012

2012 NTA - Nomination Form (Form 1)

2012 NTA - Team/Self Portrait Form (Form 2)

2012 NTA - School Motivation Form (Form 3)

How to nominate

- The principal/chairperson of nomination team must organise a nomination meeting that would include the School Governing Body (SGB) to discuss the nomination process;

- The staff and the SGB members of the school must study the criteria requirements of each Category and draw up attributes or qualities that would match their nominees with a particular given criteria;
- Once suitable teachers/teams have been nominated, their names must be filled in on the Nomination Forms provided, and
- District/Regional Officials may also nominate in consultation with the school.

Who should sign the forms:

- If a principal of a school or a School Management Team is a nominee, then the School Governing Body and the School Nomination Team must agree on a person who will sign on behalf of the principal and motivate why such a person was chosen to sign.
- Even in the case where the District/Regional Official nominates, it is still necessary for the Principal to sign the forms.

Please note:

- A separate form must be used for **each** category. A school is provided with enough booklets and must use the attached forms for the categories entered in;
- The category for each nominee must be clearly marked;
- The school must ensure that the Nomination Forms, Self/Team Portrait Forms and the School Motivation Forms are clearly completed. These forms must be sent to the District Office by **the date determined by the Province, and**
- You are free to make photocopies of the Nomination Form or access forms via the website of the Department of Education: www.education.gov.za and the Thutong Portal: www.thutong.org.za.

Disqualification

Please note the disqualifying criteria in this regard, failure to adhere will result in the nominee(s) being disqualified

- Incomplete forms;
- Nominees signing their own nomination form;
- Corrections or alterations on forms 1 and 3;
- Forms not received on time **as determined by the Province**;
- No copy of certified SACE certificate;
- No copy of certified ID document;
- Nominees are limited to one category at a time. Entering for more than one category will lead to disqualification;
- No school stamp on the Nomination Form (Form 1) and School Motivation Form (Form 3), and
- False information.

Guidelines for National Teaching Awards Exhibition Poster Design

Participants in the National Teaching Awards are requested to compile a poster of their work. This poster will be displayed at an exhibition that will precede the gala dinner early in the following year.

- **Please use a one by one m² (1 m²) poster as summary of the portfolio of evidence;**
- Please use a background size not exceeding 1 square metre to present your work. A black background is preferable, but if black is not available any other colour is acceptable. Mounting of the material for presentation will be done by the

organizers of the exhibition;

- **N.B:** Please attach the following information on the poster (please do not glue it to the front of your poster):
 - Your name;
 - The name of your school;
 - The location of your school in terms of village/town/city/ province;
 - The grade/s you are teaching/your position;
 - The category that you have been participating in as a finalist in the National Teaching Awards, and
 - A thought (150 words) on what the National Teaching Awards means to you as an educator.
- The poster could include the following elements:
 - Written explanations of the special project/teaching that you think earned you your nomination;
 - The background to the project or innovative methodology;
 - How is this introduced in your classroom/school/centre;
 - The outcomes (successes/challenges), and
 - Photographs/illustrations/art work.

Portfolio

- Adjudicators reserve the right to request for a portfolio of each nominee, and
- Portfolio compilation is a SACE requirement for every

educator.

Additional categories

Nomination processes for the following additional awards will be forwarded as separate documents.

- Kader Asmal Excellence Award: lead by the office of the Minister, and
- Via Afrika People's Choice Award: in collaboration with Via Afrika Publishers.

Notes

2011 National Teaching Awards Gala Event

