



MEDIA RELEASE FROM GROWSMART, AN INITIATIVE BY GROWTHPOINT PROPERTIES AND THE EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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REVEALED! The smartest kids in the Eastern Cape.

Gcobani Primary School has been named champion of this year's Eastern Cape Growsmart Literacy Competition, clinching not only a R350,000 iPad Lab for the Buffalo City school, but also R20,000 each towards furthering the education of the three students on the winning team.

The delighted Gcobani Primary School pupils who triumphed at the ICC on the day are Oyintanda Molose, Bonga Lisakhanya, and Lathitha Songelwa, mentored by Ms Buyiswa Gobe.

Eighty schools took part in this year's hotly-contested inter-primary competition, featuring group literacy and individual story-writing. Participation was substantially increased from the 60 schools that registered for the inaugural competition held in the province last year.

Five schools made it through to the final, with Malabar Primary (Nelson Mandela Bay) placed second with team members including Laaiqah Khan, Asiah Niekerk, and Suhaylah Essop, mentored by Ms Meena Ragar. Nontuthuzelo (Buffalo City) come in third thanks to team members Njabulo Melane, Thayama Matolweni, and Akhanya Dayimani, mentored by Mr Siya Mgalagala. Other finalists included Sydenham Primary and Young Park Primary, both from Nelson Mandela Bay district.

In the concurrent Growsmart story-writing contest, Linathi Nyiki from CW Hendrickse Primary took first prize of R20,000, followed by Shamirah Witbooi in second, and Sivuyiso Oyo in third.

A highlight of this year's competition was the publication of the Eastern Cape's first ever Growsmart Story Book, containing the top 20 stories - 19 of which came from Nelson Mandela Bay.

Growsmart - a joint initiative from Growthpoint Properties and the Eastern Cape Department of Education - aims to actively inspire and improve performance in the province's primary school students. The region's Growsmart prize pot totals around a half-a-million rand in rewards for winning pupils, mentors, and their schools.

"The value of this project cannot be underestimated," comments Genevieve Koopman, Chief Director of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. "Growsmart is happening at the right time, where the country is focusing on improving reading in all primary schools. It encourages learners to read, understand and narrate stories, in sentences. It also empowers teachers to be great mentors of teaching and reading."

"I was part of the Growsmart Programme from the beginning in the Eastern Cape, when it started in 2018," adds Lutho Kota, from the department. "I will support and continue to be part of this great programme - we are committed to working with the Growsmart Programme all the way."

Jewel Harris, Regional General Manager at Growthpoint Properties, says, "We are so excited to see the programme grow and to witness the positive impact that it has on our young learners. Not only is Growsmart inspiring, it's also about making learning fun, and rewarding the children's efforts."



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