



Keynote Address by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of the Learner Awards in Sedibeng held at the Hoer Skool, Three Rivers, Sedibeng on the 14th January 2011

Programme Director, I bring you New Year greetings from Sedibeng District Municipality. Once again we meet to acknowledge the results of the good work our colleagues in education and the learners have done. This celebration of excellent work is very significant in the light of general and specific outstanding outputs in various arenas of the South African nation. I will venture into these as I go along.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 2010 Class of Matric was indeed a special one in many ways. This is so as a result of the many milestones and challenges which our country was able to discharge with distinction.

Despite sections of the media attempting to downplay our ability to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup, South Africa rose above all the odds to provide the world with the best spectacle ever on the African continent.

Sedibeng District Municipality was not to be outdone. As part of our offerings, even though we were not a host city, we were able to provide world class Base Camps for both Switzerland and Ivory Coast. Our guests Switzerland was so impressed with these that they even sent their delegation to look into investing in our beautiful District.

It is through our 2010 FIFA World Cup offering that we showed the world that indeed South Africa is a nation of winners.

Our learners here in Sedibeng, once again proved that Sedibeng is a District of leaders and heroes once again. It was as a result of the 2010 FIFA World Cup which we successfully hosted, that the Class of 2010 had to do the work in a shorter year.

They spent the whole month of June in an extended winter holiday recess. The protracted public service protest action did not help much either.

It was as a result of these challenges that a lot of doomsayers were forecasting a disaster. The Class of 2010, encouraged by the winning mentality of the Nation, standing on the shoulders of giants and mentors from the dedicated educator core, rose to the challenge.

Like David to his Goliath, and Nelson Mandela to his long walk to freedom, they put their best foot forward. For indeed every hero is defined by his

battle and victories. The Class of 2010 provided us once again of the resilient nation which we are.

Records will show that the National Pass rate stands at 67.8%. A staggering 7% increase from the results of 2009. The prophets of doom were not to be outdone. The press, without any sense of decency, before the ink had hardly dried on the announcements of the results, was quick to concoct their own findings. They were quick to reduce the pass rate by a breathtaking 10%.

I am not a statistician, nor will I profess to be one. If the formula, which has been used to determine the Pass rate for time immemorial, used last year and used again this year, who are we to challenge it. I would not even want to venture into the question of National Pride, for indeed the success of our children is cause to beat our chests in pride.

These self appointed charlatans parading as journalists really have to look at the damage they are causing to our children in particular and the nation as a whole. Firstly they will publish stories of how unprepared the learners were to write their examinations last year.

They would even go so far as to profess what damage the educational system is to the future of our children. Without batting an eyelid and with no

pause to take a breath, they will be quick to point out how the matriculants have no future even after successful completion.

I take my hat off to all concerned with the education of our children. The picture I have painted above has seen to many a children and learners committing suicides. By the grace of God, much to the disappointment of these insensitive reporting, not a single learner death has been reported as a result of their matric results.

Faced with these challenges, the heroic and outstanding learners of Sedibeng have done it again.

With the provincial pass rate standing at 77.8%, our pioneers and future leaders have returned a mind blowing 82%, an increase of 4% from last year as well as 7% more than the 2014 National target.

We are indeed very proud. All credit to the Class of 2010 and the dedicated educators and officials who threw caution to the wind to bring about these great results.

Programme Director, as Sedibeng District Municipality, we take note that all the other Districts have also been taking notes of our successes year and year out. We have always been in the top two performing educational Districts in the Gauteng Province. The other districts went out of their way to

study our methods, emulate us and even drove us to the position four in the province which we hold this year.

Just like great champions which we are, we will go back to the drawing board and bring our best game again this year. We have taken note of our contenders. We will raise the bar again this year with a clear understanding of the challengers and pretenders to our throne. We will reclaim our top sport this year. I know that these challengers will spur us on.

Programme Director, I have noticed with keen and pleasant interest the results of the other grades up to grade 09.

The learner promotion to the next grade stands at an average of 92% and dips to 79.7% at grade 09. I take this time to challenge our colleagues in the Department of Education to develop strategies to do away with the bottle neck in Grade 09.

I further wish to present another challenge, this time to deal with the gender challenge. It is not difficult to notice that our country have gone a long way to promote the education of the girl child. It was a deliberate programme premised on the tackling the inequalities of the past. It is true indeed that, “You educate a woman, you educate the nation”.

The boy child on the other hand, is faced with challenges which far and varied. It is not uncommon to find more female students in the matric class than boys. Boys have found distractions out of the class. This cannot be allowed to gain ground, I call on the Department of Education to develop strategies similar to the “Take the girl child to work Campaign” for the boy child.

Through such similar initiative we will be able to deal with such society problem as criminality and abuse of women and children. This is possible only if we are to empower the male child who will not be easily distracted, thereby becoming a responsible citizen of South Africa.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Class of 2010 for the great work they have done, I wish to further applaud the outstanding improvements by the Khanya-Lesedi Secondary in Ratanda. An improvement of 22.97% is cause for celebration, the same goes out to the following schools:

- Assemblies of God College at 17.12%
- Hoerskool J.W Luckhoff at 12.5%
- New Ratanda Secondary at 11.6%
- Ratanda Secondary School at 11.47%
- Ruster-Vaal Combined at 11.23%

I take my hat off finally to all the schools in the District which continue to return 90-100% average year in year out. Nil Nisi Optimum-Only the best are good enough for Sedibeng.

I Thank You.