

**Keynote Address by the Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr Zamani Saul at the  
release of the 2021 Matric Results**

**Tabernakel, Kimberley**

**21 January 2022**

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**Programme Director**

**Members of the Executive Council;**

**Members of the Provincial Legislature; particularly the Chair of the portfolio  
Committee, Mr Dichaba**

**Head of the Department, Ms. Moira Marais;**

**And the entire management team of education (so in 2021 you are Team Best  
Improved Province, for 2020 you were Team Worst Results and 2022 you must  
be Team Outstanding Results)**

**Representatives of our Teacher Unions;**

**Stakeholders in Education: MTN, Vodacom, Standard Bank, Fundi, South  
African Institute of Charter Accountants (SAICA)**

**Senior Management and Officials of the Department of Education;**

**School Principals present;**

**Members of the Media;**

**Most importantly, our top performing learners and their parents;**

The release of the National Senior Certificate Examination results is always awaited with high expectations and anticipation, as it serves as a barometer for the work that was done to improve the learner outcomes, especially for the Grade 12s. For many Grade 12's as it signals the end of a 12 year schooling journey and the start of their adult lives either in an academic environment or entering the corporate and labour world.

Learning is a life-long activity and today, learners who have worked hard, will feel the pleasure of their sacrifices being acknowledged and appreciated. Roy T Bennett writes that "There are five important things for living a successful and fulfilling life: never stop dreaming, never stop believing, never give up, never stop trying, and never stop learning."

On this note I want to encourage those learners who did not succeed this time to not despair and to register for the mid-year examination. This is definitely not the be all and end all of it. You have stumbled at the last hurdle, so get up, dust yourself off and go get your pass mark in June.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**, the Covid-19 pandemic is continuing to take its toll on the Education System. The impact of the pandemic has been widely documented and has impacted on every sector of society, be it education, economy, politics and social matters.

The education sector was not spared. We lost educators, principals, circuit managers, professionals and support staff due to Covid-19 when we needed them the most. Our students depended on their wisdom, hard work and inspiration to get them through the year. We send our heartfelt condolences to all the families that have lost their loved ones to Covid-19.

Amidst the pandemic, we continued, to the best of our abilities to steer the ship, ensuring that learners return to school and ultimately sit well prepared for their final examinations.

As South Africans, we have a history of emerging victorious in most difficult situations. We are a resilient nation, and we shall overcome this pandemic as well. With the cooperation of all, we will soon return to relative normality and restore the natural order of things.

Our mental fitness has always enabled us to be better prepared to deal with anything that is thrown in our direction.

Allow me to illustrate the magnitude of managerial expertise required by the department to administer the National Senior Certificate Examination.

A total of one hundred ninety four thousand three hundred and seventy nine (194 379) answer scripts were marked by 778 Markers, 165 Senior Markers, 22 Deputy Chief Markers, 81 Chief Markers and 81 Internal Moderators. We thank all markers as well as their families for the selfless sacrifice made towards the future of our children that will ultimately benefit our Province.

The Northern Cape registered thirteen thousand and fifty six (13 056) full time candidates for the 2021 National Senior Certificate Examination (NSC). This is an increase of 1035 full-time candidates compared to the twelve thousand and twenty one (12 002) in 2020.

**Ladies and Gentleman**, we have registered the largest cohort of Grade 12 candidates for the past 10 years. A total of 12 726 full time candidates successfully completed the 2021 NSC Examinations and despite the worldwide challenge presented by Covid 19 they wrote all subjects they were registered for. The Province recorded 9 089 full-time candidates that passed, bringing the overall pass rate in the Province to 71, 4%, an increase of 5, 4% in comparison to 2020. This makes us the number one most improved Province in terms of our percentage increase.

Although the overall pass rate in the Province has increased with 5, 4%, we regrettably still remain below the national average of 76.4%. This remains a concern and more needs to be done to attain a pass rate not less than the national average. Concerted efforts must be made to ensure that this is achieved in 2022 and this must form part of our turnaround strategy to improve learning outcome across all Grades.

The 2021 National Senior Certificate Examination analysis also indicates that the actual number of distinctions obtained is 1 923, a decline of 1, 3% and 3 856 candidates achieving at a Bachelor's level, an increase of 1, 9%.

Out of a total of 145 High Schools which sat for the 2021 National Senior Certificate Examination, 9 schools in the Province have obtained a 100% pass rate, whilst 116 schools achieved a pass rate above 60% in comparison to the 90 schools of 2020. We will acknowledge our top performing schools later on in the program.

The analysis also reveals an improvement of 3, 8% in Mathematics. Out of the 2 689 candidates who wrote Mathematics, 1 591 (59, 2%) passed at 30% and 1 052 (39, 1%) passed at 40%. A total number of 72 distinctions have been obtained. We are capable of doing better. We should and this will form part of our focus for 2022 and onwards.

The results also reveal an improvement of 11% in Physical Sciences. Out of the 2 086 candidates who wrote Physical Sciences, 1 361 (65, 2%) passed at 30% and 884 (42, 41%) passed at 40%. A total number of 59 distinctions have been obtained. We will place more focus and attention on these subjects for 2022 to ensure a further improvement in the performance of these subjects, which will broaden the landscape of possibilities for our learners.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

The pass rates for our five Districts are as follows;

- The Namakwa District achieved the highest district pass rate with 81, 2% which is an increase of 2, and 5%.
- ZF Mgcawu is second with a pass rate of 79, 8% which is an increase of 8, 5%.
- Frances Baard is third with a pass rate of 69, 6% which is an increase of 4, 6%.
- Pixley Ka Seme is fourth with a pass rate of 68, 7% which is an increase of 1, 4%.
- John Taolo Gaetsewe is placed fifth with a pass rate of 67, 2% which is an increase of 7, 2%.

Allow me to acknowledge the presence of the top performing candidates in the Province. Today, we will also celebrate excellent achievements in specific subjects, where candidates obtained level 7's. These candidates will be announced and acknowledged later in the program. They have demonstrated the highest level of resilience; they were able to master highest level of discipline and hard work regardless of their social and economic conditions. They were able to rise above

their own current reality and define a promising future for themselves with endless possibilities.

We celebrate them as our modern day heroes for their hard work and dedication. We furthermore, celebrate them because through their discipline and hard work they dared their challenging circumstances and created a script to follow in the future.

Finally, we will support all candidates that have not made it through these exams. We will assist and support them in the subjects not achieved, to ensure that they complete the requirements for passing.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the MEC for Education, Mr Zolile Monakali, the Head of the Department, Ms Moira Marais and all Senior and Middle Managers for their administrative leadership.

All District and Circuit officials, Curriculum Chief Directorate, Curriculum Coordinators and all Subject Advisors need special mentioning and have to be acknowledged for the role they have played.

A word of appreciation to the Examination Chief Directorate as well as the District Examination officials for their commitment, involvement and outstanding manner in which they conduct examinations in our Province.

I thank all the teacher unions that operate in this sector and all our dedicated teachers for their outstanding role in assisting the Northern Cape Department of Education and for their individual and collective contribution. A special word of appreciation to all our partners in Education, who are present: MTN, Vodacom, Standard Bank, Fundi, South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) for their unwavering support and commitment towards Education. This is what we mean when we say, "Education is a societal matter".

I sincerely trust that this cooperation and relationship will continue and further strengthens. Please remember that these learners are our children who need our assistance and support at all times.

In conclusion, to the Class of 2022, the bar has been set, which provides a perfect stepping stone to improve the National Senior Certificate Examination pass rate in our Province. I call on all stakeholders and partners in the Education Sector to strengthen the hand of the Northern Cape Provincial Government by working with them to ensure excellence in Education. The future of our country solely rests on education and training, hence my plea that we need to recommit and dedicate ourselves to this noble cause.

**I thank you**