

# **Provincial Pledge Signing Ceremony**

**MEC Zolile Monakali**

**Ratang Thuto High School**

**Monday, 2 November 2020**

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**Acting Head of the Department, Mr Sandile Beuzana;**

**Senior Managers and Staff of the Department;**

**Representatives from our Unions;**

**Staff and Personnel of Ratang Thuto High School;**

**Representatives from the SGB;**

**Parents;**

**Members of the media;**

**Most importantly, our learners, the Class of 2020.**

Today, is the start of a very important journey in the lives of all our matriculants, as you will be undertaking a pledge to ensure that the 2020 National Senior Certificate Examinations are free of any irregularities.

The Northern Cape Department of Education has always and will continue to ensure that we administer a National Senior Certificate Examinations free of any irregularities. We have always adhered to the norms and standards of the National Senior Certificate Examinations and this year is no different.

The necessary systems and measures are in place to ensure that the status quo will remain in the Northern Cape for many more years to come.

The year 2020, will always stand out as a very difficult and abnormal school year, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lock-down has disrupted the lives of learners in different ways, not only on a personal level, but also the extent to which they have completed the curriculum.

In order to respond to educational gaps created by the lock-down, the Department needed to package additional resources and programmes to support learners.

Schools, teachers, and learners also looked for flexible ways to repair the damage caused by COVID-19 interruptions to learning and curriculum trajectories. These include among others, assistance from mental health (Psycho-Social support) specialists, radio programmes, e-learning platforms, learning support to teachers to help the weakest learners and the most vulnerable learners to catch-up and weekend classes to support learners in a controlled environment. In addition to this, close to 8000 learners benefitted from our matric intervention programmes which ended yesterday.

The Department of Education have done all we can to ensure that you are well prepared for the 2020 National Senior Certificate Examination. It is now up to you, the learners to relate what they have learnt (on the answer sheets during the examinations) and deliver on our expectations.

The Department of Education expect you to be honest and to do your own work during the examination and to refrain from any type of examination irregularities, such as:

- ***Found in possession of a cell phone.*** Even if the device was switched off or if there was no information on it to assist you, you will be sanctioned;
- ***Copying from notes or textbooks*** or any other unauthorised material or from a fellow candidate;
- ***If you receive any help*** from a teacher or a friend during the writing of the examination;
- ***When you do not hand in your annexure*** for subjects like Mathematical Literacy;
- ***Using*** a friend's exam number or ***a wrong exam number*** and;
- If you do not ***sit according to the seating plan.***

It is also very important to warn you against accepting answers that are imposed on you by anyone. ***Do not accept imposed answers.*** If you accept answers imposed on you, the following will be the ***consequences:***

- The imposed answers will definitely be detected at the marking centre. The system has advanced ways of detecting such answers.
- Your results in the implicated subject/paper will be blocked for further investigation.
- The investigation and hearings are a long process which may be concluded after the opening of tertiary institutions.
- As you will be waiting for the outcome of the hearings, other 2020 matric learners will be busy with their first year tertiary education studies.
- This means that your life will come to a complete standstill as you will be waiting for the outcome of the investigations and hearings.
- If you are found guilty of accepting imposed answers, your results will be declared null and void.
- You may be barred from writing the National Senior Certificate examination for a period of between one to three years depending on the decision of the Chairperson of the hearing committee.

- You will be given an opportunity to appeal the decision taken by the hearing committee. This is another long-drawn process which will further delay your results.
- Whilst waiting for the outcome of your appeal, your peers will be continuing with their tertiary education studies.
- The fact of the matter is that you may lose 1 year of your plans or even 2 or 3 years depending on the outcome of the appeal process.

Therefore, imposed answers can easily destroy your life whilst the person who imposed the answers on you are unaffected and continue with their lives.

We do hope that this Pledge Signing Ceremony will make you aware of the dangers of any irregularities and salvage you from the frustrations of waiting for the long processes of investigations and hearings.

In conclusion; you do have a choice. Make the right decision. Be honest, be trustworthy, be a person of character and integrity. Make us proud. Study and work hard. Be calm, arrive on time for the examination and have your identity document and admission letter with you at all times.

Lastly, our message to young people is: you can succeed despite difficult circumstances, poor backgrounds and humble beginnings.

The Department strongly appeals to parents and all school communities to continue to support their children and create a conducive environment at home to study. The active participation and involvement of parents in their children's education is crucial, especially during this time of the year.

We wish you all of the best and make the Northern Cape proud.

I thank you!