

Lessons go live for matrics at 10 Cape schools

Technology helps pupils to prepare

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A COMBINATION of satellite technology, the internet, cell-phones and smart cards is being used by teachers who are experts in their fields to present live lessons to help matriculants at 10 specially selected Western Cape schools.

Interactive Telematic Teaching, the first of its kind in South Africa, is in the form of a live broadcast to help the matrics prepare for their National Senior Certificate exams at the end of the year.

The system was developed by researchers at Stellenbosch University.

Teachers, curriculum advisers and curriculum planners of the Western Cape Education Department will use a studio at the university to present their lessons which will be beamed to the 10 schools, explained Walter Mercuur, an education specialist in the department.

Pupils at the schools, which are situated in seven education districts, will interact with the presenters via computers and



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cellphones.

Mercuur said subject teachers at the different schools would facilitate and monitor the lessons and would be paid for their time.

The subjects to be covered include maths, physical science, life sciences, accounting and English first additional language.

The lessons would be held after school and on Sundays and the department would reimburse schools for providing transport and meals to pupils who attend the sessions, Mercuur said.

The 10 schools fall within the National Strategy for Learner Attainment, a programme aimed at schools that achieved a matric pass rate of less than 60 percent in the 2008 matric exams.

Dr Sigamoney Naicker, the education department's chief director for curriculum development, said the intervention was a first in this country.

"We want to assist learners as much as possible and through not

only improving the pass rate but also (improving) the quality of education."

He said the schools taking part in the initiative had been fully equipped to participate in the programme and meetings between the principals and teachers of the schools and the lesson presenters had been held.

If successful, the project would be rolled out to more schools in the province next year, Naicker said.

The plan was to make the lessons available to all schools via the department's website.

The participating schools are Manyano High in Khayelitsha, Perseverance Secondary in Belhar, Sinethemba Secondary in Philippi, Aloe Secondary in Mitchells Plain, Desmond Tutu Secondary in Mbekweni, Noorder-Paarl Secondary, Ashton Secondary, Mandlenkosi Secondary in Beaufort West, Albert Myburgh Secondary in Bredasdorp and Naphakade Secondary in Malmesbury.

The first lessons are expected to be presented next week.

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