

Speech to be delivered by the MEC for Education, Mrs. Reginah Mhaule at the occasion of the meeting with Pastors at Ingwenyama lodge, Mbombela Local Municipality

Programme Director

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Chairperson of the Moral Regeneration Movement, Rev MM Nthali

Pastors

Members of Senior Management

Our Brother, the son of the soil Mr. Big Fish Makhabane

Congregants

Ladies and Gentlemen

At the occasion of the delivery of the state of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma clearly stated what 2015 should constitute and he said.

“The year 2015 is the Year of the Freedom Charter and Unity in Action to Advance Economic Freedom.

It is the year of going the extra mile in building a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa.

It is also the year of rededicating ourselves to eradicate racism and all related intolerances in our country.

It is also the year of investing more in our future, by educating our children and the youth about the rich heritage of this country.

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We are already inculcating a new national identity through promoting national symbols such as the national flag, the national anthem and the preamble of the Constitution in every school”

Our wish is that we need to continue to work together in all fronts to embrace the injunction without fail from our President.

Our view is that if we were to invest more in our future the following must happen:

Parents must take heed of the fact that they have a primary responsibility to educate their children. They must be involved in school matters by helping schools to help their children.

Parental structures such as the school governing bodies must be constituted by visionary leaders who would do everything possible to make education work for the citizens of this country.

Pastors, accountants and other professionals must be coopted to the schools governing bodies so as to propel professionalism and inculcating of moral values in our schooling communities.

Teachers should be accorded the highest respect, support and care so that in turn they can mentor our children into responsible citizens. Teachers must be encouraged to value their profession and to stay in the system because teaching is not only a noble profession but a calling.

Discuss the 2014 Grade 12 Results.

The province performance over the years has instill a sense of pride, courage and contentment to all citizens of the place of the rising sun, thanks to men and women who rallied side by side with the department leading to the 79% pass rate obtained in 2014.

Our founding Father of our Freedom and Democracy Dr. Nelson Mandela puts it nicely when he said:

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“The Sun shall never set on so a glorious human achievement” He further said “We feel a sense of personal renewal, the national mood changes as seasons change. We are moved by a sense of joy and exhilaration when the grass turns green and flowers bloom”

We echo such sentiments because for the first time this year our province and all the four districts performed above the national average. Out the **68** circuits only **07** are performed below **60%**.out of the **543** schools only 84 are performing below **60%**.

Our concern though is that the performance in Mathematics and Physical Science is still not at the satisfactory level that Department hopes it to be.

In 2013, **529** learners passed **Mathematics** with distinctions; this number has declined to **392** learners in 2014. In 2013, **388** learners passed **Physical Science** with distinctions and in 2014 this number has increased to **389** learners.

We as a Department however aim to accelerate all efforts of making sure that the established Mathematics, Science and Technology Academy yields the expected results as soon as possible.

We also in this regard urge parents and teachers to encourage their children to take these subjects and ensure that they children remain encouraged and work hard, as the only trick in doing well on these subjects is to always practice by answering previous question papers.

This therefore requires attention from all of us to ensure that we improve both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Acknowledging the Moral Regeneration Movement

I say it with conviction and without fear of any contradiction that had it not been that the church occupied its place in the education front of this province, we would not be where we are today.

It is through your good thoughts and pure expectations that we are able to obtain such credible accolades as a province, a dark cloud has been removed and we can walk tall and proud as representatives of the province. We truly thank you for that.

In our hour of need the Moral Regeneration Movement stood tall, and took stock in matters of education. Your steadfast participation has indeed yielded positive results.

Through your movement, we are reminded that we can fight and win against social ills that affect our young ones. We are reminded that our responsibilities go beyond the office and have to reach the core of our communities.

We have heard and witnessed cases where students stab each other to death in our schools; these are young souls that are filled with anger and have emotional voids that need to be filled with love.

I therefore call upon everyone in the house to continue to actively participate through prayer and meditation in the improvement of education and the lives in the province.

Briefly acknowledge the presence of Mr. Big Fish Makhabane

Let me take this opportunity and acknowledge the sun of soil Mr. Big Fish Makhabane.

We are extremely happy that we are gathered here with you today, you were to join us in January at the Occasions of the Announcement of Grade 12 Results, but unfortunately you were involved in a car accident and were unable to make it.

It is through one of your songs that you declared that ***“the devil is liar, he can’t get over me”***, and through your belief you recovered in no time and here you are now, continuing your Godly duties.

Conclusion

Before I sit down, allow me to emphasize working together one more time, our communities are faced with different challenges that seek for our attention.

Let us revive the concept that ***“it takes a village to raise a child”*** these are our children in our communities; working together we will be able to change the stance of our communities.

Thank you very much for your presence today,

Ngiyabonga.