

DBE underscores significance of early childhood development (ECD)

BN Babalo Ndenze
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Department of Basic Education (DBE) Siviwe Gwarube G20 Summit



Basic Education Minister Siviwe Gwarube on 21 November 2024 among ministers leading the multidisciplinary teams in government responsible for the national response to instances of food borne illnesses. Picture: GCIS

JOHANNESBURG - Basic Education Minister Siviwe Gwarube has emphasised the importance of early childhood development (ECD), saying it can't be considered an optional extra.

She said the G20 education working group has now put this fundamental phase of schooling at the heart of its agenda, adding that South Africa must lead to improve the sector nationally and globally as the G20 chairperson.

Gwarube was addressing the G20 Basic Education Special Indaba in Century City, Cape Town, on Monday.

The minister said foundation learning is imperative for learners when developing skills in literacy and numeracy.

She added that when the country gets the foundations right, there won't be a need to obsess about kids taking maths and science in matric because it will be set.

Gwarube said South Africa must use this opportunity as the G20 chairperson to talk about the issue and place it on the global stage.

"Early childhood care and education is not an optional extra. It is the foundation on which everything else rests. If we fail to get the quality foundational learning right, we undermine every reform."

Gwarube said they are grateful as a sector that President Cyril Ramaphosa has taken up the challenge to champion the foundations of learning not only in the country but globally.



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