

APPRECIATING OUR EDUCATORS' DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION

“Behind every successful person there is an educator”

What is World Teachers' Day?

In 1994, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organisations (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) declared the 05th of October as World Teachers' Day (WTD) to commemorate the signing of the UNESCO/ILO recommendation of the Status of Teaching Profession published in 1966 on this day. The Education International (EI) which is a member organization to the ILO and a strong associate of the UNESCO, has been leading the international community in celebrating World Teachers' Day.

Paying Tribute to our Educators

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) continues to acknowledge the significant role educators play in educating the children and adults, and building the nation as a whole. Hence the SACE views the month of October as educators' month. It is during this month that the SACE celebrate World Teachers' Day (05 October) to convey the gratitude it has for the South African educators in particular and educators of the world as a whole. Most of the successful people are what they are because of the valuable contribution made by educators in their lives. Alexander the Great puts it perfectly when he says, “I am indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well”.

It is also crucial to make certain that the country pays special tribute to our educators in different ways as a way of demonstrating that that we **APPRECIATE THEM**. Although we may want to send them messages of appreciation and talk endlessly about being grateful of their valuable contribution, it is also important that we display our appreciation and gratefulness by engaging in number of sustainable activities for them. This is expressed well by John F. Kennedy we he says,

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them”.

In the light of the above, the message in this brochure is dedicated to all educators who have directly or indirectly touched and affected our lives in many different positive ways. SACE also want to use it to highlight the importance of celebrating,

honouring, appreciating and saluting our South African educators. Educators are often self-sacrificing people at the coal-face of the education process. They also do more than just teaching the children and adults. For this, we need to publicly acknowledge our heartfelt gratitude for all the commitment and the allegiance they pay to the teaching profession.

Despite all these selfless efforts, the media continue to dent the image of the teaching profession and keep silent about the good things done by our educators and the profession as a whole. In the light of the bad publicity on teachers, how do we turn this bleak situation around? What kind of activities should we engage in, as a nation, to show support and respect to our educators and the teaching profession?

The Teacher Count organization in the United States of America runs a campaign that aims to combat the lack of teacher appreciation and also change negative perceptions about the teaching profession. The organization has an effective theme that addresses the campaign's aims – the theme is *"Behind Every Famous Person is a Fabulous Teacher"*. One of the things the theme does, in achieving its goals, is to pair celebrities and famous people with teachers who influenced their lives. This is one way of showing how teachers touch people's lives. All of us need to take teacher appreciation very seriously and celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments made by our educators. We are all grateful for what they do for our children and the nation as a whole, but are we doing enough to acknowledge their contribution?

2007 World Teachers' Day/Week Celebrations

SACE celebrates the World Teachers' Day / Week in various provinces every year. In 2007 the SACE World Teachers' Day/Week celebrations were held in the Limpopo province. The Division organized number of activities to ensure that the majority of educators in the province benefit from it, Some of the activities were as follows:

School Visits

- Physical school visits to 568 schools across the five districts in the province, The visits were carried out by the SACE staff, Councilors, and stakeholders in the province, They took place from the 01st – 03rd October 2007. The aim of the visits was to send messages of appreciation, SACE material and tokens of appreciation to the educators in various schools. In addition SACE sent 31 000 promotional material and tokens through circuit offices, teacher unions, and stakeholders.

Media Campaigns

- Two weeks (14 days) radio campaign on teacher appreciation and SACE visit to Limpopo province. The campaign was covered by the three SABC radio stations in the province – Thobela FM, Phalaphala FM, and Munghanalonene FM (from 21st September – 05 October 2007)

SACE Open Day

- As part of the World Teachers' Day celebrations, the Division organised the SACE Open Day on the 04th October in Seshego, Polokwane. This was attended by 587 people coming from all the 5 districts of the province. The main aim of the SACE Open Day session was to provide the report to the SACE constituencies and stakeholders in terms of how the organisation's achievements and challenges. In addition, the open day served a purpose of providing the constituencies and stakeholders an opportunity to interact with SACE and advice it where necessary.

World Teachers' Day Celebration

- For the first time, we managed to negotiate that the 2007 World Teachers' Day celebration be a live broadcast on the television. As a result we managed to broadcast the 2007 World Teachers' Day celebration on SABC 2's Morning Live show at Makgofe High School on the 04th October 2007. This show was attended by educators, Makgofe High School staff, Department of Education officials, MEC for Education in the Limpopo province (Dr Aaron Motswaledi), SACE stakeholders, teacher unions, SACE Councilors and staff, and community members. This gave SACE, World Teachers' Day celebration, and teacher appreciation messages more publicity in the whole country
- In addition, SACE had a joint World Teachers' Day function with the Department of Education at Makgofe High School on 05th October 2007. The Director General for Education, Mr Duncan Hindle, was part of this function.

2008 World Teachers' Day Celebrations

In 2008, SACE will be celebrating the World Teachers' Day/Week in Kwazulu-Natal province. The actual World Teachers' Day celebration will be on the 07th October 2008. Just like in the Limpopo province, school visits will be done for purposes of

delivering teacher appreciation messages, SACE materials and some tokens of appreciation.