



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEC SIWELA CALLS FOR LEARNERS' EMPOWERMENT

Local government stakeholders have been challenged to develop programmes to aid learners to break into the mainstream economy. This call by Human Settlements MEC, Ms Violet Siwela came at the first day of schools re-opening in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga, when she addressed more than 700 learners at Ngwaritsane High School. Public representatives are visiting several schools to encourage the culture of learning and teaching throughout the country.

MEC Siwela emphasised the challenges around completed matriculants citing that most of them have their certificates but cannot be absorbed anywhere in the institutions of higher learning. She said, ***"We need to act beyond this challenge as it requires a collective effort between us and the society."*** She outlined the dangers of making bad choices with wrong friends and maintained that all these lead to school kids engaging on drugs and many other wrongful doings. She added, ***"We need the school to produce nurses, policemen and other dependable professions that will in turn benefit the community."***

According to MEC Siwela, substantial programmes by municipalities and business people will go a long way in imparting skills to learners to actively participate in their development. School Principal, Mr Isaac Mogane expressed his displeasure and said that according to their preparations he was certain that the school was going to perform better. He said, ***"Surely we are disappointed about the results but we want to ensure you that we will review our strategy and improve from our last year's results."*** The school achieved a 48% pass rate in last year's grade twelve results. It is one of the many schools especially in rural areas that performed badly in last year's results. The province obtained an overall 79% in its 2014 grade twelve results.

The schools' outreach programme is government's intervention to diagnose challenges affecting schools and developing interventions to improve the situation. Representatives from the National Department of Basic Education acknowledged challenges bedevilling schools. They however called for all concerned to play their part in ensuring that the culture of teaching and learning is well embraced. The three-day programme will be concluded on Friday the 16th January 2015. Bushbuckridge has significantly improved in its grade twelve outcomes in the last two years.

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