

S'bukosetfu

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As the country celebrates 20 years of Freedom and democracy it remains prudent that we make a reflection of what the Mpumalanga Department of Education achieved in 2014.

There has been a lot of challenges in the delivery of quality education and the department has made a lot of strides within this period of time. A lot need to be celebrated as achievements for the development of the whole provincial community.

There are many reasons why we need to celebrate freedom and democracy in the context of education delivery in the province. We have resolved to limit the number of reasons why we need to celebrate to 20. There are many more others that we may cite, lets just highlight the following:

The Announcement of the 77.6% Grade 12 results on 05 January 2014 making Mpumalanga the most improved province in the country from 47.8% in 2009 to 77.6% in 2013, a 30% improvement.

The MEC launched the Rhandza Xi Kolo Xa Wena Campaign to inspire communities to take care of their school environment and to renovate schools.

The MEC for Education in collaboration with Imperial Toyota Nelspruit has handed over a brand-new cars to the overall best learners for the past two years. Calvin Mawere and Bhavika Mistry were beneficiaries.

The Department has launched three Boarding Schools in the province to do away with multi grade classes in the farm schools as well as to take care of economically disadvantage learners.

The Honourable Premier pronounced the establishment of the Early Childhood Development Institute that will be located at the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality.

A number of schools were used as election centres thereby creating an enabling environment for deepening democracy and freedom in our beautiful country, South Africa.

The Department organized successful winter school programme for Grade 12 learners whose schools performed below 60% in the

process increasing the pass performance in Grade 12.

The Department led from the front in speeding the Mandela Day Celebrations at where parents and learners were involved in giving their 67 minutes helping improve and beautify their schools.

The Department initiated the Teachers' Call Initiative in collaboration with a long list of institutions in an effort to curb the premature resignations of educators.

The Department received an unqualified audit opinion for four years in succession providing fertile ground for a clean audit outcome in 2015.

The MEC launched the school sanitation programme at Lehlasedi Secondary School in the Bushbuckridge Local municipality on 23 September 2014. This is one of the key flagship projects for the current administration.

The Department in collaboration with the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport handed the first special school for Bushbuckridge Local Municipality namely Tsakane Special School on 15 October 2014.

The Department entered half a decade of a well-managed, incident free examination process that started on 28 October to 28 November 2014. A total of 45 951 of both full time and part-time learners participated in these examinations.

The Department handed over Hlalisani Primary School at Thembisile Hani Local Municipality on 29 November 2014 at an occasion that coincided with the provincial launch of the 2014 16 days of Activism on No Violence Against Women and Children.

The Province is leading in the pilot programme of the implementation of giving priority to indigenous languages at primary schools.

These are some of the highlights but there are many other reasons to celebrate. Enjoy this read.

Together We Move South Africa Forward

Committed educators attended the National Teacher Awards Provincial Ceremony in Mpumalanga as a build-up towards the national event to be held in 2015.



MEC Mhaule honouring teacher excellence

On the evening of 17 October 2014 the majestic building housing the Gert Sibande District Municipality in Ermelo within the Msukaligwa local municipality was the inviting venue for the gala event in honour of these educators who nurture the interests and the development of their communities and learners.

The world over, Teachers' Day is celebrated on the 5th of October. South Africans, however, dedicate the entire month of October to teachers - Teacher' Month redirects teachers towards our common goal of quality education for all.

Ten awards categories were identified for the best and excelling educators in the province. These were Excellence in Primary School Teaching,

Excellence in Secondary School Teaching, Excellence in Primary School Leadership, Excellence in Secondary School Leadership, Excellence in Special Needs and Inclusive Teaching, Excellence in Grade R Teaching, Excellence in Technology - Enhanced Teaching, Excellence in Mathematics Teaching (FET), Excellence in Physical Science Teaching (FET) and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Each of the four districts of the province was represented in the National Teaching Awards and only the top three were nominated to compete for the honours.

The Provincial Department of Education acknowledged the fact that all the nominees are champions and the province is proud of each and every one of them.

Nozipho, a choral soloist who took position one in the provincial South African School Choral Eisteddfod stole the show with her golden soprano voice wowing the audience to amazement.

In his message of support, the 2013 Lifetime Achiever, Mr Bright Mdaka, whose prowess in the NTA won his school a computer laboratory to the value of R250 000, laptops plus training for Ligebhuta's teaching staff, congratulated all participants for taking the bold step to participate in the National Teaching Awards. He also highlighted the fact that all contestants were by virtue of participation winners. The end product of the hard work and sweat of educators was evident as the MEC for Education; Mrs Reginah Mhaule, ascended the stage accompanied by Angel Nkambule, a praise singer from Duma Primary School in Pienaar, Ehlanzeni District.

In her keynote address, MEC Mhaule expressed her profound gratitude to teachers who are taking the journey forward to educate the nation. To that effect, she said, "This event comes just after the world celebrated its educators on World Teachers' Day, 05 October 2014. Both these events give us a platform to express our profound gratitude to the educators that give us a 100 % commitment.

MEC Mhaule continued: "Allow me to first congratulate each and every educator who is a

nominee here today. That alone, proves that you are an individual that aims to develop and elevate the educational standard of the South African child. Your dedication is reflected and exuded on the future leaders of this province.

It is through your moulding factories that different generations are shaped to be responsible citizens that will have a positive change in our country.”

MEC Mhaule also pleaded with teachers to encourage learners to take up teaching as a profession to counter the negative effect of teachers who are exiting the system prematurely.

The victors in the 2014 National Teaching Awards can be summed up as follows:

Excellence in Primary School Teaching - Ndaba Nomathemba C

Excellence in Secondary School Teaching- Madalane Danisile E

Excellence in Special Needs and Inclusive Teaching - Bester Pieter W

Excellence in Grade R Teaching - Msibi Ntombi M

Excellence in Primary School Leadership- Mabuza Amos M

Excellence in Secondary School Leadership - Mlombo Moses

Excellence in Technology - Enhanced, Teaching and Learning - Msimango J

Excellence in Mathematics Teaching (FET) - Mashele Sibusiso M

Excellence in Physical Science Teaching (FET) - Lebjane Council C

Appreciated as a Lifetime Achiever, Mirriame J Khoza, from Sifundzekhaya Primary School in Ehlanzeni District received a standing ovation from the audience.

The Mpumalanga Department of Education wishes all first position nominees the best of luck in their quest to take the honours in the National Teaching Awards at the national level.



MEC Mhaule with some of the best teachers in the province

The handover event of Tsakane Special School was synonymous to taking the bull by its horn as the physically and cognitively challenged section of our society which is mostly marginalised and stigmatised was uplifted and recognised through this event.

The mood was set for the prelude of the official handover event of Tsakane Special School that took place on 16 October 2014 at the Tsakane Special School hall. The emphasis of the event was the prevailing notion that government really cares for the needs of the South African people, the disabled included.

Situated in Orpen Gate, RDP Block in Arconhoek in the Bohlabela District, Tsakane Special School caters for learners with special needs from Grade R to Grade 4. The school is a state of the art facility with an enrolment of 111 learners with a SENASE backed curriculum which covers three main areas; Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills. The learners enrolled at the school are day scholars from the surrounding areas of Manyeleti, Shatale, Arcornhoek and Casteel.

The facility consists of an Admin Block of six offices, four store rooms, a staff room, kitchen, sickroom, a foyer and reception area. There are ten classrooms, a hall, four workshops, a double garage, a media centre, change centre, a guard's room and thirty four toilets for disabled and abled learners. With regards to staff personnel to take care of the special educational needs of the learners as well as their support are one principal, an HOD and 09 PL1 Educators, 03 Administrative Staff, 18 Teacher Assistants, a General Foreman, 04 Cleaners and four Grounds men.

The buzz word of the day was "taking care of the school" as echoed by MEC Mhaule imploring the school community to take ownership of the school. Cllr Mokoena spoke on behalf of the Executive Mayor.

In his message of support, Mr. Judas Mudala, the Provincial Chairperson of the South African National Council for the Blind expressed his gratitude to the department for making disabled people feel respected and worthy in the course to make education accessible to all. In his words there is still a long way to go in the journey to educate

people with disabilities and is confident that the Department of education is up to that challenge.



The MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Ms. Dumisile Nhlengethwa said, "We have heeded the call for catering for the commuting needs of the learners by providing scholar transport for this learners. In this respect we find this being a positive narrative and a good story to tell to all. There could be no better way of uplifting our disabled learners than giving them an education that is responsive to their needs."

"History has been made as this is the first special school to be built in the Bohlabela District, Bushbuckridge local municipality. This is the 18th special school within the province and the learners will learn life skills so that they could be able to be independent in earning a living. Parents within this area will derive joy and be content that their children with learning disabilities who need special educational attention will be able to learn within their locality. These learners are human beings and should be treated as such and no one has a right to take away their right to an education. I want to make a plea to all the school community to work together towards taking good care of this school," said MEC Mhaule in her keynote address.

The MEC concluded by wishing all learners who will be sitting for examinations well in their studies. She also made a commitment that the Mpumalanga Department of Education will afford learners with disabilities who pass their grade 12 examinations and apply for bursaries with bursaries.

This is a positive narrative and a good story to tell. The African Dream as in the words of Vicky Simpson is on. 'Minthiro yavulavula'.

Sisonke Sifundzisa Sive.

The first memorial of Tata Nelson Mandela's passing should be a time for all of us to reflect on whether we are upholding the values and virtues that he embodied such as selflessness, dignity, humility and respect.



Being Visible: Public Service Commission Officials

In memory of Nelson Mandela's passing, the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Mpumalanga will hand over a water tank at the Cyril Clarke Secondary School. The water tank is part of the vegetable garden project that the PSC initiated during its '67 minutes for Nelson Mandela' in July 2014. For the PSC, the garden project was not just a symbolic gesture but rather an endeavor that will tangibly and sustainably improve the lives and capabilities of the learners. The Cyril Clarke school community will immensely benefit from the project which was handed over on 04 December 2014.



The indispensable tank flanked by learners

Cyril Clarke Secondary is located in the heart of Mattafin, Nelspruit and hosts 844 learners and has a staff compliment of 30 teachers. All 844 learners come from the disadvantaged backgrounds and come from the surrounding areas such as Ngodwana, Schagen, Cairn, Phumlani, Msholozhi, Elandshoek, Sudwala Caves, Mattafin and the



The Cabbage Patch brought about by the donation former Airport area. Many of the learners in the area rely on the school nutrition programme to get their daily sustenance and, without it many will go hungry and will not be able to focus on their education.

On 18 July 2014, the PSC spent half the day planting over 2000 seedlings ranging from beetroot, onion, tomatoes and cabbage. Six weeks later, sprouts of fruit could visibly be seen bursting through the fertile soil of Mattafin. However, the school requested a solid irrigation system in order to sustain the plants. It is on this basis that the PSC donates a water tank to the school.

The PSC will continue to render support and assistance to the school in Mpumalanga. The Mpumalanga department of Education hails this partnership with the PSC as a catalyst to change and development.

Together Moving South Africa Forward.



Vegetables aplenty

CIn most cultures and in the African culture in particular, a name has a prophetic meaning and that is why names are so significant to tell the history, intent and wishes for the future. Hlalisani is a Nguni word meaning; stay together or live in peace and had a significant symbolic meaning for the 16 Days of Activism.



MEC Mhaule caring for the vulnerable

The Mpumalanga Department of Education handed over Hlalisani primary school to the Tweefontein community on 29 November 2014. The handover event co-incided with the 2014 provincial 16 Days of Activism on No Violence Against Women and Children held at the Thembisile Hani Local Municipality.

Hlalisani Primary School is a fully fledged primary school in Tweefontein South Circuit in the Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, Nkangala District. The school project is comprised of 18 Classrooms, 2 grade R facilities, an Administration block, a library facility, a computer laboratory, fencing, water, rails and ramps, 27 toilets, a



Learners received new sets of school uniform

Kitchen, 3 Sports grounds and a car park.

The project forms part of the Department's 100 days project or 2014 and caters for 945 learners who are presently enrolled at the school. On the day of the event, the department also donated 60 new sets of school uniform. Twenty learners were from each of the three schools; namely Zindli, Siphwe and Hlalisani primary schools.

MEC Vusi Shongwe, the MEC for Community, Safety, Security and Liaison who was standing in for Premier DD Mabuza said, "We thank the Mpumalanga Department of Education for this wonderful gift to the community of Tweefontein. We call upon the community of Tweefontein to protect this facility and I want to assure you that we will do everything from the side of government and the SAPS to ensure that this facility is kept intact from criminal elements and vandalism."

The MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule highlighted the significance of teaching and learning delivery and learner performance. To that effect, she said, "Our vision of a state of the art school such as Hlalisani, is that of a performing



Opening the Plague: Members of the Executive Council Mhaule and Shongwe

school in terms of learner attainment and effective teaching and learning. The teaching and learning conditions have thus been improved and we are looking forward to improved results as well."

The Chairperson of the School Governing Body, Mr. Daniel Zabenzini Masango said, "We welcome this wonderful structure and we are grateful to the Department. Our children are proud of the beautiful school and are happy to go to school at any day. We really appreciate this and we are hopeful that the improvement of learner attainment will follow as well."



Proudly South African: Learners joyfully displaying the National Flag

Badanile Zulu, affectionately known as “Make Zuka” was taught the value of giving at a very young age.

Born in the old Mbombela, the first born of eight children. She grew up from a poor family, and this taught her patience and sharing. Her past was however preparing her for a greater cause. A higher calling.

The religious vibrant lady collects only 5 cents (Zuka) from the surrounding communities and uses the money to buy school uniforms for orphaned children and those living below the breadline.

She has over the years realized that some school children attend school with an empty stomach and hence has also started donating food parcels and toiletries.

During her school visitations she is always accompanied by a pastor who plays the role of a motivational speaker.

Make Zuka believes in feeding the body and the spirit. Her aim is that these learners are equipped with life skills that will enable them to not only help themselves but to help their neighbors as well. Her work will be done when she has groomed more givers.

She shares her story with a twinkle in her eyes, which is soon filled with tears as she guides us through her mental pictures of the difficult situations she has experienced when visiting different schools and homes.

She shares that it has not been always easy for people to believe in her initiative, which led her to dig deeper in her pockets.

Make Zuka is woman that has discovered the dark side of poverty and aims to fight it with the help of her community. She was eager to share that she hopes to build a soup kitchen that will be able to feed the young and the old.

Her dream is to see those that cannot afford walking in for a meal in a safe environment; this enables them to redeem their pride.



Make Zuka with Fifty Cents ready to give a helping hand

With the aim to better the lives of the people of Mpumalanga, the Department of Education has always encouraged big business to offer a helping hand towards the communities of the province.



SGB Chairperson, Mr. Elvis Shakoane receiving the soccer kit from Nedbank's Brian Bogape with Ms. Lorrain Goba looking on

It was therefore an honour for the Department to collaborate with Nedbank at ES Malele Secondary School, Shatale Circuit in Bohlabela District to officially handover Mobile Science Laboratories. This initiative intended to take away the notion that previously disadvantaged schools are unable to cater for learners taking Mathematics and Physical Sciences as subjects.

The event was honoured by the presence of the District Director: Bohlabela, Ms. Lorraine Goba, who was very excited and expressed gratitude towards this generous gesture, as it represented growth and a great relationship between the Government Department and the private sector.



When interviewed she added that “the Department aims to increase the number of learners that take up Mathematics and Physical Science subjects in the province, when these children are not only exposed to theory but practical experiments their put into an even greater advantage of not only easily understanding but passing with great results”.

As part of the donation, the Department of Education organized free training on using the mobile laboratory kit to science teachers from the school.

The learners were eager to express their gratitude and expressed that the donation will contribute immensely on the improvement of the teaching processes as they will be able to practically participate in science experiments.

“We are very excited that we will also be able to mix different chemicals and see their reaction, I can't wait for our chemistry class” expressed one excited learner learner.



In demonstrating the seriousness of caring about empowering communities, especially children on issues affecting their socialisation and development towards a positive and progressive society, the Mpumalanga Department of Education held its Soul Buddyz Club Gala dinner at Badplaas' Aventura Resort from the 07th-09th October 2014.



Soul Buddyz: Empowering the Youth in many ways

Themed, "My Life, My Future," this event epitomised the Soul City Institute's caring character about empowering communities and demonstrating positive organised action that gets things done.

The Club 's focus is specially directed to children being one of the vulnerable groups that require a positive active environment to blossom and reach their developmental potential.

This exercise seeks to counteract the negative effect of children becoming victims of socially unbalanced surroundings.



Facilitating Youth Empowerment: Ms. Thully Nagel and Mr. Joe Molai, Director : GET

Established in 2003, the Soul Buddyz Clubs programme is implemented in a way that extends the fun, learning and active participation from the Soul Buddyz TV programme that has is a hit with children within the 8 to 14 year old cohort into the classroom.

The programme is a partnership between the Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication, SABC Education and is supported by the National Department of Education with the participation of the nine provinces.

The Club is also working towards creating an environment for ongoing learning, encouraging children to have fun and to be creative while covering a wide range of debate and life skills topics such as HIV/AIDS and child grants, caring for the environment, alcohol free schools and dealing with bullying.

This covers the vision of working with children and adults to create a platform that gives voice to, and promotes real action for, children's health and wellbeing.



Displaying Youth Empowerment in Action

Based on the alarming statistics received by the office of the Honorable MEC, Mrs. Reginah Mhaule on the number of educators that have left the system, the Mpumalanga Department of Education took it upon themselves to curb even more educators from resigning.



MEC Mhaule with the FNB Team

The meetings with educators deemed, the Teachers' Call Initiative aims to inspire, motivate and appreciate educators by engaging them on issues pertinent to their well-being taking into consideration the stressful and challenging circumstances under which teaching and learning takes place.



Ms. Magauta Mphahlele addressing debt matters

The Department has partnered with stakeholders such as The South Africa Council of Educators, The Banking Association South Africa, Standard Bank, National Debt Mediation Association, South African Revenue Services, SACE, Government Employee Pension Fund and Old Mutual.

Speaking at one of the meetings in Emalahleni, on Thursday, 04 September 2014 the Honorable MEC stated that:

"We wish to appeal to our teachers not to exit the system prematurely as this is not only detriment to their well-being but also threatens the development of our nation as we are talking teachers in this instance. We cannot afford to lose our good educators in such droves."

"If the Department loses educators at this rate, we also lose valuable key skills needed for the development of our province."

"Let me also highlight the fact that Emalahleni is leading the province in resignations and early retirements and this needs to be curbed urgently"

The initiative has been positively received as educators are afforded the opportunity to voice out their concerns and frustrations in a safe platform to relevant stakeholders.



Educators in attendance

On 23 September 2014, the Mpumalanga Department of Education launched its school sanitation, water and electrification project at Lehlasedi Primary School in Shatale, Bohlabela District.

This launch follows the pronouncement of the MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule on her 2014/15 Policy and Budget Speech where she said:



MEC Mhaule putting the water to test

"The Department will ensure that water and sanitation infrastructure improves by constructing 1033 ablution units this financial year."

Lehlasedi Secondary School received 16 new sanitation units which were constructed by the MRTT. The school has 1445 learners, 53 educators and its grade 12 results were 68.6% in 2012 and in 63.1% in 2013.



Principal, Mr. Brown acknowledges receipt of portraits

The Mpumalanga Department of Education has in its school infrastructure programme for 2014 prioritised the improvement and rehabilitation of school sanitation facilities, provisioning of water and electrification of schools.

This infrastructure development is intended to instil a sense of pride, restore dignity and ensure that the conditions for teaching and learning are conducive.

The Sanitation Programme currently underway includes the construction of 94 sanitation units in six schools within the Bohlabela District at an allocation of R3.5 million. This is done through the Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust (MRTT).

The Schools that are benefiting from this noble endeavour are Casteel, Maphuthaditjaba, Skhila, Ximoyi Khosa, LM Kganane and Letshele.

In addition to the projects mentioned, 279 sanitation units will be constructed through the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in 17 schools from the four districts.

This project commenced in September and it is expected to be completed in January 2015.

The Department has set aside R19.02 million towards this project and Etshondo, MD Coovadia, Lindzalokuhle, Entokozweni, Mkhutshwa, EJ Singwane, Silingane, Matlushe, Machaye, Bhekimfundo, Nwa Mahumana, Kufakwezwe, Motseleng, Saselani, Umzimvelo, Manyeleti and Shanke schools are beneficiaries of this project.

Equally the Department has set aside R30 million

towards the provisioning of 442 sanitation units and the provisioning of water supply in four schools. This project is expected to commence from November 2014 to March 2015 and will be implemented by the MRTT and the Gert Sibande FET College.

Beneficiary schools from this project are Zinikeleni, Vuyelani, Tiyani, Sisukumele, Sibongangwane, Seselani, Njonjela, Mvuyazi, Mlavha Khoza, Matlolane, Matlushe, Matikwana, Mathibela, Masibekela, Mapalene, Magwagwaza, Machaye, Mabahrhule, Lobhengula, Lindzalokuhle, Langa, Khuphukani, Jameyana, Ithole, Imisebeyelanga, Ian McKenzie, Hundzukani, Dyonzekani, Dilayi, Daniye, Chayaza, Bhekimfundo, Bethamoya and Baadjiesbult.

"We intend to make the shortage of water and sanitation a thing of the past. We want all our schools to have running water. Even in cases where we will be called upon to provide boreholes, we intend to go that far to provide for the sanitation needs of our schools," said MEC Mhaule.

A fully equipped laboratory was donated to Lehlasedi this by Industrial Development Corporation.

The unveiling of the sanitation, water and electrification of schools coincided with the official handover of the Lehlasedi School Laboratory.

The private-public partnership of this nature needs to be appreciated. Mr. Steve Mashego, Chairperson of the school governing body expressed the gratitude of the school and the community with regards to both projects and hoped for more partnerships to benefit schools in the area.



MEC Mhaule opening the Sanitation Plaque



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