



# S'bukosetfu

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# Content

- 3 Editorial Comment
- 4 MEC Mhaule Celebrates with Orphans
- 5 Learner Performance in the Spotlight
- 6 The Education Light is on for Thandukukhanaya
- 7 MEC Mhaule Meets Religious Leaders
- 8 New Leaf for Msimango Children
- 10 Storm Damaged Schools Roofed
- 11 Trek to the North
- 12 Bridging the Digital Divide
- 14 National Teaching Awards

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*Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Mpumalanga Department of Basic Education*

**A** Educating the nation cannot be only a matter of adhering to the tangible academic matters without showing care and affection. In that space, educationist need to adhere to the child developmental issues spiced up with love as the fundamental ingredient.

As the Malagasy people succinctly put it, all the blame is normally shifted to an orphan as there is usually no one to take up their cases. MEC Mhaule is one of the few leaders who does not ascribe to the notion of leaving orphans out in the cold. This is well captured in this edition of *Sbukosetfu* on page 4 where MEC Mhaule celebrated with 70 Orphans on a tour to Johannesburg's Golf Reef City Theme Park on 05 December 2013.

We also reflect on the main issue ascribed to teaching and learning; learner performance which is a yardstick for the success of the teaching and learning mandate. In this case, MEC Mhaule went on tour of the four districts meeting Circuit Managers to chat a way forward towards maximum learner performance, this is covered in page 5.

The delivery of infrastructure is a priority for the Department as the improvement of service conditions in the teaching and learning environment is crucial. To that effect, Thandukukhanya Secondary School in Piet Retief witnessed the official handover of the state of the art school infrastructure project to the school community.

While still on infrastructure development, we also turn the spotlight to the renovation of storm damaged schools to ensure that teaching and learning takes place without hindrances.

The kind-heartedness of MEC Mhaule leads us to the handover of a newly built four bed roomed house to the Msimango children in Matsulu. These children used to live in a dilapidated structured that was not fit for human habitation. Gratitude should be directed to MRTT, Sure Lowveld Travel, Big Sky Travel, Clear Choice Builders, Abacus, Siyakhula Foods, Welcome Builders and Social Cluster departments as well as Home Affairs for the success of this project.

On page 12, we look at bridging the digital divide as we cover the handover event of twenty computers handed over by the MTN Foundation. Concluding this volume is a coverage of the National Teaching Awards which is a highlight of the importance of teachers and the appreciation of the good work they do at managerial and classroom level.

Please enjoy this read and let us know of your views and education success stories.



The Editor: Mr. Jeffrey Makhumba

She is undecided as an orphan: if she does not wash her hands, she will be told she is a dirty child; if she washes her hands she will be told that she is wasting water," say the Malagasy people.

These wise sayings and other teachings of value and virtue poke some consciousness in humanity



with regards to taking care of and the wellbeing and of vulnerable orphans.

Taking care of orphans has taken top priority for the MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule. She celebrated her birthday, an annual feature, with orphans in Johannesburg at the Gold Reef City Theme Park on 05 December 2013.



The 70 kids were taken from MEC Mhaule's political constituency which covers Matsulu, Kanyamazane and Tekwane.

The Kids got a special treat as they were ferried to Johannesburg for the birthday event.

Celebrations awaited them at the Gold Reef City Theme Park where play time was highlighted by the theme park game rides. The birthday party could not be complete without an edutainment feature as kids were taught about the history of gold mining, the city of gold and an educational visit to the Apartheid Museum.

Ceffie, the safe and friendly schools mascot was also present to play, entertain and amuse the kids with his friendly antics. In her speech to the kids, MEC Mhaule inspired them to take pride in who they are and not to allow their situation to take hostage of their future but to strive to do well in life through education and being responsible citizens.



**A** Following her pronouncement in the 2013/14 Policy and Budget Speech that there will be no tolerance for schools which are performing below 50% in the 2013 academic year, MEC Reginah Mhaule embarked on a road show to engage circuit managers per district (i.e. Bohlabela, Ehlanzeni, Gert Sibande and Nkangala) and on learner attainment improvement. The department has defined schools which are performing below 60% as poor performing and those below 50% as dysfunctional.

The road shows were held at the four districts of the province to ensure that each district is accorded proper attention and time. Circuit Managers were expected to oversee the performance bar at all schools and all grades by reflecting on the targets set and good practices. Amongst matters under discussion were the improvements on learner attainment, the management of LTSM, learner admission, teacher deployment, promotional posts, human resource, teacher development, good management and governance practices.

The MEC encouraged circuit managers to be hands on in the ordering of LTSM in their circuits and to also take schools along. Special emphasis was put on planning and ensuring that learner admission takes place prior to the re-opening of schools to allow teaching and learning to take place on the first day. To this effect she said, "We have a noble responsibility to teach this learners and to bring them to a level that will bring them to compete with the rest of the country in terms of performance as well as allow them to participate in the economy of the country."

In the main the insights and inputs of circuit managers reflected on "Everything rises and falls because of leadership." The issue of moving non performing principals came under the spotlight so as to ensure that learner performance is lifted. The Carrot and Stick method was mooted as a main factor that could assist. Acting allowance should also be addressed as a motivational factor to acting principals."

Other issues raised were that poor foundation at primary level could be detrimental to high school

learner performance as primaries feed secondary schools with undercooked learners. Performances on the Annual National Assessment also need to be the focus for all circuits with a lot of pro action to arrest failure before it actually takes place.

Bad attitude and content knowledge management were also put under scrutiny. Circuit managers committed themselves to improve learner results in their circuits by setting themselves achievable outcomes.

With regards to learner motivation and inspiration, some circuit managers have resorted to engage and challenge learners with admission requirements criteria from some of the universities to encourage learners to work towards such a goal. The formation of QLTC has also been brought to the fore with circuit managers managing stakeholders' involvement by engaging community structures to ensure that community issues are ameliorated to the advantage of learner performance.

There were also positive developments highlighted with learners taking the initiative to hold evening classes and some circuits graduating from mere assessment to qualitative and common assessment with SMT monitoring and learning area educators' accountability.

Though there are challenges and a lot of work to be done with putting the performance systems in place and meeting the 10% provincial target, the situation is promising towards that goal. Sisonke Sifundzisa Sive.



Inqubeko is Nguni for “progress” or “prosperity.” This is the visionary word that the community of Thandukukhanya decided to give as a name of one of their institutions of learning and in the process wish for only good things for itself and its future.

The official opening of Inqubeko Secondary School on 13 September 2013 in Piet Retief, Mkhondo Local Municipality in the Gert Sibande District thus served not only as a rallying point in



government’s quest to provide school infrastructure but confirmation that indeed huge progress has been made on that front.

This hand over event comes freshly at the footsteps of the official hand over of eight infrastructure development projects in the Marapyane Circuit of Nkangala District championed by the Honourable Premier, Mr. DD Mabuza.

Inqubeko is a complete and fully-fledged Secondary School with 28 classrooms, an admin block, a science laboratory, a computer centre and a library. It also boasts a huge multi purpose hall, a soccer field and two netball courts.

There computer center is equipped with 25 fully functional state of the art computers supplied with courtesy from Computer Technology Giants SAMSUNG. The e-Learning Centre has an Interactive Whiteboard which is a marvel for educators as they go about their core business. The library is fully stocked with books on the shelves donated by Maskew Millar and Shutter and Shooter publishers.



Inqubeko was built to alleviate the problem of overcrowding and to accommodate learners who were housed in mobile classes which were used as satellite branch of another school called Amadlelo Aluhlaza Secondary.

“You have got the best facility here; we can only hope that come the end of the year, we will have the improved Matric results. I am pleading with you to look after this school because the future of your children is in these buildings. You should also know that if you destroy it, you would have gone ten steps backwards. Do not steal the computers and furniture. Parents must take responsibility of their children, because unless we collectively invest on them, we will have a dark future,” said Premier Mabuza in his keynote address.

The Premier also discouraged learners to involve themselves with self destructive tendencies like alcohol abuse and encouraged them to focus on educating themselves.

The learning field has been leveled and set for the 1187 learners of Thandukukhanya and now the ball is in their court to learn and change their lives for the better. Sisonke Sifundzisa Sive.



**A** The MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule convened a meeting with religious leaders from various churches and faith groups on 24 January 2014 at Emnotweni Arena in Mbombela.



The meeting was in line with a call by MEC Mhaule to involve all stakeholders towards the enhancement of education delivery in the province.

The MEC also extended her heartfelt appreciation for the contribution made by all religious leaders in improving the Mpumalanga education system during the past year, 2013.

“The Province has improved its grade 12 from 70 % in 2012 to 77.6% in 2013 and I would like to thank all the pastors for their outstanding contribution and their continued earnest prayers during the 2013 school year.



These prayers played a meaningful role towards

ensuring that the department managed an incident free examination.

This enormous improvement comes at a time where the Department has also received a clean audit opinion by the Auditor General.

We have conducted successful meetings together with the religious leaders over the past years and I again take this opportunity to invite all of them to join the department in celebrating these remarkable achievements and also discuss our future collaborations”.

Faith groups attended the prayer event which also culminated in a prayer for the education department, the improvement of learner attainment as well as for the management of examinations and grade 12 improvement results.



Those of us who had the liberty to read a book entitled “The Student Companion” recall phrases and proverbs which we tended to recite in every engagement.

One that comes to mind is, “In every dark cloud there is a silver lining.”

The silver lining came as the MEC for Education handed over a newly built four bed roomed house to the Msimango family on Friday, 15 November 2013 at 10H00 in Matsulu Township (Youth Centre), Mbombela Local Municipality.

This happened after a dark cloud had befallen five Msimango children from Matsulu Township within the Mbombela Local Municipality following the passing on of their mother in 2009 leaving them truly helpless in a makeshift structure that could not resemble a shelter for human habitation.

The Msimango children were left without anyone to call family as their father had long disappeared and had played no part in their upbringing.

They had to endure the hardship of life throughout their rearing, with no identity documents as such they could not benefit from the social grant programme and life was unbearable for them until a God sent companion made a turn that changed their meaning of life completely.

This companion was the chairperson of the Social Cluster Committee, Mrs Reginah Mhaule who was on a door to door activity as part of her constituency responsibility on 20 July 2013.

She could not contain her sadness on the state of affairs that these children found themselves in as she pronounced that everything will be done to extend a helping hand to them.

Immediately calls rang endlessly with offers to ensure that a new page of life is opened for these children.

This brought to fruition a fully furnished four bedroom house with a kitchen and a lounge as well as clothing donated by the staff of the Department of Education.

Indeed a silver lining presented itself in real terms as today there stand majestically a beacon of hope and fulfilment of dreams for these children who are already looking at life with greater determination and courage, thanks to all the people and institutions who made this possible.

Those who made this possible include Big Sky Travel, Sure Lowveld Travel, Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust (MRTT), Clear Choice Builders, Abacus, Siyakhula Foods and Welcome Stores, Social Cluster Departments and the Department of Home Affairs.

The trustful companion will return to this township this time in the company of those who made it possible that a new leaf of life is turned for the Msimango children to officially hand over the house, identity documents, as well as the title deed.

The visit will also serve to appreciate the benevolence and the patriotic gestures from all the people and institutions who enacted their love and care.

“It is amazing to see the wonderful work done in a short space of time in the quest to change the lives of these children for the better.

We will forever remain indebted to all the people and institutions who dug deep into their pockets to make sure that this dream is realised,” said MEC Mhaule.

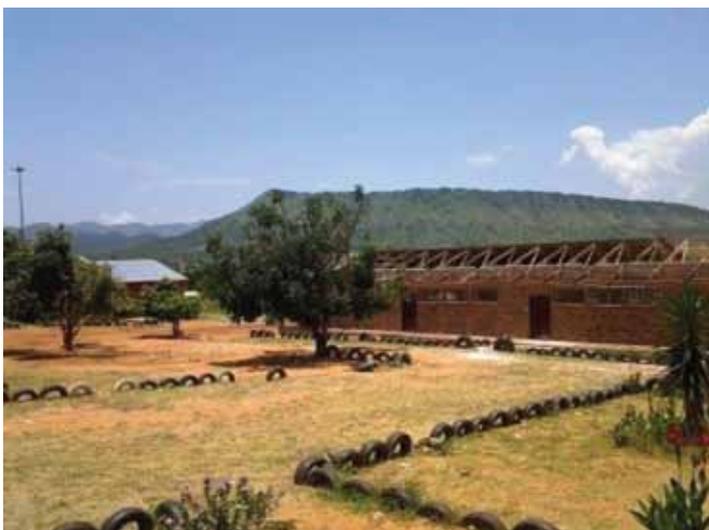




The Mpumalanga Department of Education has developed the scope of work and costs implications to replace roofs to 80 schools which were blown out by heavy storms during the 2013 school year as well as fix serious ablution infrastructural challenges.



This endeavour will be managed through the Rapid Implementation Unit (RIU) to ensure that the projects are fast tracked and in the best interest of the teaching and learning process.



This follows the severe storms in the province which led to an increase in the number of damaged schools from 22 which were recorded at the end of October 2013 to 80 as time went by.

What was compounding this challenge is that the department had exhausted its allocation of infrastructure development for 2013/14 which was

R 586 million to construct 11 new schools, complete eight schools which were already under construction and other projects that are ongoing including the construction of two boarding schools one in Amsterdam at Mkhondo Local Municipality and the other at Emakhazeni Local Municipality.

The department did everything it could to ensure that learners are housed in safe conditions as it requested communities and school governing bodies to bear with it and work together to address the challenge.

The department also convened meetings with affected school communities through their school governing bodies to explore feasible options so that teaching and learning is at no stage affected.

The Department also convened consultations with the relevant school governing bodies to inform them on the commencement of the reroofing projects and to ensure that the renovations take place in a manner that will not be hazardous or negatively affect the teaching and learning process.

The Department would have preferred that the process had been done earlier but had to follow due administrative procedures to come to this conclusion.

It is expected that all this work should be completed by the second week of March 2014.



The trek to the north towards the land of Mzilikazi has marked the ultimate step towards skills and knowledge acquisition.

I guess Queen Modjadji was smiling on us on 20 September 2013 as we entered the Anglo Platinum Multi-Purpose Centre in the University of Limpopo to witness the graduation ceremony of 54 Mpumalanga Provincial Government bursary holders.



Draped in the university's colours, the hall was packed to capacity with graduates and well wishers from all walks of life.

The high pitched ululations drowned even the music played on the sound system as the excitement from both well wishers and graduates

came to play.

The Mpumalanga bursary holders graduated for a one year programme in the Advanced Certificate in Education: (Life Orientation - GET).

As a top priority of Government, education and especially skills and knowledge acquisition for educators is highly considered as it has to leverage learner attainment at the classroom level.

During the angelic rendition of the Anthem, performed by a designated choir; the Chancellor, distinguished academics and management of the university entered the hall in a procession and the proceedings were officially underway.

As in all academic endeavours, there are those graduates who soared above the rest to pass in distinction. Masango Grace got two distinctions.

Sadly, Sikhosana Jafta Bafana passed on before the day of the graduation and his certificate was received post humusly by the department to be handed over to the family.

One must say that graduation ceremonies are in nature inspirational and for them to take place the hard work and sometimes sleepless nights have to be undertaken first.



**T**handeka Malaza, an eleven year old grade 5 learner has had some better luck as she has learnt to use a computer in 2012 as taught by her Dad. Her luck turned even for the better as, on 07 November 2013 the school community of Tlhame saw the coming of age as the collaboration of the Departments of Education, Water and Environmental Affairs and the MTN Foundation officially handed over a media classroom.



Deputy Minister Rejoice Madubafhasi and the MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule graced the occasion. In her keynote address, Deputy Minister Madubafhasi said, " We need to conserve water for South Africa is a dry area with an annual average rainfall of 500mm. This programme endeavours to achieve high standards of water conservation as we teach our children and learners the importance of water conservation at home and schools."

In her remarks, MEC Mhaule requested the community of Mmamethake to take care of the donated media classroom. To that effect she said, " These computers are now at your disposal use them to your advantage and take ownership of them. I want to request the community of Mmamethake to take ownership of the computers and guard against vandalism and theft."

Goitse Modimo is a grade 4 learner at Tlhame primary in Mmamethake who is also a beneficiary of the programme. She came to learn about computers in September 2013. Reared by a single parent in the village of Dierefeng, this ten year old is very much taken by the ability to communicate with the rest of her class though the cyber world.

The MTN Foundation's contribution with regards the media classroom came as a blessing for her to be able to practise her newly found computer skills.

Goitse is a Social Sciences, Natural Science and Technology fanatic who would love to be a doctor after completing her studies. She has been inspired to help people of her community through medicine.

The media classroom helps her to conduct her class research project and has impacted positively with regards to her writing and typing skills. Even though, she has been exposed to computers for a little while, her language of computers has improved as she is able to describe the process of going about using the computers doing some research.

The media classroom came about as a result of Tlhame primary school being declared 2012 victors in the Kids in Water competition. The





media centre valued at R350 000 boasts 20 computers connected to the internet. The MTN Foundation also subsidises the internet connectivity for a period of twenty four months.

The importance of water conservation should be everybody's business as we all should become water conservation ambassadors. The ease of accessing water through the tap should not mislead us into thinking that this is mere water and not a resource.

"Thank you MTN Foundation for donating the computers because they will really help us in developing our writing and reading skills, research our school projects. This will also help us to do well as we have programmes that improve our performance in the classroom," she concluded.



Honouring the best educators in the province at a gala event held at the Ingwenyama Lodge on the 04 October 2013 was a marvellous affair for the Mpumalanga Department of Education. The glitter and glamour of the occasion would in no way outweigh the intangible benefits of restoring the honour and integrity of the teaching profession. Guests were treated to the captivating African sounds of a marimba band from Tenteleni primary school led by Ms Maggie Thobejane.

The event was held on the eve of the World Teachers' Day which is celebrated on the 05 October the world over. The 2013 World Teachers Day was themed; A Call to Teachers and the MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule to that effect made a call to parents to encourage their children to take teaching as a profession of choice.

The objectives of hosting the NTA are to honour excellence in the eight categories on offer and mainly to select the cream of the crop of the provincial 2013 teaching cohort to represent Mpumalanga in the National leg of the NTAs.

Category Excellence in primary school teaching to engage learners with curricular- 1.Ms Helen Kotze Ehlanzeni, 2 Martha Kedibone Kholokotho, Brenda Segabe and 3 Mavis Madike Matladi Bohlabela

Sharing best practices, the 2013 Best Teacher in Excellence in Special Needs Education, Ms H Swanepoel said she has overcome technophobia as a result of participating and going all the way to conquer at the national level. "The intrinsic rewards that I received far outweigh the monetary rewards considering the burn out and physical exhaustion I had come to endure. The NTA came with building blocks for me to start over. I always knew I wanted to be a Yeffrou teaching children with special needs," she said.

A stranger is just a person you do not know.  
1. Ehlanzeni District- Lubisi Priscilla- Excellence in Special Education with Special Needs.

Magdeli Bosman- Ligbron Academy  
Bringing hope to the nation starts with just one

learner. This is about using technology to deliver support to learners in critical subjects.

Excellence is a big word for a teacher. We at Ligbron are far from Excellence but are striving towards it.

Teaching is passion and not a career. If you teach with passion your learner will learn and live with passion.

Technology Enhanced Learning- Mr DM Mabena (Nkangala District)

Excellence in Secondary School Teaching- Ms Christina Ngomane (Ehlanzeni)

Excellence in Primary School Leadership – Mr Jonas Khazamura (Nkangala)

Excellence in Secondary School Leadership- Mr Nkosi Dingizulu (Ehlanzeni)

Shoot for the moon, if u miss you will land to the stars.

Excellence in Grade R Teaching (Instilling Independence and Confidence in learners) - Ms Promise Mabaso (Ehlanzeni District)

Excellence in Mathematics Teaching- Mrs Jayasree Thulasi (



I take this time to extend my best wishes to all candidates who are going to sit for the 2013 examination. Please know that the province has your interest at heart and everything is being done to ensure that you achieve to your best potential.

We remain committed to even support you to further your studies by offering bursaries to those of you who wish to study at any university in the country including the University of Mpumalanga.

Use this time to your advantage, acknowledging the 12 year school journey which you had to undergo is about to bear fruit.

Grade 12 is but a first step towards achieving your goals and dreams, make the best of the opportunity at your disposal. Stay focussed, listen to your parents and teachers and study until the last day of the examinations

On behalf of the provincial government, I wish you all the best in your endeavours.

Sisonke Sifundzisa Sive

**MEC Reginah Mhaule**  
**MEC for Education**





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