

# EduUpdates

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Mpumalanga Department of Education

SEPTEMBER *Edition*



*Mpumalanga A province that Works for All*



# Honoring Heritage, Embracing Education



## Dear Colleagues,

**A**s we welcome the month of September, a time of growth and reflection, our focus as a department turns to excellence, empowerment, and cultural celebration.

The MEC for Education, Ms. Masina, sends her heartfelt best wishes to the Class of 2025, who will soon begin their Grade 12 examinations. This marks an important chapter in their lives, a culmination of years of learning, discipline, and determination. As a department, we stand united in supporting them to cross this final hurdle with confidence.

September is also celebrated as Heritage Month across South Africa a time when we honour our cultural roots, diversity, and shared identity as a nation. In this edition, we bring you inspiring stories that reflect the spirit of excellence and heritage.

We feature the Cleanest School Competition, an initiative that not only encourages pride in our schools but also teaches learners the values of responsibility, discipline, and respect for their learning environment. Beyond the prizes, this competition strengthens the reputation of schools that excel in maintaining spaces where learners feel safe and motivated to learn.

We also highlight the vibrant Ngoma Festival, held in

Ermelo, which embraced culture and tradition as part of the country's Heritage Month celebrations.

This two-day festival reminded us that education is not only about books and classrooms but also about embracing who we are. With a showcase of traditional and modern dances, the festival was a true reflection of unity in diversity.

In addition, we report on the Female Principals Forum, chaired by the MEC, which was a powerful platform for empowering women in leadership. This session provided principals with encouragement, inspiration, and practical tools to continue their vital role in shaping the future of education.

Finally, MEC Lindi Masina in her Heritage Month message, reminds us:

"As we celebrate Heritage Month, let us take pride in our roots and identity while embracing the diversity that makes us strong as a province and as a nation. Our heritage is the foundation upon which we build our future."

We hope this September edition brings you motivation and pride as we continue our shared journey of educating, empowering, and celebrating our heritage together.

*Wishing you an insightful and engaging read!*



**REIMAGINE  
OUR HERITAGE  
INSTITUTIONS  
FOR A NEW ERA**





# *Good Luck* **MATRIC CLASS OF 2025**

**MEC Lindi Masina sends a message  
of support to the Matric Class of 2025**



**A**s the final examinations are fast approaching, I wish to take this moment to encourage and wish every Grade 12 learner the very best.

This marks an important milestone in your academic journey, and I know that many hours of preparation, sacrifice, and dedication have led you to this point.

Stay focused, remain disciplined, and approach these examinations with confidence. Believe in the knowledge and skills you have gained over the years, and trust that your hard work will carry you through.

On behalf of the Department of Education, I want to assure you that we stand firmly behind you. You carry the hopes of your families, your schools, and your communities, and we have no doubt that you will rise to the occasion.

May this final stretch bring you calmness, courage, and clarity.

Best wishes, Class of 2025  
Go forward and make us proud!

**MEC for Education  
Ms. Lindi Masina**



# Ngoma Festival Brings Culture and Tradition to Life in Ermelo

**T**he town of Ermelo was a hub of colour, music, and celebration last week as the province hosted the Ngoma Festival, a two-day showcase of culture and tradition.

The festival brought together schools, traditional groups, and communities to celebrate the richness of heritage through dance, music, and performance.

Since September is celebrated as Heritage Month across the country, the Ngoma Festival formed part of these national celebrations, embracing our cultural diversity and showcasing the pride we take in our traditions.

From traditional dances such as umbhacanga and to contemporary styles, the stage came alive with talent and energy. Learners proudly showcased their cultural roots, while others explored modern interpretations, blending tradition with creativity. The diversity of performances reflected the province's unity in its cultural variety.

The atmosphere was electric, with families, learners, and educators gathering to cheer on participants. Local craft stalls, food vendors, and cultural exhibitions added to the festive spirit, making it more than just a performance, it was a cultural experience.

"The Ngoma Festival is not only about entertainment. It is about reconnecting with who we are, preserving our traditions, and giving young people a platform to celebrate their heritage," said one of the organisers.

The event also created opportunities for learners to build confidence, showcase their talents, and engage with peers from different backgrounds. For many, it was a chance to celebrate diversity while strengthening social cohesion in schools and communities.

The success of this festival reaffirmed the importance of cultural programmes in education, proving that learning goes far beyond textbooks.

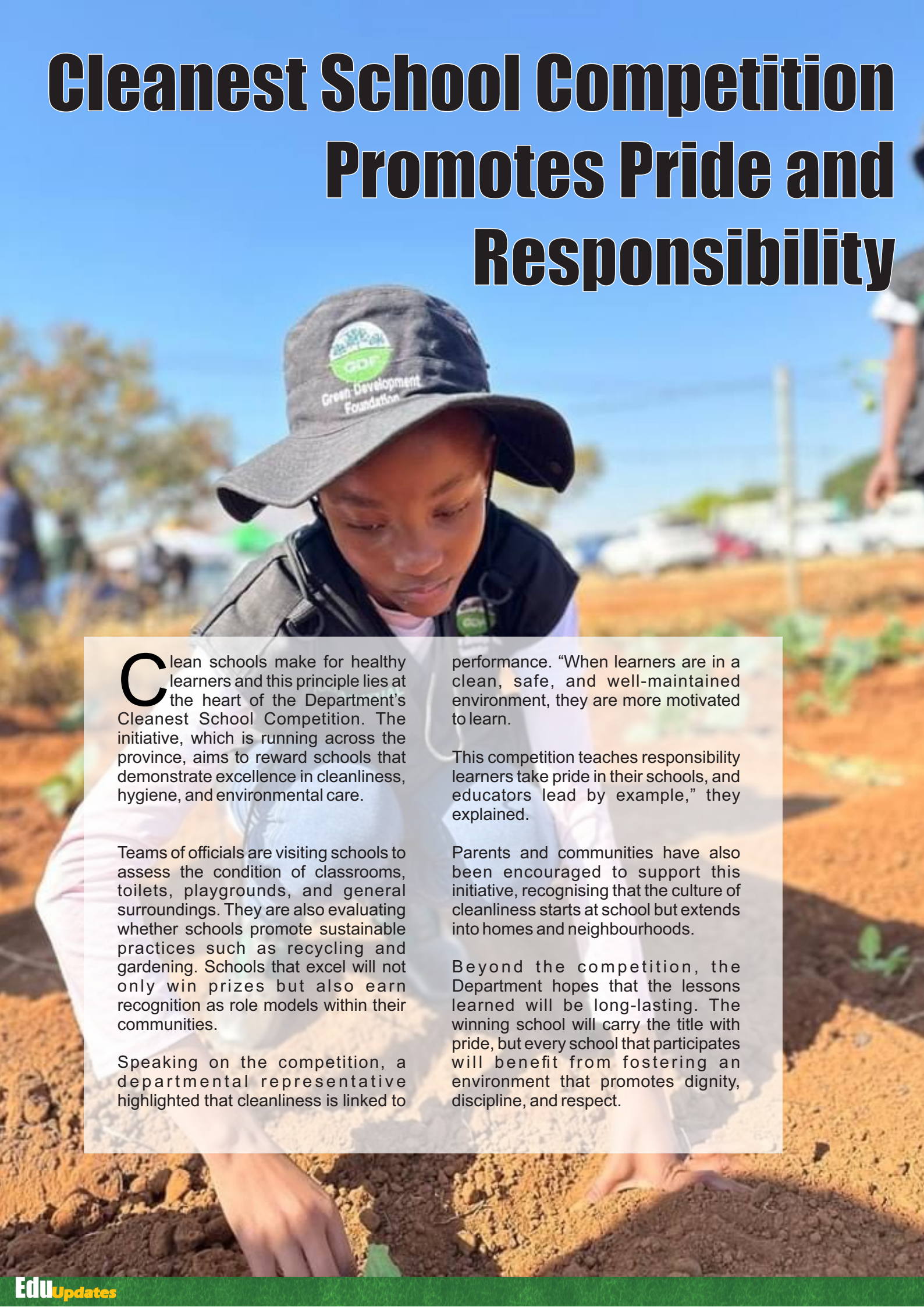








# Cleanest School Competition Promotes Pride and Responsibility



**C**lean schools make for healthy learners and this principle lies at the heart of the Department's Cleanest School Competition. The initiative, which is running across the province, aims to reward schools that demonstrate excellence in cleanliness, hygiene, and environmental care.

Teams of officials are visiting schools to assess the condition of classrooms, toilets, playgrounds, and general surroundings. They are also evaluating whether schools promote sustainable practices such as recycling and gardening. Schools that excel will not only win prizes but also earn recognition as role models within their communities.

Speaking on the competition, a departmental representative highlighted that cleanliness is linked to

performance. "When learners are in a clean, safe, and well-maintained environment, they are more motivated to learn.

This competition teaches responsibility learners take pride in their schools, and educators lead by example," they explained.

Parents and communities have also been encouraged to support this initiative, recognising that the culture of cleanliness starts at school but extends into homes and neighbourhoods.

Beyond the competition, the Department hopes that the lessons learned will be long-lasting. The winning school will carry the title with pride, but every school that participates will benefit from fostering an environment that promotes dignity, discipline, and respect.



# Female Principals Forum Empowers Women in Leadership



Female principals from across the province gathered for a landmark Principals Forum.

The event created a platform for female leaders in education to come together, share their experiences, and chart a way forward in strengthening women's leadership in schools.

The session focused on the challenges women face in leadership positions and the strategies needed to overcome them.

Topics such as mentorship, work-life balance, and the importance of peer support were discussed in depth. Principals shared stories of perseverance and triumph, inspiring one another with practical examples of leadership in action.

In her keynote address, MEC Masina emphasised the importance of creating spaces where women can thrive as leaders. "When women are empowered,

schools flourish.

Female leadership brings a unique perspective that strengthens our education system, and it is crucial that we continue to support and empower women in these roles," she said.

Participants described the forum as both inspiring and empowering. One principal shared, "It was refreshing to connect with other women who understand the challenges we face daily. I leave this forum encouraged and more determined to make a difference in my school."

The forum highlighted the importance of networking, mentorship, and continued professional development. It ended with a renewed commitment to building a strong support system for female leaders in the province.





# Strengthening Education Together: Inspires Collaboration and Change

## Extended Lekgotla at Badplaas Forever Lodge

**F**rom 1 to 3 September 2025, the Department of Education, in partnership with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), hosted the Extended Lekgotla at the scenic Badplaas Forever Lodge.

The gathering brought together officials, stakeholders, and partners who shared one goal which is to strengthen the education system and ensure that every learner receives quality education.

The Lekgotla created an atmosphere of reflection, collaboration, and forward-thinking. Over the three

days, participants revisited the progress that had been made in recent years and tackled some of the pressing challenges still facing the education sector. With robust discussions and honest exchanges, the gathering became a space not just for planning, but also for learning from one another.

Central to the conversations was how to support teachers better, improve learner outcomes, and close the gaps that continue to hold back progress in schools. Delegates engaged deeply, offering practical solutions and fresh ideas that could be taken back to classrooms and offices across the province.



The National Education Collaboration Trust's (NECT) role as a partner stood out, reminding everyone of the importance of collaboration between government, organisations, and communities in driving change.

What made the Lekgotla even more valuable was its spirit of unity. Participants did not only focus on technical issues; they also reflected on the bigger picture that is what it means to shape the future of young people in the rising sun and in South Africa at large.

The energy was one of optimism and determination, with many leaving inspired to contribute more in their respective spaces.

Beyond the formal sessions, the Lekgotla also created opportunities for networking and building stronger relationships among colleagues and partners.

Informal conversations during breaks and evening reflections added richness to the programme, giving delegates a chance to share experiences, connect on a personal level, and forge bonds that would strengthen collaboration beyond the event.

Another highlight of the Lekgotla was the reaffirmation of the department's commitment to continuous improvement. While celebrating the milestones achieved so far, delegates acknowledged that the journey ahead required even greater dedication and creativity.

The emphasis on accountability, innovation, and working together set a positive tone for the months ahead.

As the event drew to a close, resolutions were adopted and a clear way forward was mapped out. The Extended Lekgotla ended on a high note, with a renewed commitment to building an inclusive and high-performing education system.







## CELEBRATING OUR DIVERSITY, OUR HERITAGE







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**G20**  
SOUTH AFRICA 2025

**A NATION**   
**THAT WORKS** **FOR ALL**