

**Speech delivered by the MEC for Education on her visit to K.I Twala Secondary School on 06 March 2014**

---

Head of Department: Mrs. Mahlasedi Mhlabane

District Director: Mr. JJ Mabena

Members of Senior Management

District Management Team

Circuit Managers

SGB Members

Principal Mr. K Masondo

Educators

Learners

Ladies and Gentlemen

Representatives from the Media

**Sanibonani, Molweni, Goie More, Good Morning, Lotshani!**

It gives me great pleasure that I can stand before you and address this assembly in five **(5)** of our eleven **(11)** official languages.

This Programme Director, I can execute with great confidence because the school we are visiting today, offers all these languages as subjects.

We started the New Year in high spirits, as we celebrated the class of 2013 for achieving a glorious **77.6%**. This achievement translates to a **7.6%** improvement from the year 2012. The class of 2012 has indeed made us proud.

Today I stand before this assembly of learners so that I may be a voice that reminds them to commit to their studies. I speak not only as a representative of the Mpumalanga Department of Education, but as a mother of the children I see before me.

Bantwana bami, we are aware that most of you come from families that live below the breadline. Let this be not a weapon that persecutes your dreams and goals for a bright future that awaits you, but motivation to change your circumstances for the better.

You are to be a group of young people that are eager to better their lives, and this can be achieved by acquiring all the knowledge that is presented to you.

I urge each and everyone of you to use education as a tool that will assist you in winning the battle against unemployment, poverty and inequality.

I can assure you that one does not need special powers to achieve great results; you just need to be disciplined and put in extra effort towards your studies.

### **Past Performance of K.I Secondary School**

K.I Twala Secondary School has over the years proven to be a school that aims at producing great grade 12 results. The school registered a pass mark of **73%** in 2012, followed by a **66%** in 2013.

We acknowledge that the school registered a pass mark above 50% as we had declared at the beginning of the year 2013 that any school achieving less than 50% was to be categorized as a dysfunctional school.

We however, have noted the 7% decline and are here today to also encourage the school and learners to close the gap.

In the quest to further improve the pass rate for the school, we encourage all learners to fully utilize programmes such as Dial-a- tutor and to always tune in to your local radio stations for radio lessons. These programmes are developed with the aim to enhance learner confidence when tackling exams.

K. I Twala Secondary School ladies and gentlemen, has shown great potential, and such good work cannot remain unnoticed. The school has over the years produced educators, professional sport administrators, a medical doctor, a geologist, and a lawyer.

These are young professionals who are presently contributing towards the growth of the province, young people who were instilled with pride and discipline on these very grounds that we stand on. Surely, this must assure us that hard work truly pays off.

### **Thank Teachers**

Allow me to take the time and extend my sincere gratitude towards the teachers of the school. Your dedication and hardwork is evident in the previous pass rates that the school has been producing.

Teachers are a source of knowledge and hence play a very important role in the shaping of these young minds.

We acknowledge that you occasionally have to put in an extra effort and time; in the quest to build the future of the province, we have witnessed this through the extra classes you always commit your good selves to.

We are confident that your dedication will only continue and that learners of K.I Twala Secondary School are in good hands.

Siyabonga kakhulu!

### **Advice to learners**

I urge all learners to respect their teachers. Your teachers also play the role of your parents. Listen to what they have to say, they always have your best interest at heart.

I want to plead with every one of you to refrain from the use of drugs, from bullying one another and carrying dangerous weapons to school. The school environment should be a safe haven where you protect each other as brothers and sisters.

It is important that I also take this opportunity and remind all of you that HIV/AIDS is real; I therefore request all of you to abstain from sexual activities, let us fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic and be the generation that also says NO to teenage pregnancy.

Young ladies, please find motivation in the story of a young lady, Bhavika Minstry from a small town in the Province of Mpumalanga, Bethal, who is the top learner following the 2013 Grade 12 examination results. Miss Minstry achieved seven **(07)** distinctions in all

her subjects (Mathematics, Physical Science, Life Science, Accounting, Life Orientation, English and Afrikaans).

I sincerely anticipate that her story is one that will prove that through hard work one can receive great results.

### **Encourage Learners to Vote**

South Africa will once again be given the democratic right to choose a political party that will lead us. I therefore, urge all learners who are above 18 years of age, to participate in the next coming elections.

Speaking at the event of the launch of the 2014 election manifesto, the Honorable President stated that ***“Our key commitments for the next 5 years are making early childhood development a priority; eradicating illiteracy; improving quality in teaching and learning in schools and expanding and building capacity in higher education”***

We therefore encourage everyone to stand up and vote on Wednesday, 07 May 2014, so that the ruling party may fulfill its educational commitments.

The Department also requests that the school implements the Rhandza Xi kolo Xa Wena Campaign. This campaign aims at encouraging communities to take care of their schools by ensuring that they always remain clean and that their infrastructure is always maintained.

We urge all parents and the community at large to ensure that this campaign remains an on-going one.

### **Conclusion**

As we celebrate 20 years of freedom, allow me to quote from the late, former President, Nelson Mandela when he stated that ***“Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do”***

I leave you with these words so that they may linger in your minds, everytime that you are at a verge of giving up.

**Ngiyabonga.**