

Statement by the Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr Zamani Saul, at the Matric Examination State of Readiness Press-briefing

Northern Cape Department of Education

Wednesday, 4 November 2020

MEC for Education, Mr Zolile Monakali

Acting Head of Department, Mr Sandile Beuzana

Senior Managers of the Department

Members of the public tuned in through the various platforms

Members of the media

Ladies and gentlemen

We have deemed it necessary to convene this media briefing to declare that the Northern Cape Department of Education is ready to administer the 2020 National Senior Certificate Examinations. As of now it's all systems go.

Last year, the Northern Cape achieved a pass rate of 76, 5%, an increase of 3, 2% from 73, 3 % in 2019. The Class of 2020 has an enormous task ahead of them, to ensure that they further improve on last year's pass percentage and surpass the national average of 81%.

Support to the Class of 2020

It goes without saying that this year was a very difficult and abnormal school year as a result of 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.

The Department of Education has had various interventions with the sole aim of ensuring that our schools and learners get the maximum support with a strong emphasis on progressed and borderline learners.

Amongst those interventions were the following programmes:

- Curriculum Roadshow and Subject Clinics;

- Radio Broadcasts of lessons, Whatsapp groups, Online and Offline Content Applications and Woza TV Broadcasts,
- Saturday classes, Weekend Lock-In Sessions and Psycho-social support;
- Differentiated Content Support by Subject Advisors for problematic and high enrolment subjects;
- Provisioning of Additional Learning Support Material; and
- Extended Spring Schools for approximately 8000 learners.

The state of readiness for the 2020 NSC examination

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted on our June mid-year examination which could not sit. As a result, all candidates will be accommodated in the final year-end 2020 National Senior Certificate Examination. The Department revised and strengthened the COVID-19 protocols that will apply to all examination processes. Strict compliance with COVID-19 regulations and guidelines is therefore guaranteed at all examination and marking centres.

In as far as further State of Readiness is concerned; allow me to put the following 8 key points forward:

1. The conduct of the examination

The examination for all candidates will commence on 5 November 2020 (English) and conclude on 15 December 2020 (Visual Arts and Agricultural Management Practices).

2. Registration of examination centres

All exam centres have been audited by provincial and district officials, based on a national instrument. The Northern Cape has registered 177 National Senior Certificate examination writing centres.

3. Registration of candidates

The 2020 National Senior Certificate registration has been completed. We have registered a total of 23 928 candidates, of which 12 049 are 2020 NSC full time candidates, 4 528 candidates include the 2019 National Senior Certificate Multiple Examination Opportunity candidates completing their matric; candidates who could not sit for the 2019 NSC due to valid reasons such as ill health and those who are

improving subjects. The total number of part time and Senior Certificate candidates are 7 351.

It should be noted that for this exam no candidate will have the option to make use of the Multiple Examination Opportunity. This simply means that all candidates will sit for all their subjects during the 2020 National Senior Certificate Examinations.

If a candidate is unable to write all their subjects due to illness, COVID-19 infection or any other reason, they will be able to write those subject/s during next year's May/June mid-year examinations. It also means, that their results will not form part of the final 2020 NSC Examination results. The same applies to the results of part-time and Senior Certificate candidates, which will not form part of the overall NSC results of 2020.

4. Integrity management

The Province leaves no stone unturned in ensuring that examination irregularities are prevented especially acts of dishonesty and possession of unauthorised electronic devices like cell phones. A total of 150 Chief Invigilators were appointed and trained to strengthen our efforts to eradicate examination irregularities for the 2020 NSC examination.

5. Printing, packaging and distribution

All 125 papers are set by Department of Basic Education panels. Packing, boxing and distribution of question papers are done per district, per school, per paper. Security measures are brought in to track each and every question paper printed.

The Province is confident that all candidates will receive question papers on time, on the day of writing.

6. Selection of markers

A thorough process was conducted to ensure that quality marking of answer scripts will take place. The required marker personnel were appointed as follows:

- **1052 Markers**
- **217 Senior Markers**
- **97 Chief Markers**

- **28 Deputy Markers**
- **97 Internal Moderators**
- **3 Data Capturing Supervisors**
- **4 Centre Managers**
- **8 Deputy Centre Managers**
- **200 Examination Assistants**

7. Commencement and completion of marking

We have increased the marking centres to 4 centres to make provision for 1 691 marking personnel and to comply with Covid-19 protocols. The marking centres will open on 4 January 2020 and answer scripts and question papers will be delivered to marking centres. The capturing of marks will take place up to the 14th of January 2020.

8. Release of results

The National Minister of Basic Education will have a press conference on the 22nd of February 2021 to release the national results.

The Northern Cape will release our provincial results on 23rd of February 2021, which will be followed by the Matric Awards.

Conclusion

We are confident that the Department of Education with the full support of the Provincial Government has during these extremely trying times, done our level best to equip each and every willing candidate to sit down for what could well be the most important examination they will ever write.

It is also important to understand that the matric examinations not only impacts on the registered candidates, but is a partnership between Government, the parents, family and the community as a whole. This partnership spanned over 12 years and we have reached the last chapter of their schooling career. Now they will sit alone for the examinations, but they will do so with our full support and well wishes.

We call on parents and family to give the class of 2020 all the support, guidance and patience they need to transition from school to adulthood.

We call upon the class of 2020 to conduct themselves ethically and professionally when they sit for their exams. They have signed an oath to do so and we trust they will uphold this oath and pledge.

We are confident that the Class of 2020 will do the Northern Cape proud.

I thank you.