

# Press Statement-Release of the 2016 Matric Results

MEC Martha Bartlett

Thursday, 5 January 2017

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NC Premier, Ms Sylvia Lucas;

Head of the Department, Mr GT Pharasi;

Representatives of our Teacher Unions;

Senior Management of the Department;

Members of the Media;

Most importantly, our top three learners and their parents;

Our communities and listeners, tuning in through all Community Radio stations;

We are gathered here today, at the beginning of a new year, renewed with hope and optimism about the future of our children. This annual occasion provides us with the opportunity to reflect and do introspection on the education system we need now and for the future. It also allows us to give recognition to our top achievers who have excelled academically towards their prosperous future.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Premier, Ms Sylvia Lucas and liberation movement I belong to, the African National Congress (ANC) whose selfless sacrifice has shown us the path of freedom for having entrusted me with the most important portfolio, namely Education.

In the words of the father of our nation, Madiba, he said and I quote: “A good head and good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue and a pen, then you have something very special.”

Honourable Premier and Distinguished Guests, our work began in 1955 during the dark days of the apartheid regime. Men and women with a vision converged in a small town known as Kliptown and drafted what became the rallying cry for all freedom loving South Africans and our international community throughout the struggle period. I am talking about the Congress of the People that met on that winter day of 26th of June 1955 and produced the Freedom Charter.

It proclaims that “The Doors of Learning and Culture shall be opened! The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life; the aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace; Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children.” During the apartheid years, up and until the 1994 breakthrough, our education system was fragmented and discriminated against black people in general and rural blacks in particular.

It was only in 1996 that the new ANC-led government managed to successfully launch a single and integrated education system for the whole country. Our new system of education inculcates the ethos of non-racialism, non-sexism and inclusiveness. Our end goal as dictated by the Freedom Charter is to offer universal free and compulsory primary and secondary education.

### **The National Development Plan**

The importance of Basic Education also finds expression in the government developmental blueprint, the National Development Plan (NDP).

Our immediate plan, the NDP stipulates that free education must be introduced up to undergraduate level. It says we shall continue to test grade 3, 6, and 9 learners each year to measure improvement and identify problems. It enjoins us to ensure that educators are in class on time, teaching at least seven hours a day and that all schools must have all required teaching aids including workbooks and textbooks.

Equally, we expect learners to be attentive in class, learning and respecting the learning environment including school property and educators. The NDP commits this government to ensure a conducive environment for quality learning and teaching through the provision of infrastructure, water, sanitation and electricity; irrespective of where they find themselves in this country.

## **Examination Administration**

Let me illustrate the extent of the magnitude of managerial expertise required by the department to succeed.

We used 136 examination centres, 3 marking centres, 647 markers, 140 senior markers, 15 deputy chief markers, 46 chief markers, 47 internal moderators, and a whopping 154 082 scripts had to be marked and moderated.

The Quality Assurer, Umalusi found that we have sound systems in place and the whole examination process was conducted with integrity. So, our results have been certified by Umalusi as a direct reflection of the ability of our learners, free of irregularities and having been conducted with integrity.

## **Analysis of the NSC Results**

In 2016, a total of 10 042 full-time candidates wrote the National Senior Certificate Examination in the Northern Cape Province. A total of 7 902 candidates passed the examination giving an overall pass rate of 78.7%. The pass rate for this year has considerably increased with 9.3% from 69.4% to a staggering 78.7%.

Ladies and Gentleman,

It is important that we clarify the NC pass rate with the members of the media and the public at large.

The Northern Cape has achieved an overall pass rate 78,7%, which includes the progressed learners as well. Our performance, excluding the progressed learners is 82.2%.

A total of 1230 progressed learners wrote the 2016 NSC Examinations of which 659 passed. We will continue with our intervention to further improve the pass rate of progressed learners. However, there is a noticeable improvement from 31.2% in 2015 to 53.6% in 2016.

The Northern Cape 2016 NSC results have recorded the highest improvement nationally, and the highest pass percentage compared to the last 10 years.

20 schools in the Province have obtained a 100% pass rate compared to the 9 schools in 2015.

Ladies and gentlemen, comrades and friends;

Of the 10 042 full time candidates who wrote the NSC Examination, 1 649 candidates obtained distinctions, which is an increase of 4.5% and 2 606 candidates obtained access to bachelor's degree university entrance, an increase of 4.8%.

The performance of learners has improved in Mathematics and Physical Science. 2789 candidates wrote Mathematics and 1694 candidates passed which constitutes a pass rate of 60.7%, an increase of 4.0%. 2558 candidates wrote Physical Science and 1469 candidates passed which constitutes a pass rate of 57.4%, an increase of 1.0%.

We will place more focus and attention on these subjects for 2017 to ensure improved performance, 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 has recorded the highest pass percentage of 91% with an increase of 14.5%;
- The Pixley Ka Seme District has recorded a pass percentage of 82.9% with an increase of 7.4%;
- ZFM Mgcawu District follows with a pass percentage of 79.7% with an increase of 7.9%;
- The Frances Baard District recorded a 78.4% pass percentage with an increase of 10% and;

- The John Taolo Gaetsewe District recorded a pass percentage of 70.5%, an increase of 8.5%

It is worth noting that we had no District performing below 70% and it shows that every District contributed to the excellent provincial results.

Ladies and gentlemen,

For 2016, we have managed to reduce the underperforming schools in our Province from 39 to 20 schools, which have recorded a pass rate below 60%.

Our interventions to underperforming schools will continue as well as unannounced visits to further reduce the number of underperforming schools in our Province.

In this regard we need to assess the impact, as well as the effectiveness of those intervention systems already in place, and come up with more creative and workable solutions to further improve performance in the affected schools as a matter of urgency.

Ladies and Gentleman,

We have reason to celebrate today.



Allow me to acknowledge the presence of the top three candidates in the Province, Emeleo Duister, Daniquo Visser and Thapelo Molelekwa.

Our top candidate in the Province hails from Northern Cape High. Congratulations to Emeleo Duister. Emeleo, you have proven that hard work and dedication pays off.

Today, we also celebrate excellent achievement in specific subjects. Candidates obtained level 7's in subjects such as Accounting, Home languages, Business studies, Life sciences, Mathematics, Physical science, History, Geography, Economics and technical subjects. These candidates will be named and honoured by the Premier later today.

Diamantveld High School in the Frances Baard District is our top performing school in our Province, followed by Kimberley Girls High and Upington High School.

Kimberley Girls High School is the top Mathematics and Physical Science School in the Province.

Kharkams High School in the Namakwa District is the top performing Quintile 1 School with a pass rate of 97.8%.

Rietvale High School in the Frances Baard District showed the best improvement in the Province with a pass rate of 35.3% in 2015, to a pass rate of 94.1% in 2016.

Finally, we will support all candidates that have not made it through these exams. We will provide supplementary programmes to assist learners who qualify for the supplementary examinations.

We will assist them in the subjects not achieved, to ensure that they complete the requirements for passing.

Where learners need to re-write the exams in 2017, we request these learners to register at the nearest ABET centre with a matric rewrite programme or to contact the nearest district office for assistance in getting placement in a centre.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Head of the Department, Mr GT Pharasi and all Senior and Middle Managers for their administrative leadership.

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

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

A special word of thanks to the South African Police Services for their annual support and cooperation when we conduct the final matric examinations.

Furthermore, the police in all areas were on high alert during the writing of the examinations to ensure that no candidate was disadvantaged by any form of community unrest and assisted and intervened where problems occurred.

I thank all the unions that operate in this sector and all our dedicated teachers for their outstanding role in assisting the Northern Cape Department of Education into taking our combined efforts to greater heights.

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

In conclusion, I take this opportunity once again to extend my sincere thanks to the collective leadership of the ruling party, the ANC, for the necessary guidance and for providing the much needed direction. The Premier of this Province, Ms Sylvia Lucas for her leadership, and all my political colleagues for the support and invaluable inputs made since I took office.

The Legislature and its committees have continued to assert their oversight role and I thank them for constructive engagements.

I also want to thank my family for all their unconditional support, without which I would not be able to manage this important portfolio.

My best wishes to all, especially the Class of 2016 for all your future endeavours. You have made yourself and us, as Province very proud. For the Class of 2017, receive the baton, and all learners in the Province, I want to call on everyone to re-dedicate them to the strenuous tasks that lie ahead of us in 2017. I thank you!