education
Department:
Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS

2009

Recognising Excellence in Education

Information Guide

Introduction

The National Teaching Awards Scheme conceptualised and launched in 2000 now enters its tenth 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 2009.

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

The National Teaching Awards are but 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
- 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 Inclusive Education and Special Needs Teaching
- Excellence in Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)
- Lifetime Achievement Award

The awards are:

• District finalists:	Certificates of Excellence
• Regional/Cluster finalists:	Certificates of Excellence and the school/centre receives a cash award of R5 000
• Provincial finalists:	Certificates of Excellence and the school/centre receives a cash award of R7 500
• National finalists:	Certificates of Excellence and the school/centre receives a cash award of R10 000 for the first prize, R7 500 for the second prize and R5 000 for the third prize

Cash awards received by schools/centres must be used for staff development to improve classroom practice.

NB: These amounts could be reviewed.

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

- **ABET** Refers to levels 1 to 4 in the GET band

- **Grade R category**

- **Inclusive Education and Special Needs Teaching**
  For public special 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 both ECD and ABET)

- **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
  - 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

CRITERIA FOR NOMINATION

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

General criteria

Social cohesion issues and confronting challenges

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
- 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
- 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
- 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 and knowledge and promote critical thinking and problem solving
- Adhering creatively and innovatively to curriculum outcomes and assessment standards relevant to the learners' developmental levels
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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.
- 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.
- 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
- 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
- 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 Inclusive Education and 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Identifying the special skills and knowledge required by learners for them to obtain employment when they leave school

Excellence in Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)

Engaging learners creatively with the curriculum in order to enhance their learning experience

- Providing guidance and support to learners using the curriculum for career and life choices
- Using learner-centred techniques that provide for the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge and promote critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Using different techniques to promote research skills and independent learning
- Using resources relevant to the context of ABET learners optimally and creatively
- Recognising the diverse needs of learners and respecting the learners' individuality

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

- Ensuring that all learners have access to learning
- Organising space to enable all learners to be productively engaged in learning
- Keeping comprehensive and up-to-date records that meet requirements in terms of accepted practices and/or developmental requirements
- Using knowledge and skills to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses in order to choose appropriate teaching and learning strategies

Inspiring and encouraging colleagues to be creative and innovative

- Working collaboratively with colleagues and consulting with all stakeholders in order to effect improvements at the centre for the benefit of the centre community
- Engaging in collective planning
- Initiating and engaging in collective reflection and other staff development activities

Facilitating adult learning through the ABET curriculum

- Displaying content knowledge of relevant learning areas
- Facilitating satisfactory learner performance
- Addressing the developmental needs of the learners

Establishing and sustaining community links

- Encouraging community access to the centre
- Involving the community in centre programmes
- Addressing the needs of the community
- Making a positive impact on the community
- Networking and providing the ABET learners with opportunities to use their acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes in the outside world

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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Responding positively to social cohesion issues

Eligibility

The team or nominee must:

- Be a serving educator in a public school/Public ABET Learning Centre/ECD Centre registered with the Department of Education in South Africa
- Be employed by the Department of Education or a School Governing Body/PALC Governing Body or an ECD Centre 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)
- For ABET, have been working for at least one year in a Public ABET Centre
- 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
- School Principals, Deputy Principals and Centre Managers 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 2009
2009 NTA - Nomination Form (Form 1)
2009 NTA - Team/Self Portrait Form (Form 2)
2009 NTA - School Motivation Form (Form 3)

How to nominate

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

- The staff and the SGB/CGB members of the school/centre 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.

- District Officials may also nominate in consultation with the school/centre community.

Who should sign the forms

- If a principal of a school/centre or a School Management Team/Centre Management Team is a nominee, then the School/Centre Governing Body and the School/Centre 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 Official nominates, it is still necessary for the Principal/Centre Manager to sign the forms.

Please note

- A separate form must be used for **each** category. A school/centre 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/centre must ensure that the Nomination Forms, Self/Team Portrait Forms and the School/Centre Motivation Forms are clearly completed. These forms must be sent to the District Office by **no later than 19 June 2009**.
- 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 or forms completed incorrectly
- Nominees signing their own nomination form
- Corrections or alterations on forms 1 and 3
- Forms not received on time by District Offices
- No SACE certificate
- No ID document
- Nominees are limited to one category at a time. Entering for more than one category will lead to disqualification.
- No school/centre stamp on the Nomination Form (Form 1) and School/Centre Motivation Form (Form 3)
- False information

Guidelines for National Teacher Awards Exhibition Poster Design

Participants in the National Teacher Awards are requested to compile a poster of their work. This poster will be used in the national adjudication interviews and displayed at an exhibition that will precede the gala dinner later in the year.

- 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.

- 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;
  - 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;
  - the outcomes (successes/challenges); and
  - photographs/illustrations/art work.