

SOWETO SCHOOLS MAGAZINE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

PRINCIPAL OF THE MONTH

**BOPASENATLA
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

98.9%
MATRIC
PASS RATE

ON THIS ISSUE

- **TEACHING BOYS TO LOVE READING**
- **ORLANDO HIGH WINS 10 MEDALS**
- **PREPARING FOR FIRST TERM EXAMS**

KNOW YOUR LEADERS

We talk to Mr. Takalani Robert Radzuma, principal at Bopasenatla Secondary School in Diepkloof.

We get to know him up close and personal, on taking his school to 98.9 percent in 3 years.

CONVERSATION WITH MR. RADZUMA

Can you tell us a little about yourself? What inspired you to become an educator?

I am driven by a deep desire to positively influence and uplift the lives of children, inspiring them through my work.

I bring a strong passion for education and a commitment to supporting learners in unlocking their fullest potential.

How do you maintain a connection with students despite the administrative demands of being a principal? Do you have any special traditions or practices?

I regularly visit classrooms each day to engage with learners in meaningful conversations and hold weekly discussion sessions with Grade 12 students.

Additionally, I personally welcome my learners at the gate every morning, greeting them and fostering open dialogue.

What are some of the biggest challenges facing schools in Soweto today, and how do you address them?

As a principal, I address the shortage of furniture, such as tables and chairs, by finding creative solutions to ensure a conducive learning environment.

To tackle late arrivals at Bopasenatla, we've implemented a daily detention system for learners, which has proven highly effective in reducing tardiness.

For behavioral challenges, we've established a functional disciplinary committee to manage and improve student conduct efficiently.



How long have you been the principal of this school, and what has been the most rewarding part of your time here so far?

I have been serving as a principal for three years, and one of my greatest achievements has been the significant growth in learner enrollment. In 2021, the school had **195** learners, which increased to **556** in 2022, **627** in 2023, **741** in 2024, and has now reached **965** in 2025.

Our Grade 12 results have improved remarkably over the years. In 2023, we achieved a **91.1% pass rate**, with only four learners failing, earning us 1st position in Circuit 1. In 2024, our results soared to a **98.9% pass rate**, with just one learner failing, securing 1st place in both Circuit 1 and 2.

Additionally, in 2022, I successfully eliminated late coming by introducing a learner detention system, which has since ensured greater discipline and punctuality among students.

If you could introduce one major reform in the education system, what would it be and why?

Implementing learner detention in all Soweto schools can be an effective solution to address the issue of late coming.

Persistent tardiness negatively impacts both the school and learner performance, weakens discipline, and damages the school's image, reputation, and overall dignity.

By effectively tackling late coming, academic results will improve, and more learners who currently travel long distances to attend former Model C schools will be encouraged to return and pursue their education within Soweto schools.

If you were given R500,000 to spend at your school, what priorities would you use to determine how you would spend the money?

If given R500,000, I would prioritize refurbishing the soccer and netball pitches to ensure learners can participate in tournaments without challenges.

I would also renovate classrooms, repairing worn-out floors, ceilings, and cupboards while repainting for a better

learning environment. To enhance security, I would install surveillance cameras, a gate motor, and build a guard room to address ongoing burglary issues.

Additionally, I would upgrade the staffroom to boost teacher morale and organize a bosberaad to improve teamwork and strategic planning.

What message do you have for parents in Soweto regarding their role in their children's education?

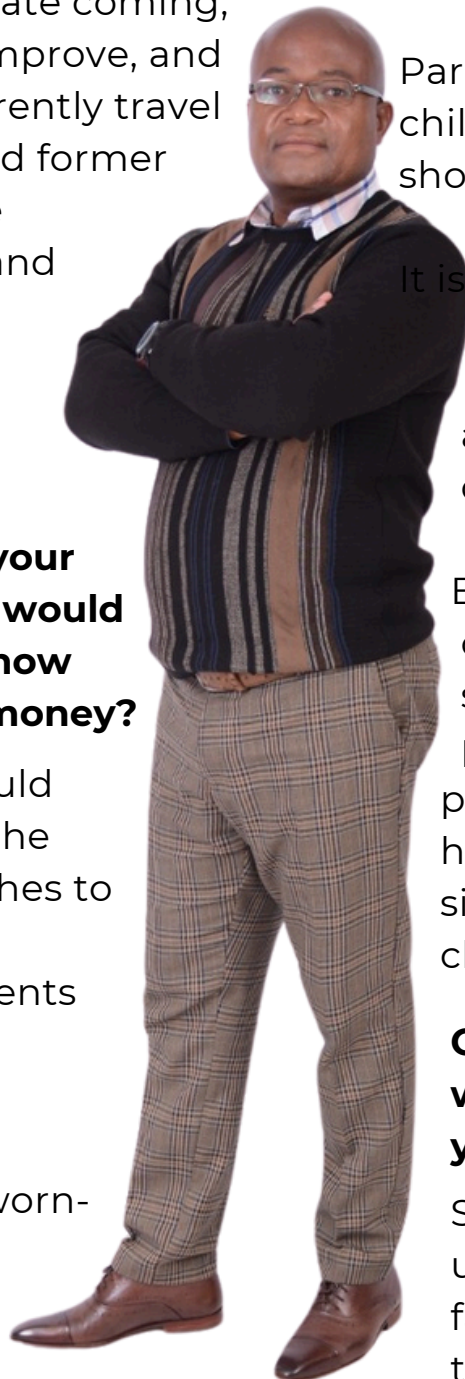
Parents play a crucial role in their children's academic success and should be actively involved in their educational journey.

It is important for them to provide guidance, encouragement, and support rather than being distant or uninvolved.

By staying engaged in their children's learning, attending school meetings, monitoring progress, and fostering a positive learning environment at home, parents can make a significant difference in their children's future.

Outside of school leadership, what do you enjoy doing in your free time?

Spend meaningful and uninterrupted time with my family, engaging in activities that strengthen our bond.





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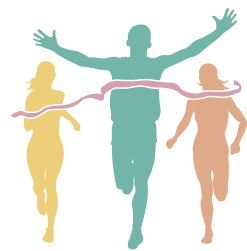


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CASHLESS ENVIRONMENT

TEAM OF THE MONTH

Athletics 2025



Orlando High Shines at the Athletics Competitions!



Congratulations to the talented learners of Orlando High School for their outstanding performance at the annual Athletics Competitions 2025 held on the **12 February 2025** at the Ruimsig Athletic Stadium in Roodepoort, where they proudly brought home 10 medals!

Their dedication, hard work, and determination have showcased the exceptional talent within Soweto schools.

We give thanks to the coaches of the Athletic team, **Mr. Nhlapo and Mr. Dlephu**. The entire school community celebrates this victory, and we look forward to seeing them continue to shine on even bigger stages.

Well done, Orlando High!

ABOUT US

March Edition

Soweto Schools Magazine is an online monthly publication published by Funda Smart.

We feature stories and events about local schools and education news.

Soweto Schools Magazine is distributed to more than 5000 parents in Soweto via Email, WhatsApp & Telegram.



Contact us

If you have stories or you want to feature your school, drop us an email.

If you want to collaborate or write for us, feel free to contact us via email:
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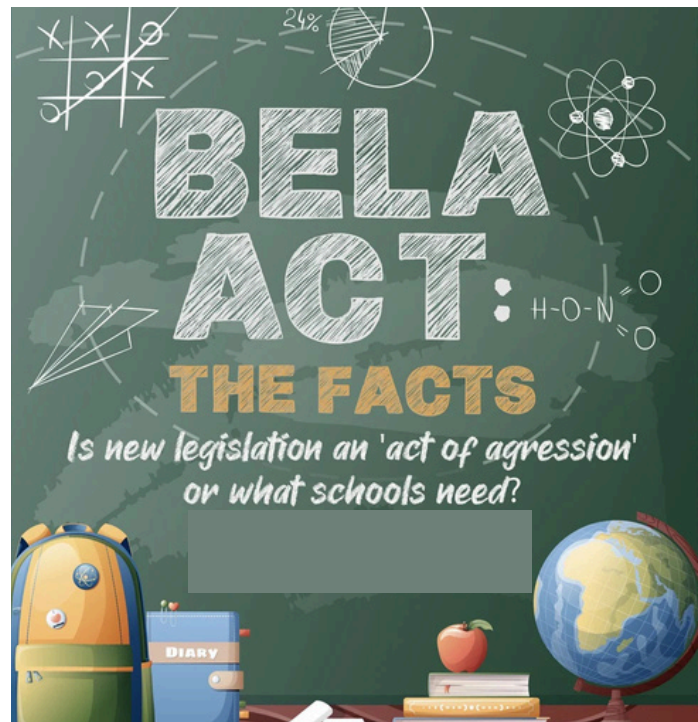
BELA Bill

A Guide for Soweto Parents

**What exactly is
Bela Bill.**

**How will it affect
schools in Soweto?**

The Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill, signed into law by President Cyril Ramaphosa on September 13, 2024, brings big changes to South Africa's schools.



It updates old education laws to make learning fairer and better for everyone, especially in places like Soweto.

This FAQ explains what it means for learners, parents, and schools in simple terms, highlighting the good, the challenges, and how you can make the most of it.

What is the BELA Bill?

It's a new law that changes how schools handle admissions, languages, discipline, and attendance, aiming to fix inequalities.

How does it affect learners in Soweto?

Grade R is now compulsory, giving kids an early start, but crowded schools might struggle to fit everyone.

What does it mean for parents?

You must ensure kids attend school, or face fines/jail, but it also protects your child's right to education.

How will Soweto schools be impacted?

Schools get more support for vulnerable learners, but they lose some control over admissions and language choices.

What are the positives?

It bans corporal punishment, ensures fair access, and boosts early learning—great for Soweto's kids.

What are the negatives?

Overcrowding, less local say in school decisions, and penalties for parents could cause stress.

How can we take advantage of it?

Push for Grade R funding, join school boards, and use the law to demand better resources.

What happens if I want to homeschool my child?

Under the new law, you must register with the Department of Education if you choose to homeschool. You'll need to follow the national curriculum guidelines and keep records of your child's progress. The Department will provide support but will also monitor compliance.

What steps can be taken to address potential challenges posed by the BELA Act?

Active participation in school governance and open communication with education authorities are crucial. Parents and educators should collaborate to ensure that cultural and linguistic needs are met within the new framework.

Understanding the BELA Act empowers parents and schools in Soweto to navigate the evolving educational landscape effectively, ensuring that all learners receive quality education in an inclusive environment.

For a more detailed explanation of the BELA Act,
CLICK HERE TO WATCH A VIDEO






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|--------|----------------------------------|-------------|----------|
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| U8-10 | Tuesday Wednesday Thursday | 16:00-17:00 | 60 MIN |
| U11-12 | Tuesday Wednesday Thursday | 17:00-18:00 | 60 MIN |

SCHOOL FEES

ONCE-OFF REGISTRATION FEE: R500

THIS INCLUDES A PLAYER KIT (TOP, SHIRT, SOCKS) THAT WILL BE USED BY THE CHILD TO TRAIN IN DURING SESSIONS.

BOYS: R250 PER MONTH
GIRLS: R100 PER MONTH

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE
CONTACT:**
072-368-9231
futsalsoccerschool@gmail.com

MONTHLY PAYMENT STRUCTURE

PAYMENT DETAILS

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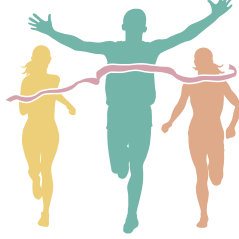
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Thembalihle Primary Triumphs at Cluster Competition!

Thembalihle Primary School from Orlando East has emerged victorious at the Cluster Competition held at Ruimsig Athletic Stadium, securing their place as the top-performing school among local competitors.



Their dedication, teamwork, and athletic excellence set them apart, proving that hard work and perseverance yield great results. This victory highlights the school's commitment to sports development and showcases the talent within Orlando East schools.

With this impressive win, Thembalihle Primary will now advance to the District Level, where they will proudly represent Orlando East.



PREPARING FOR 1st TERM EXAMS

As the first term of this academic year comes to an end, schools across Soweto will be preparing for the quarterly exams.

These assessments are especially important for high school learners, particularly those in Grade 11 and Grade 12, as they lay the foundation for future academic success.

Most schools will also issue first-term report cards, giving parents insight into their children's progress.

These results serve as an early indicator of strengths and areas needing improvement, allowing learners to adjust their study strategies before final exams.

Here's how parents can support their children during the examination period:



1

Create a study-friendly environment: Ensure a quiet, well-lit space where your child can focus.

2

Encourage time management: Help them create a study timetable to balance subjects effectively.

3

Provide emotional support: Reduce stress by encouraging and reminding them to take breaks.

4

Monitor rest and nutrition: A healthy diet and enough sleep improve concentration and memory.

5 Ways Teachers Can Get Boys to Love Reading

By [Elizabeth Heubeck](#)

Too many boys think reading for fun isn't "cool."

This isn't breaking news. Global studies from the mid-2000s found boys are less likely to read for pleasure than girls, a trend that continues today. But it matters, a lot.

Experts point to a direct correlation between reluctant readers and lower reading proficiency.

And the abysmal reading scores on the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress, released this week, show a dire need to improve reading proficiency among all students—especially boys.

It's not surprising that students who lack confidence in their reading ability would avoid reading for fun—and, conversely, that reading more regularly leads to mastery. The 2022 NAEP results showed that 73 percent of high-performing 9-year-olds reported reading for fun either almost every day or once or twice a week, compared with 58 percent of their low-performing peers.

In response to the nation's persistently poor reading report cards, a growing number of states in recent years have introduced sweeping legislation to mandate that schools implement evidence-based reading instruction in their classrooms.



But overall, students' reading test scores have yet to show significant improvement, and the number of "reluctant readers" grows.

Now, some educators are bearing down on a strategy they hope will create better, and lifelong, readers: pleasure reading.

Here's a look at how four teachers across grade levels are piquing boys' interest in reading for fun.

[This Article was first published on EdWeek.org](#)

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE

Building Strong Souls: A Call to Parents

Rev. Sizwe Tshabalala

As we journey through another month filled with opportunities and challenges, I urge you to consider the profound impact of spirituality on our children's lives.

Beyond academics and extracurriculars, nurturing their inner spiritual growth is vital.

Teaching them about values, ethics, and the power of prayer instills a foundation that supports their overall development.

In today's fast-paced world, where distractions abound, it's easy for our children to lose sight of what truly matters.

By incorporating discussions about faith into daily conversations, we not only guide them towards making ethical choices but also help them find solace in times of uncertainty.

Instilling these principles early on equips them with resilience and a sense of purpose.



Let us prioritize the spiritual well-being of our children. By encouraging moments of reflection and gratitude, we pave the way for them to cultivate a deeper connection with themselves and with others.

Together, let's empower our young learners to embrace values that transcend the classroom, preparing them to navigate life's journey with grace and integrity.

Warm regards,
Reverend Tshabalala

BOOK REVIEW

BOOK: THE YEARNING

AUTHOR: MOHALE MASHIGO

REVIEW BY OMPHILE

[Bookamoso Book Club](#)

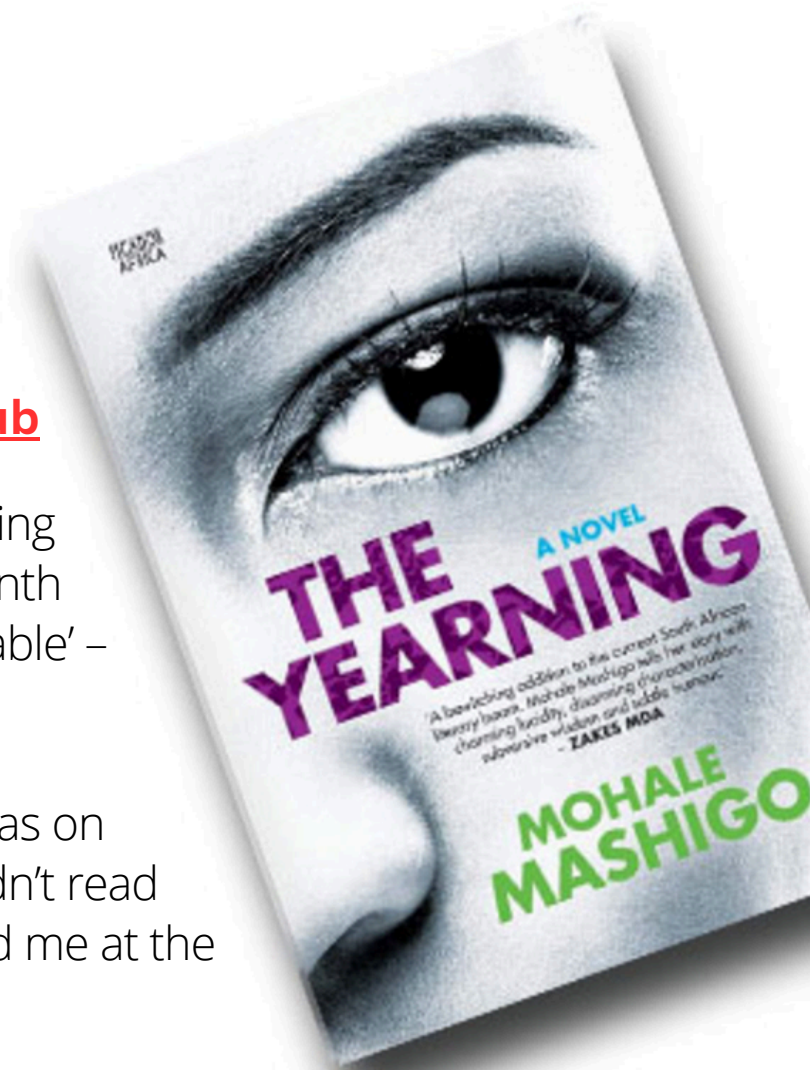
We had Mohale Mashigo's *The Yearning* as our book of the month for the month of July 2016. Dubbed as 'unputdownable' – I went in on it with much excitement.

By the time I started on this book, I was on record as having confessed that I hadn't read in such a long time. Well, this book had me at the first sentence until the last.

The first part of this book was fully understood at the ending of it once one had read the entire book. "In our quiet denial, *The Yearning* devours us".

This line is what got me so engrossed in the book. Written simply by first-time author and broken into five parts, each part is linked with the main character, Marubini's current and past. This is what I looked forward to – piecing back the different parts of the past with the present. The past and the present are differentiated by the change of font between the current Marubini and her younger self.

This is a story of hope for the future, of dealing with heartbreak, loss, cultural roots, tradition and self-discovery. Marubini is a 30-something-year-old woman, living an idyllic life in Cape Town with her friends and boyfriend, working a great marketing job in a wine farm.



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