

**Speech to be delivered at the occasion for the Announcement of the
2018 Grade 12 Results by the MEC for Mpumalanga Department of
Education, Mr Sibusiso Malaza on 04 January 2019 at KaMhlushwa
Primary School**

Programme Director and Head of Education, **Mrs MOC Mhlabane**

Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, **Mrs Reginah Mhaule**

Members of the Executive Council

Members of Parliament

Members of the Provincial Legislature

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, **Ms Thulisile Khoza**

CONTRALESA President, Kgosi Mokoena

Leadership of the House of Traditional Leaders

His Excellency, the Executive Mayor of the host Municipality, **Cllr Johan Mkhathswa**

Executive Mayors

Councillors

Provincial Chairperson of the Moral Regeneration Movement, **Rev Dr. MM Nthali**

Leadership of Faith based organisations

Leadership of the African National Congress

Leadership of all political parties represented in the Provincial Legislature

Leadership of COSATU

Leadership of Labour Formations

Leadership of Principals associations

Leadership of Schools Governing Bodies

Learner Formations

Heads of Provincial Government Departments

Officials of the Department of Education

Our Sponsors

Parents of Top Performing Learners

Top Performing Learners

Leadership from various universities represented today

Chairperson and Members of the Departmental Audit Committee

Provincial Finalists of the 2018 National Teaching Awards

Members of the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign

Leadership of Associations of School Governing Bodies

Members of the community

Representatives of various Media houses, and

All invited guests

Sanibonani, Good Morning

As pilgrims, we have travelled the length and breadth of our province. It is befitting that today we pause and look back at 2018, the year that was.

His Excellency, **President Cyril Ramaphosa**, described **2018** as a year of change, renewal, a year of hope and a new dawn.

Like marshalled soldiers we responded to his clarion call as an education sector and stepped into the cold face of education delivery.

Indeed, 2018 was an action-packed academic year galvanised by a host of activities from the Elections of School Governing Bodies, Training of Teachers, Resuscitation of the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign structures, convening of winter and spring classes, the hosting of the national event to launch the National Science Week, National Teaching Awards, hosting of the national World Teachers Day Celebration and the list goes on. We did all we could to provide support to teachers and learners in the classroom.

All of these programmes were done based on the understanding of our collective quest to improve Grades R to 12 teaching and learning output.

As an activist department, we worked tirelessly with communities, business, labour formations and faith based leaders throughout the year to improve the delivery of quality education, subject performance and to ensure that we contribute significantly towards involving everyone on matters pertaining to education.

This is something we will continue to do because it has the potential to move us forward and to sustain the results we are about to announce.

Our collective view is that education remains the cornerstone of any developing nation. As the sun rises and shines upon the Nation, we need to be content and confident that we have men and women devoted to the teaching and development of our children across the board.

These are teachers who dare the cold winter of Daggakraal and the unbearable heat wave of KaMaqhekeza, Siyabuswa up to the deep ends of Marapyane, all in the patriotic quest to improve the education of an African Child.

This makes us to confirm without any fear of contradiction that in this province – *Mpumalanga*, the teaching profession remains noble and is in safe hands.

The results we are about to announce are a true reflection of the hard work, dedication and resilience of our teachers in all grades.

Programme Director, our primary schools' performance is encouraging. Their performance is above 90% whilst the secondary schools, grades eight to eleven are at an average of 70%. Performance in Mathematics and Languages, particularly the language of learning and teaching shows positive trends.

83% of grade three learners and **64%** of grade six learners have obtained marks above **50%** in Mathematics.

We remain concerned that grade nine learners are still not achieving at expected levels and the performance in the language of learning and teaching though with signs of improvement, still lags behind that of Mathematics.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Programme Director, the number of full time learners who wrote all seven subjects in 2018 are **44 612** and of this number **35 225** have passed the National Senior Certificate Examination.

As announced by the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs. Angie Motshekga last night, the class of 2018 for Mpumalanga Province obtained an overall pass rate of **79%** compared to the **74.8%** pass rate obtained in 2017.

The above statistics depict a **4.2%** improvement.

13 199 learners met the requirements of following bachelor programmes which represents **29.6 %** of those that wrote as compared with the **23.4%** in 2017

DISTRICT PERFORMANCE

Of the four districts, Ehlanzeni District has recorded the highest pass rate, obtaining **82.3%** as compared to **76.8%** obtained in **2017**. This constitutes a **5.5%** improvement.

Ehlanzeni District has reached the **80%** target and we wish to use this opportunity to congratulate **Ms. Hazel Brukwe** and her team.

Nkangala District obtained **78.7 %** as compared with **73.5%** obtained in **2017**. This is an improvement of **5.2%**.

Gert Sibande District obtained **77, 5 %** as compared with **76.5%** obtained in 2017. This is an improvement of **1.0%**

Bohlabela District obtained **76.9%** as compared with **72.4 %** obtained in 2017. This constitutes a **4.5%** improvement.

Programme Director, it is encouraging to note that all our four education districts have their hands on deck as all have improved their pass rate and are performing above **76%**.

This is where the tyre hits the ground; as such it is appropriate to express our heartfelt appreciation to district management and staff.

CIRCUIT PERFORMANCE

Of the **68** circuits within the province, **Steve Tshwete 3** is declared the best circuit after obtaining a **92.4%** pass rate as compared with **90.3%** in 2017. This is an improvement of **2.1%**. Congratulations to **Mr Tonga and his team**.

We also wish to congratulate **Casteel Circuit** for registering a **22.3%** improvement this time around. **Congratulations Mr Khomola** and your team.

It is encouraging to note that **62** out of **68** circuits have performed above **70%**. We wish to appreciate the sterling work that our circuit managers and subject advisors continue to do, at times, under challenging circumstances.

We wish to appreciate the Honourable Premier for allowing the Department to fill in the vacant posts of District Directors and Circuit Managers as this has helped to bring the required stability at the levels of support.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Of the **556** examination centres that administered grade 12 examinations, **26** as compared with **18** in 2017 obtained **100%** pass rate.

Of these centres, **285** performed between **80%** and **99%**. In **2017** there were **225** schools in this category.

106 centres performed above **70%** but below **80%**.

Programme Director, it is encouraging that **417** out of **556** centres have performed above **70%**, an increase from **346** last year.

The Department is however concerned that there are schools that continuously perform below **70%**.

All the **139** schools performing below **70%** are thus declared underperforming in terms of section 58 (b) of the South African Schools Act, Act no 84 of 1996 as amended.

I am going to lead a programme together with all our structures, which will **make** our communities to support schools in such a way that there will be no school performing below **70%** in all grades and subjects.

Any performance below **70%** will not be appreciated as it represents mediocrity and ineffectiveness.

The best performing school in the province for the 2018 academic year, passing all **267** learners that wrote the exam is **Hoërskool Nelspruit**.

It is worth noting that, 226 out of **267** learners from **Hoërskool Nelspruit** met the requirements to study bachelor programmes thus making it the school with the most bachelor passes in the province.

The most improved school in 2018 is **Mchaka High School** from **Lehukwe Circuit** in **Bohlabela District**. This school registered an improvement of **52.7%** and a pass rate of **95.6% as compared to 42.9% obtained** in 2017.

We congratulate all the schools that performed outstandingly and at the same time making a call to them to sustain this improvement.

SUBJECT PERFORMANCE

Our quest to increase participation and performance in the gate way subjects of Mathematics and Physical Sciences is beginning to yield positive results.

The **101** OR Tambo MSTA secondary schools designated to offer Mathematics and Physical Sciences as mandatory subjects to all learners have presented their grade 12 class under this policy for the first time in 2018.

As such, for the first time in 2018, more than **50%** of the learners writing the National Senior Certificate in the province wrote Mathematics as opposed to Mathematical Literacy.

24 207 wrote Mathematics and **22 938** wrote Mathematical Literacy.

This improvement is encouraging and augers well for the future and the economic emancipation of our province.

It will be appreciated if parents and communities continue to motivate and support learners and schools to choose these subjects.

In 2018, **13 112** learners passed Mathematics as against **11 618** in 2017. This is a difference of **1 494** more learners passing. This represents a **54.2%** pass rate as against **47.8%** obtained in 2017. This constitutes an improvement of **6.4%**.

14 321 learners passed Physical Sciences as compared with **11 902** in 2017. This number has increased by **2 419**. This performance represents **70.2%** as compared with **61.6%** obtained in 2017. This is an improvement of **8.6%**.

It gives pleasure to report that our **101** schools linked to the OR Tambo MSTAs have registered an overall pass rate of **81.4%**. This is commendable. The Province has registered a total of **7 553** distinctions.

NO FEE BOARDING SCHOOLS

The Provincial government has established five boarding schools to guarantee quality education to learners from farm communities.

We are convinced that the decision we took to close small and unviable farm schools is justifiable and is already yielding positive results.

Out of these five boarding schools, four participated in this examination, and have performed as follows:

- eMakhazeni Boarding School obtained a pass rate of **72.0%**
- eZakheni Boarding School obtained a pass rate of **73.3%**
- Izimbali Boarding School obtained a pass rate of **85.7% and**
- Shongwe Boarding School obtained a pass rate of **95.5%**

The material conditions that these learners were subjected to, would have made it difficult for them to reach Grade 12, let alone to pass it.

It is for this reason that we must continue to support this programme for it has huge benefits for these learners, the communities they came from and for the future prospects of this province.

We wish to confirm that the top three learners from each of these boarding schools will receive a full bursary from the Provincial Government to further their studies in any public higher education institutions.

Our view is that from 2019, we must ensure that all boarding schools attain a **100%** pass rate **NOMAKANJANI!**

MUNICIPALITY PERFORMANCE

It gives me great pleasure to announce that **Dipaleseng Local Municipality** is the 2018 overall best performing municipality obtaining **86.9%** as compared with **68.6%** obtained in 2017. This marks an improvement of **18.3%**.

In this regard, we wish to congratulate the Executive Mayor, **Cllr Mafunda Makhubu** and the community of Dipaleseng Local Municipality.

Programme Director, allow me to extend my appreciation to all the Executive Mayors at District and Local Municipality levels for elevating education to the highest priority and the support they give to our institutions.

PROGRESSED LEARNERS

4 074 progressed learners wrote all subjects and out of this number **2 635** passed. This represents a **64.7%** pass rate in 2018 as compared with **56.4%** in 2017.

This improvement is of great significance as it provides hope, encouragement and confirms the effectiveness of this intervention policy as some of these learners would have sadly dropped out of school to join the queue of the lost and deserted.

GENDER BREAKDOWN

We are noting with appreciation that more girl learners are making the grade.

Of the **35 225** learners that passed, **19 329** are girls, translating into **54,9%** of girls passing compared with **45,1%** boys.

“Ayihlome Ifunde Imbokodo”.

This improvement shows that our efforts to ensure gender equality are on track and yielding the desired results.

We need to carry on as government and communities with this good work to ensure that the girl child is affirmed and empowered.

While we appreciate the efforts made to advance the education levels of the girl child, we must consciously work towards ensuring that the boy child does not slip through our fingers.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2018

I wish to take this opportunity and congratulate the class of 2018 for these impressive results. They have made us proud in a way that spells a good future for our Province.

In all this, I request that we must not stop in extending our appreciation to all our teachers, from grade R to Grade 12 for their patriotic sacrifice, dedication and hard work.

The results that we are celebrating today are a true reflection of their sweat and zeal. We are really proud of the kind of teachers that this province has.

Siyabonga Kakhulu.

SUPPORT TO LEARNERS

Programme Director, whilst we desire and work towards ensuring that every child in our system makes the grade, the reality is that some learners require extra support and patience for them to finally qualify for the National Senior Certificate.

In this instance, it remains essential that we continue to grant support to the 9387 candidates that did not make the grade.

As a Department, we cannot leave these learners to their own demise as we have programmes that are meant to assist them at times like these.

It is in that spirit that I wish to request parents and community members not to put undue pressure on these learners but to afford them care and support so that they can successfully take advantage of the opportunities available to them to reach their full potential.

I therefore make a humble appeal to all our principals to provide the required and necessary support to these learners.

Our Psychological Services Units in Districts and partners in the Departments of Health and Social Development are ready and available to provide support.

Learners that have opted for Multiple Examination Opportunities (MEO) must be supported accordingly until they sit for their examinations in the remaining subjects in May/June 2019.

I wish to make a call that all our schools must give learners who failed grade 12 for the first time another chance to go back to class fulltime and repeat the grade. I strongly believe they deserve a second chance and the direct support of their teachers.

WAY FORWARD

Programme Director, we remain confident that the future looks even brighter.

We shall marshal all resources towards the attainment of quality results and sustainable performance that will make the **5, 4 million citizens** of the Place of the Rising Sun proud.

As Team Education, we shall continue to work with our stakeholders until we improve the overall performance in Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12 to above 80% in all our schools.

The time has come for the Department to reward performing schools with the support they require to sustain good performance. For years, we have channelled more resources to underperforming schools.

The Department will offer amongst others special support to:

- Secondary schools that performed at **70%** and above;
- Schools that offer Grade 12 for the first time;
- the OR Tambo Mathematics, Science and Technology Academy Schools;
- Public Funded Boarding Schools
- Primary Schools that have less than **70%** of their learners performing below **50%** in Mathematics and in the Language of Learning and Teaching in exit grades

We will continue supporting talented learners in all subjects, render radio lessons for grade 12 high enrolment subjects to also support learners participating in Multiple Examination Opportunities (MEOs).

Our support to teachers and subject advisors will be heightened as we plan to deliver these for extended periods including during school holidays.

Indeed, it is our shared view that these efforts will assist a great deal in ushering a new performance order for all our schools and we thus urge all learners and educators to take advantage of these support initiatives.

In our collective effort to take our country to greater heights, it is important that we all work together to fight and bring to an end all the social ills that drag us back as a country and a nation.

The violence that we are experiencing in our schools needs to be dealt with urgently and government cannot fight this alone. It is therefore the role of communities and government to ensure that we socialise our children well

from the home front so as to prevent physical threat or harm directed to other learners and teachers.

No person be it a teacher or learner deserves such treatment hence we encourage members of the community to report such incidents so that the law can take its course.

The disruption and torching of schools is also something that we should collectively condemn in the strongest terms possible as this does not help us in any way and takes us backwards.

MEC's SPECIAL AWARDS

In keeping to the tradition of recognising persons who rise above the expected norm by contributing towards the advancement of education in various districts.

I wish to request the Ehlanzeni District Mayor, Cllr Jesta Sidel and the Executive Mayor of Nkomazi Local Municipality to assist me in bestowing the MEC Special Awards:

The first award goes to:

MR MAFOHLO HAMILTON MNISI

Mafohlo Hamilton Mnisi is a former teacher and Principal; former Rector at Hoxane College of Education.

He facilitated the construction of Acorn to Oaks MST School under Buffelshoek Trust and currently serves in the school's SGB. Mr Mnisi participates in the QLTC structure where he represents Manyeleti and Greenvalley Circuits. He advises the Mnisi Tribal Council on Education Support issues and secures bursaries for disadvantaged learners qualifying for university entrance. He identifies and provides school uniforms to needy children and assist them to apply for social grants. He trains youth on Entrepreneurial and environmental skills thus reducing the number of youth loitering the streets. He secured sponsorship for extra classes to improve learners' mastery of MST subjects in and around the Buffelshoek area.

I am humbled to present the MEC Special Award to Mr Hamilton Mnisi-Mvuleni.

Dr DERRICK NDZIMANDE

As a former principal of a school, he helped to produce a long list of students some of whom are playing a pivotal role in the emancipation of the people of this country and province in particular.

He started teaching privately and acted as a principal at the same time at Blomplaas Primary School in Belfast in 1974 and later trained as a teacher at Mgwenya College of Education.

He is still assisting a number of children to attend schools and improve their performance in schools .It is my humble privilege that I present the special MEC Award to Dr Derrick Ndzimande.

MRS MABUZA

She dedicated her 42 years of service, teaching learners within the Mbombela Local Municipality.

She started her teaching career at Inkunzi Secondary School, being the only female teacher in 1967, moved to Khumbula High School and then to Sitintile Senior Secondary School in 1976 ,

She also worked as an ABET (Night School) teacher, a part time lecturer at Mgwenya College, taught SiSwati at Nelspruit Primary.

Her accolades are second to none, as she is still pioneering the delivery of education with thin the Early Childhood Development Sector. Allow me to bestow the MEC Special Award to Mrs. Mabuza.

Ms. NONTUTHUKO LEKHULENI

She has mastered the art of presenting Radio lessons like no one we can ever imagine.

She does it in such a way that makes all of us obliged to tune in on Radio from 17H30 to 18H00 not only to follow the lesson presentation but to marvel the way she interacts with education experts.

She is also a producer for the Education weekly talkshow programmes.

She has embraced the issue of Radio Lessons in more ways than one and it is for this reason that I request to bestow Ms Nontuthuko Lekhuleni of Ligwalagwala FM the MEC Special Award

DR GUMBI

He has officiated at a number of occasions for the Department, rendered motivation sessions to teachers and learners.

His sermons and ministry which are flavoured with stimulating and life changing satire are a revelation and a blessing to our people.

I am greatly humbled to get an opportunity to bestow the MEC Special Award to Dr- Rev SD Gumbi.

MRS REGINAH MHAULE

Programme Director, allow me to take this opportunity to give our gratitude to our one and only former MEC for Education for all her hard work, sacrifice and commitment to transform and improve the Mpumalanga Department of Education during her tenure.

She rose above the expected norm and outperformed herself in the quest of enhancing the delivery of education in the province.

She has been a true inspiration to most of us, a good mother and a mentor to all our children.

She worked very hard to lay the foundation on which today we stand firm.

We wish you well in everything that you do in your new position.

It is an honour and great privilege to bestow the MEC Special Award to the former MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule

CONCLUSION

The spirit of our forefathers ; Nelson Mandela, Mama Albertina Sisulu, OR Tambo and many others who sacrificed their lives to usher in the democratic South Africa that we live in, must propel us to achieve the mandate of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa --- which provides that;

“To improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person”

Allow me to thank the Honourable Premier, for her unwavering support and for entrusting me with the responsibility to lead the Department of Education.

I also wish to extend my appreciation to the leadership of the African National Congress for the mandate given to me to drive this sector.

Fellow members of the Executive Council and Members of the Portfolio Committee, I am grateful for your support. Let us continue to work together to deliver education to the children of our beautiful Province.

When the sun rises again tomorrow, it shall find us hard at work.

For we owe it to our forefathers to ensure that we build a better South Africa for all. A country where our children will have a better future and equal opportunities to unleash their potential.

As the sun shines upon the warm people of Mpumalanga, let them be content that as servants of the people we continue to strive to improve the education of our children.

I wish to request our communities and parents to work with our schools to prepare for smooth re-opening. In this regard it will be appreciated that parents volunteer their time to help clean schools so that on the first day of re-opening learning and teaching can start on the first period.

We shall build on this foundation and we are confident that together we can achieve even more.

Whatever the difficulties ahead of us, we shall soldier on, whatever the setbacks of the moment, Mpumalanga shall rise, and nothing can stop us now. God Bless all of you, God bless our glorious Province. May 2019 be a prosperous year to all of us.

A new dawn has set! Ayihlome ifunde! Nomakanjani!

Thank you!

Ngiyabonga!