

**Statement by Eastern Cape Education MEC Mandla Makupula on the occasion of the 2016
Release of Grade 12 Results, 5 January 2017**

Honourable Premier

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Parents, Teachers, Learners, Communities and Organised Labour

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Warm season's Greetings and a happy new year to all of you!

I am honoured to, once more stand before you to present the performance and the outcomes of the Class of 2016 NSC Grade 12 results.

This is a realization of work done over the past year, jointly by teachers, parents, and officials who have all worked hard to turn around the fortunes of our province and set us on a sustainable upward trajectory that we can all be proud of.

The Matric Class of 2016 improved the Eastern Cape National Senior Certificate results by 2.5%, from 56.8% in 2015 to 59.3% in 2016. This improvement represents an advance to the 8.6% decline experienced in 2015, a significant departure from the average historical learner performance profile of the Eastern Cape. The Executive Council subsequently instructed the Department to develop a sustainable system wide recovery plan, and undoubtedly, the **3 year System Transformation Plan** adopted by the Executive Council in January 2016 provides a significant base to account for the current improvements.

The Plan focusses on transforming the overall education system while at school level placing a specific focus on **560 viable quintile 1 to 3 secondary schools**. The *"catch them at the end"* strategic thrust of the plan sought to maximise opportunities of learners achieving a good pass in the National Senior Certificate while improving performance in the whole system. The plan rests on 7 outcomes, viz;

- Increasing the number of **functional schools** by providing a comprehensive package of support to **560** quintile 1 to 3 secondary schools.
- The **rationalizing and realigning 2077 small and unviable schools** into fresh start schools that are linked to infrastructure and transport provisioning

- **Capacitating Head Office and Districts Offices** into functional support systems for schools
- **Mobilizing** and harnessing the power of civil society to invest or provide support to the education transformation project.
- Increasing the **supply of appropriately trained educators** through teacher development programs that are focusing on demand driven teacher qualifications
- Securing resources to **address inefficiencies** in the system with an objective of aligning allocation with national norms and standards
- Building a momentum that will **improve audit outcomes** by eliminating material findings relating to predetermined objectives and compliance with laws and regulations.

DEVELOPING FUNCTIONAL SCHOOLS

At the core of school functionality is a pool of 560 schools that were identified as levers of change. The Scope is to develop a support package for the 560 schools focusing on: leadership and management, “In classroom” support and e-learning packages, analysis and filling of vacant posts, as well as determining non-teaching staff requirements. Our view is that effective school management is a function of 3 interrelated variables, (i) the quality of instructional leadership, (ii) the professional capacity of teachers, and (iii) curriculum coverage. We then identified a basket of interventions that included the following:

Leadership and Management

In order to improve leadership, management and administration of 560 schools, mentors were appointed and allocated to each of these schools to strengthen their functionality. This was followed by **A School Principals’ Conference** on the 01 – 02 June 2016 in Port Elizabeth, and **A Learners’ Conference** (28 – 29 June 2016) in East London focusing on leadership and personal growth activities to promote time on task, accountability and teaching and learning in the 560 special focus schools.

Curriculum Support Systems

- **Streamlining curriculum offerings in Secondary Schools** in order to improve output at national senior certificate level was an urgent priority. Curriculum Management Guidelines were issued to schools to guide schools in selection of winning subject combinations for Grades 10 to 12.

- 90 posts of Therapists were advertised, and earmarked for all 23 Districts to **give every learner a second chance in life** by assessing learner capabilities in the early grades. To this end an “early learning disability detection” program in line with White Paper 6 was inaugurated.

Protection of Teaching Time

- The Department released a circular instructing schools to observe and adhere to teaching times as prescribed by the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statements.
- The Department further released a series of supplementary guideline documents to all public schools to assist teachers with optimal utilization of prescribed teaching time per academic year. The Guideline Document is the Annual Teaching Plan for Grades R-9 and Grades 10-12 per subject per grade. The Department supplemented this with posters providing schools with an overview of the amount of work to be covered at various timelines of the academic year in line with CAPS prescriptions and the school terms.
- An early warning system based on a Provincial Common Examinations was launched in 2016 focusing on the 11 high enrolment subjects in Grade 12, as well as Common Examinations for Grade 3, 6 and 9 in the GET Band. All performance improvement efforts in 2016 were informed by lessons learnt from March, June and September provincial Examinations.
- Schools and districts are required to report on syllabus coverage per quarter and feedback is provided and ‘hotspots are visited by subject advisors and circuit managers to provide support and inject the appropriate sense of urgency.

Filling of funded vacancies

This is a deliberate focus on managing teacher demand and supply by managing vacancies in schools better. In 2016 alone the Department **issued 4 bulletins** covering PL1 and promotional posts, and employed **2 272 of them between May 2016 and August 2016**. We have now developed a web-based database to register and recruit unemployed teachers that can fill vacant funded posts in the shortest time possible.

To achieve better institutional functionality, the department is currently reviewing the **recruitment and selection administrative procedures on appointment of principals** to ensure that the selection criterion is based on requisite expertise to avoid parochialism.

E-learning Integration

- **167 new Telematics Centres** were established in selected Quintile 1—3 high schools in 2016. There are now **253 centres in operation in the Eastern Cape of which 224 are part of the 560** schools project. Stellenbosch University broadcast quality lessons during afternoons via satellite offering Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Accounting, English FAL, Afrikaans HL, History, Geography and Business Studies. Learners and their teachers attend these lessons and have the opportunity to ask questions to the presenters via cellphone messages.
- **242 of the 560 schools benefitted from the ICASA project** and were provided with Broadband coverage (3G), Mobile trolley with 26 tablets in a trolley, 1 Teacher Laptop, 1 Printer, 1 Interactive whiteboard, 1 Data Projector, Wi-Fi connectivity and 1 Server. Teachers are currently attending training on the use of tablets and the integration of ICTs in teaching and learning.
- **10 Smart Classrooms were installed in 10 of the 560 schools** with classrooms equipped with the necessary technology and curriculum content for teaching and learning.

MATRIC COUNTDOWN SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Department launched a Matric Countdown Program targeting 58 000 learners in Quintiles 1-3 schools. Categories include Progressed and high risk Learners, as well as schools presenting a matric class for the first time in 2016. The basket of interventions included but not limited to:

- **Partnership programs** with Zenex Foundation, NMMU, Partners for Possibility, as well as ESKOM to support the teaching of Math, Physical Science and English FAL
- **Winter and Spring Schools Program** in collaboration with SAICA study camps focusing on 800 learners in Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Accounting.
- **123 Support Centres across the 23 Districts to support Progressed and High risk learners.** Approximately 30 000 learners benefit from the project in key gateway subjects.

- **Weekend and extra classes carried out in all districts** mainly focusing on underperforming schools and benefitting 50 000 learners.
- **Distribution of Examiners reports and past question papers** and memoranda for 11 Key subjects as booklets for all teachers to support teaching and learning and to give guidance on the correct cognitive levels and types of questions expected for the NSC examinations.
- **Distribution of extra LTSM addressing key content areas**, orientation of practical tasks, radio lessons, ensuring credibility of School- Based Assessment, motivational and pastoral tasks for learners.
- **An on-line Curriculum Coverage tool** that is completed weekly, giving an overview of the progress made in each subject. A weekly statistical analysis is provided by the web master. The tool can be accessed through the web address; <https://goo.gl/OtHByA>. Furthermore, the following website will provide a link to the site: www.ecexams.co.za

2016 MATRIC RESULTS

Overall pass

- The Matric Class of 2016 improved the Eastern Cape NSC results by 2.5%, resulting in a 59.3% pass average, an improvement from the 56.8% obtained in 2015.

National honours

Two Eastern Cape learners placed in the top three positions of the National Top Performing Learner awards, and they are both female. They are

- **Anelisa Marwanqana** who **placed second** in **Quintile 1** category of the National Top Learner Achiever Awards. She is from **MARIAZELL SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL** in Maluti
- **Siphokazi Hlalukana** who also **placed second** in Quintile 3 category of the National Top Learner Achiever awards. She is from **Holy Cross Senior Secondary School** in Umtata

Bachelor passes

- The number of Bachelor passes increased from 15291 in 2015 to 15654 in 2016, representing a 1.3% (363) increase from 17.6% in 2015 to 18.9% in 2016.

Cluster performance

- Cluster performance improved from 51.5% to 54.4% in Cluster A; from 55.5% to 57.9% in Cluster B; as well as improvement from 62.7% to 65.1% in Cluster C

District performance

- 3 Districts performed within and above the national pass average; and 10 Districts performed between 60-70% pass mark, resulting in 14 of the 23 Districts performing above 60%.
- Cradock at 81.2% was the highest performer, followed by Uitenhage at 76.3%; Graaff-Reinette at 76% and Grahamstown at 70.3%.
- 18 of the 23 District improved their pass average above the 2015 performance, with only 5 Districts declining from their 2015 performance
- Qumbu was the most improved (17.4%) District from 47.9% to 65.3%, followed by Graaff-Reinette (15.8%) from 60.1% to 76%; Sterkspruit (15.4%) from 49.8% to 65.2%
- 14 Districts had a decrease in the number of schools obtaining below 60% pass, with 4 remaining unchanged, and 5 experiencing marginal increases. The five are Libode, Lusikisiki, Mbizana, Ngcobo and Port Elizabeth

Quintile performance

- **The poorest quintiles** performed better compared to 2015
- Quintile 1 slightly improving from 48.9% to 49.5%;
- Quintile 2 commendably improving from 50.7% to 55.9%
- Quintile 3 commendably improving from 54.7% to 57.9%
- However, the biggest concern is that 70% of learners are in quintiles 1-3
- **The richest quintiles** are a combination of slight decline and slight improvement although relatively performing well,
- Quintile 4 slightly declined from 81.9% to 81.5%
- Quintile 5 slightly improved from 94.4% to 95.3%

Independent schools

- Independent Schools registered encouraging improvements although far below performance levels of Quintiles 4 and 5.
- In 2016, Independent schools improved from 70.6% to 74.9%

Schools Performance

- Schools performing below 50% declined by 57 from 405 in 2015 to 348 in 2016
- Schools performing between 70-80% improved from 86 to 121
- Centres between 80-90% improved from 70 to 88;
- Centres at 100% improved from 37 to 44

Subject Performance

Of the 38 subjects written in the EC, only 10 have declined and they are small enrollment subjects except for Agriculture and Business Studies. Commendable improvements were registered in the big enrolment and gateway subjects with:

- Accounting improving by 9%, from 52.7 to 61.7%
- Economics by 0.5% from 53.9 to 54.5%
- Geography by 2.5% from 66.9 to 69.3%
- History by 2.3% from 72.5 to 74.8%
- Life Sciences by 1.9% from 59.8 to 61.7%
- Math Literacy by 0.4% from 55.6 to 56%
- Mathematics by 0.2% from 37.3% to 37.5%
- Physical Science by 3.7% from 45.9 to 49.6%

IN CONCLUSION

The Class of 2016 has performed above expectations in very difficult circumstances. Firstly, it is this cohort of learners that has had to prove to the nation in general that the Eastern Cape is on the rise to produce quality results after the poor performance in 2015. Secondly, the Class of 2016, has had to perform in a very different academic context, where the stakes have risen in terms of levels of difficulty in all subjects.

The improvements made in 2016 must be seen in the light of intervention programmes the Department has put in place to mitigate the impact of the high stakes NCS (CAPS) curriculum. These interventions include, but are not limited to: the training of teachers in content gaps areas, mentoring of school Principals, provisioning of quality learners and teacher support

materials as well as sustained focus on improving Schools Based Assessment and the development and launch of the Education Systems Transformation Plan (which incorporated a dedicated focus on the 560 Schools Project).

We call on our communities to continue playing a meaningful role in ensuring that schools remain focused on learning and teaching at all times. In that way, we can start to instill a morality that recognizes and respects the role of education as catalyst for transformation of education.

To all our successful learners who have passed the examinations, we say: “This is just the first step towards the realization of all your dreams! The ball is in your court from now on! Harness all the opportunities and options available to you. Your success is critical for the future wellbeing of our country.”

To those who could not make it, we say they must not despair. They must weigh all their options, and urgently seek advice about all the available alternatives, including FET colleges.

To the communities out there we say again that our greatest heroes are you, the ordinary people, who continue to make tremendous sacrifices and immense contributions in ensuring that your children’s education takes priority. We dare not fail you.

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