

Northern Cape Teaching Awards 2019

Opening Remarks: MEC Mac Jack

Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre

Thursday, 3 October 2019

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Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr. Zamani Saul

Members of the Executive Council and the Legislature of the Northern Cape;

Collective Leadership of the ANC led Alliance;

Head of the Department Education: Mr GT Pharasi;

Senior Managers and Departmental Officials present;

Worker and/or Teacher Unions;

SGB's, Stakeholders and Partners in the Education Sector;

Most importantly, the Educators, the Provincial Finalists of the 2019 Northern Cape Teaching Awards;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Distinguished guests;

Programme Director

This is the first National Teachers Awards Program taking place since the May 2019 National Elections, with the constituency mandate given to the African National Congress to run the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration. I am indeed honoured to be here at this very important occasion tonight, as we recognise excellence in the teaching profession. Occasions such as these, to recognize excellence in teaching seldom takes place, and yet the teaching profession is the most important.

From the 03<sup>rd</sup>-05<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the Department of Education undertook a task of convening a Strategic Plan Session under the strategic focus "Building the Elements of, Capacity for and Momentum Towards a Modern, Growing and Successful Education System in the Northern Cape." During this Strategic Plan Session of the Department of Education of the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration, we paid a fitting tribute to the great and dedicated revolutionaries, teachers' administrators who built and shaped our Education System over many years.

The tribute that the Strategic Plan paid to these revolutionaries, teachers and administrators was a living proof that in our Province, the vision of educating the nation and producing adequate relevant skills is not only alive and well, but is inherited from generations of hard working revolutionaries, teachers and administrators whose record of struggle and sacrifice is unequalled in our country's history.

We have put together a 15 Point Plan and a Turn-Around Strategy that must be given to all teachers and administrators of the Department to overhaul these Department, which in brief have to do with:

- The review of our mission and vision of the Department so that it is better aligned with the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration strategic focus.
- Redesign our education system to the new technological advances, i.e. coding and robotics, henceforth our vision and mission must speak to these advances in curricula, etc.
- Put together an approach towards the review of the Organizational structure and capacitation of our Districts, Circuits and Schools.

All of us, no matter where you are in life today, were positively influenced by teacher. Tonight, I'm in presence of the best in our Province, and teachers at the cutting edge of the teaching profession. You also represent a calibre of teachers that promotes professionalism in the sector to serve as role models for our learners. Yes, you are here tonight, because you have overcome a barrage of challenges to succeed in life and in your classroom.

Their care and concern is the ballast for many of our learners when they are faced with challenges, whether in school exams, difficulty coping with grades, different aspects of school life or a teenager's life, and in all these, our teachers make a difference with a listening ear and a caring heart.

Through the Northern Cape Department of Education's Provincial Teaching Awards, we are actualising the National Teaching Awards' aims and objectives which are to:

- Recognise and promote excellence in teaching performance so that our teachers feel valued by the system;
- Honour dedicated, creative and effective teachers and schools which will encourage our teachers to go beyond the call of duty;

- Encourage best practice in schools;
- Afford South Africans the opportunity to publicly say “thank you” to all outstanding teams or individual teachers in schools.

We are very grateful for the contributions you have made to the education system in the Province. Allow me to wish all the Provincial Winners well at National Teachers Awards and trust that they fly the Northern Cape high.

I thank you!