



**Opening and Welcome Address by the Sedibeng District Municipality
Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of
the Education Imbizo held at the McCamel Church on the 13th
January 2010, at Evaton in Sedibeng**

Programme Director

MEC, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ms Nandi Mayathula-Khoza

MEC Bheki Nkosi, Department of Roads and Transport

Director, Mr Jerry Bhagaloo, of Gauteng Department of Education D8

Mr Victor Thetha, Chief Education Specialist, D8

Director, Ms Dorah Moloi, of Gauteng Department of Education D7

Mr Jimmy Sithole, Deputy Chief Education Specialist, Policy and Planning

Ms Joan Tucker Chief Education Specialist Institutional Development and Support Officers

Ms Machabedi Mazibuko Chief Education Specialist Education, Learning and Curriculum Support Programmes

Mr Lovell May Chief Education Specialist Human Resources Management and Development

Mr Tuis Phadime Deputy Director Finance and Administration

Mr Seko Mareletse Human Resource Administration

Ms Emma Welcome Curriculum Development and Support

Distiguished Guests

It is with a great sense of euphoria that I came to this august occasion, the education Imbizo, on the first day and opening of the school year. I am reminded of the excitement and great expectations of the year it will be, new friends to make, new teachers to lead us into the journey of discovery and great new things to learn.

This period and day, was a very special day for me indeed. I hope it still holds great expectations for our learners in Sedibeng District in particular and Gauteng Province in general. The fun to be had with brand new stationery, the covering of books, the new uniform held us in suspense, assuming that our parents could afford them.

It is with the advent of Democracy, the ushering of the new order, under the leadership of the ANC, that we no longer have the problem of being without stationery, thanks to the visionary leadership of the ruling party, we have achieved universal access in education for the girl child as set in

the Millennium Development Goals which were developed by the United Nations on Education, which declaration, Our country is a signatory.

Programme Director, allow me to raise a little concern that I have in the light of the Matriculation results that have just been released, it is the finality attached to writing matric that really gets my goat. When we speak about matriculation exams in the press, it is always “The beginning of the Final Year Exams”, “the Final Exams”, “The Last and Final Hurdle”.

It does not surprise me that learners go to extremes just to get by. Students in Mpumalanga will steal papers, just to survive the threat of matric exams, other students will commit suicide just because they have not passed. The pressure put on our learners is unbearable to say the least by the irresponsible reporting in the press.

Passing or failing matric is not a deal breaker, suicide is, our children needs to be taught that. We will love them more for trying again, I hope that this esteemed Imbizo will assist the entire communities of Gauteng Province, learners and parents, to deal with this challenge going forward.

I also take this opportunity to condemn the vandaling of Mahareng Secondary School in Boipatong. The destruction of property will never be a solution to anything. If there are any disagreements, I am sure that the

School Governing Bodies together with the School Management Teams, are best placed to provide lasting solutions.

In Conclusion, I take this opportunity to welcome MEC Nandi Mayathola Khoza and MEC Bheki Nkosi to this beautiful district, we all call home, all the guests and the community here present. I wish this Imbizo, fruitful deliberations that will guide us to better results this year.

In the words of State President, Jacob Zuma, in the January 8th Statement in Kimberley last week, our concern as parents should and must be,

“We have called for non-negotiables in education that teachers must be on time, in class and teaching for seven hours every day. Working particularly with the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), we will intensify efforts to build a movement for quality education involving learners, teachers and parents alike. Among the key tasks of improving quality education is the strengthening of the public school management”.

I Thank You.