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CONGRATULATORY REMARKS BY THE PREMIER OF MPUMALANGA, MR MP NDLOVU, ON THE RELEASE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF MATRICULATION RESULTS FOR THE CLASS OF 2025 ON 13 JANUARY 2026, LILLIAN NGOYI CENTRE, SECUNDA, AT 9 AM.

Programme Director

MEC of Education, **Hon Lindi Masina**

Members of the Executive Council

Speaker of the Provincial Legislature, **Hon Makhosazana
Masilela**

Members of the Provincial Legislature

All Executive Mayors and Councillors present

The Chairperson of the Mpumalanga House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders, who is also the President of CONTRALESA, **Kgoši Mokoena**, and all our Traditional Leaders present here today,

Religious Leaders and Pastors' Fraternities



The Acting Head of the Department of Education, **Ms Gugu Mashiteng** and all Senior Officials of Government,

The Principals, Educators, Learners, and Parents present here this morning,

Stakeholders, Sponsors and Partners in the Education Sector,

The Leadership of all recognised labour unions in the Education sector,

Members of the Media,

Members of the Public, most importantly, resilient learners of the Class of 2025

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

1. Today, we gather to mark a significant milestone in the academic journey of our matriculants.

2. It is a moment of celebration as we release the matriculation results for the Class of 2025; results that reflect not only the hard work and dedication of our learners but also the commitment of our educators, the support of their families and



the community at large especially those who donated food and meat to the matric camps in the province.

3. I want to thank you, my beautiful children for finishing a race. Finishing a race is about perseverance and never giving up. Dean Karnazes encourages us to **“run when you can, walk if you have to, crawl if you must, just never give up”**
4. Your academic journey started twelve years ago. I am happy that you did not only finish the race but you won it. We salute you, our children for remaining in class until you sat for your matric examination.
5. Former President Thabo Mbeki said **“Those who complete the course will do so only because they do not, as fatigue sets in, convince themselves that the road ahead is still too long, the inclines too steep, the loneliness impossible to bear and the prize itself of doubtful value.”**
6. My beloved children you remained focused on the goal and you completed the journey with integrity. Congratulations, you

are now starting another journey towards your purposive and responsible adulthood.

7. The retention of learners within the education system is 67,1% in the province. We are sitting at number 3 from the top in the country when it comes to retention. We have to track the 32,9% missing youth who are not in education or are dropouts. In Mpumalanga youth graduate unemployment was 14,2% in quarter 3 of 2025.
8. We want to assure you that young graduates have real opportunities to enter the job market. We are confronting the main causes of youth unemployment, slow economic growth, lack of work experience, and the unfair reality that many young people need experience to get a job, yet need a job to gain experience.
9. I am fully gratified with the quality of matric results that we attain every year, there are very few college dropouts from the province.

10. When we track matriculants from the past ten years who progressed to institutions of higher learning, we find that many are now occupying positions where their skills and knowledge are making a meaningful contribution to the socio-economic development of both our province and the country.
11. Our matriculants are not coerced into registering as part-time candidates, nor are they excluded from writing examinations on the assumption that they are unlikely to pass matric.
12. While today we are celebrating our results, we are equally ready to resume with classes for the 2026 academic program. Learning materials have already been delivered to schools, these are designed to inspire, engage and support interactive and effective learning for learners across every grade.
13. We have distributed tablets to all our matric class of 2026, and in advancing digital education, this year marks a milestone for our Grade 10 learners as they will also receive tablets, opening new doors for learning and innovation. We

are also modernising our school infrastructure where our children will have access to free WIFI which will enable them to utilise their smart devices and digital learning tools.

14. By embracing technology, we are preparing our children to compete confidently with their peers from other provinces and on the global stage.
15. We are determined to repair all damaged schools to ensure a safe and conducive environment for learning. We remain resolute in our commitment to eradicate all mud schools and unsafe ablution facilities in the province.
16. However, our efforts have been disrupted by recent hailstorms that have destroyed some of our school infrastructure. In this light, I appeal to our religious leaders to pause their prayers for rain, as it has lately come accompanied by destruction.
17. We are committed to ensuring that all deserving learners have access to scholar transport. We are also prioritizing the

eradication of overcrowding in our schools, especially in densely populated areas, to create a safe and conducive learning environment for every child.

18. On behalf of our parents and teachers, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the service providers who ensure our learners travel safely every day. We appreciate the roadworthy buses and the dedicated drivers who ferry our children with care. Every kilometre they drive deserves a heartfelt thank you.

19. My office has received an overwhelming number of applications for the **Premier's Discretionary Bursary Fund**, and I want to assure all applicants that your submissions are receiving our full attention. The committee tasked with reviewing applications will meet next week and is expected to finalise decisions before the end of January.

20. Beneficiaries will be selected based on the criteria outlined in the advertisement that was widely published in December

2025. We thank all applicants for your patience and your commitment to education.

21. I am grateful that the **Mandla Ndlovu Foundation** has partnered with the **Department of Education** to support excellence in rural schools. Through this partnership, the department has identified **10 top-performing rural schools** that have achieved a **100% pass rate**. In recognition of their outstanding performance, the foundation will be donating full school uniforms to **1000 learners**, **100** per school and **20** per grade.

22. Let me pause and appreciate the dedication of the team led by the MEC for Education, Ms Lindi Masina, and the Head of Department for ensuring that we reach this 86,5% achievement. We are number 3 from the bottom up. I can settle for number 3 from the top, now MEC.

23. A well-educated workforce benefits the whole community as it is essential for attracting investment, fostering innovation, and ensuring sustainable economic growth.

24. We celebrate your achievement today because in you, we see the solution to the challenges facing our country. At a time when some say there is a poverty of ideas, you are the solution.

25. We see each successful matriculation as a step towards building a prosperous future for our province; an era where education becomes the foundation for economic empowerment and social progress.

26. Once again, Nelson Mandela eloquently expressed: **“A good head and good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue or pen, then you have something very special.”**

27. In conclusion, while we celebrate your achievements as the Class of 2025, we must not shy away from acknowledging the stark realities of our education system.

28. It is imperative that we recognise the challenges faced, learn from these experiences, and work towards fostering a transparent, accountable, and responsive education environment.

29. As we look towards the future, we commit to implementing the necessary reforms that will strengthen our educational framework and ensure that all learners have access to the quality education they deserve.

30. To those who may not have achieved the results they hoped for, this is not the end. You are still my children, you still have a lot to offer to this province and country. Utata Madiba said **“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall”**. There are opportunities for rewriting, vocational training, and other pathways to success.

31. Once again to our learners, teachers, parents, sponsors, MEC Masina, HOD, all senior departmental officials and labour unions. **I take a bow for your outstanding performance.**

Go forth, excel, and make Mpumalanga proud.

32. Good bye my children, go and become good ambassadors for our province, Mpumalanga, **the place of the rising sun.**

33. **Bravo to the class of 2025**

40. I thank you

