

EDU Updates

MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT
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Mpumalanga, A province that Works for All

From Reflection to Action: Inspiring Vision, New Appointments and Building Momentum in February

As we reflect on this edition of our newsletter, it is fitting that we begin with February — the month widely recognised as the month of love.

Across the Department, we witnessed a beautiful display of unity as colleagues and officials embraced the spirit of the valentines day by dressing in red and white.

The atmosphere was warm, energetic, and filled with kindness. More than just a celebration, it reminded us that love in the workplace is expressed through respect, teamwork, grace, and appreciation for one another.

This spirit of positivity resonates throughout this edition. One of the highlights was our strategic planning session, which proved to be both impactful and inspiring.

The discussions reflected shared vision, commitment to excellence, and a collective determination to strengthen service delivery.

Strategic moments such as these are essential, as they help us align our goals, reflect on progress, and chart a clear path forward with renewed focus and purpose.

In this issue, we also celebrate leadership growth within the Department, including the appointment of Mr. Mathonsi as Chief Education Specialist responsible for School Libraries and Computer Science.

His appointment represents an important step in strengthening literacy, digital learning, and innovation within our education system. We wish him well as he takes on this important responsibility, which will undoubtedly contribute to advancing teaching and learning in meaningful ways.

We are also pleased to introduce the newly elected Sports Committee, which will focus on various sports codes and promote active participation across the Department.

Encouraging sport and physical activity

remains an important part of employee wellness and team building. A healthy body and a healthy mind go hand in hand, and initiatives like these contribute to stronger relationships, collaboration, and overall well-being in the workplace.

Speaking of wellness, our recent Employee Health and Wellness session was a true success. Officials had access to a range of professional services, including physiotherapy, dental check-ups, and other health screenings.

The positive response and enthusiastic participation demonstrated just how much employees value opportunities that support their physical and mental well-being.

These initiatives not only promote early detection of health concerns but also reinforce our commitment to creating a safe and supportive working environment.

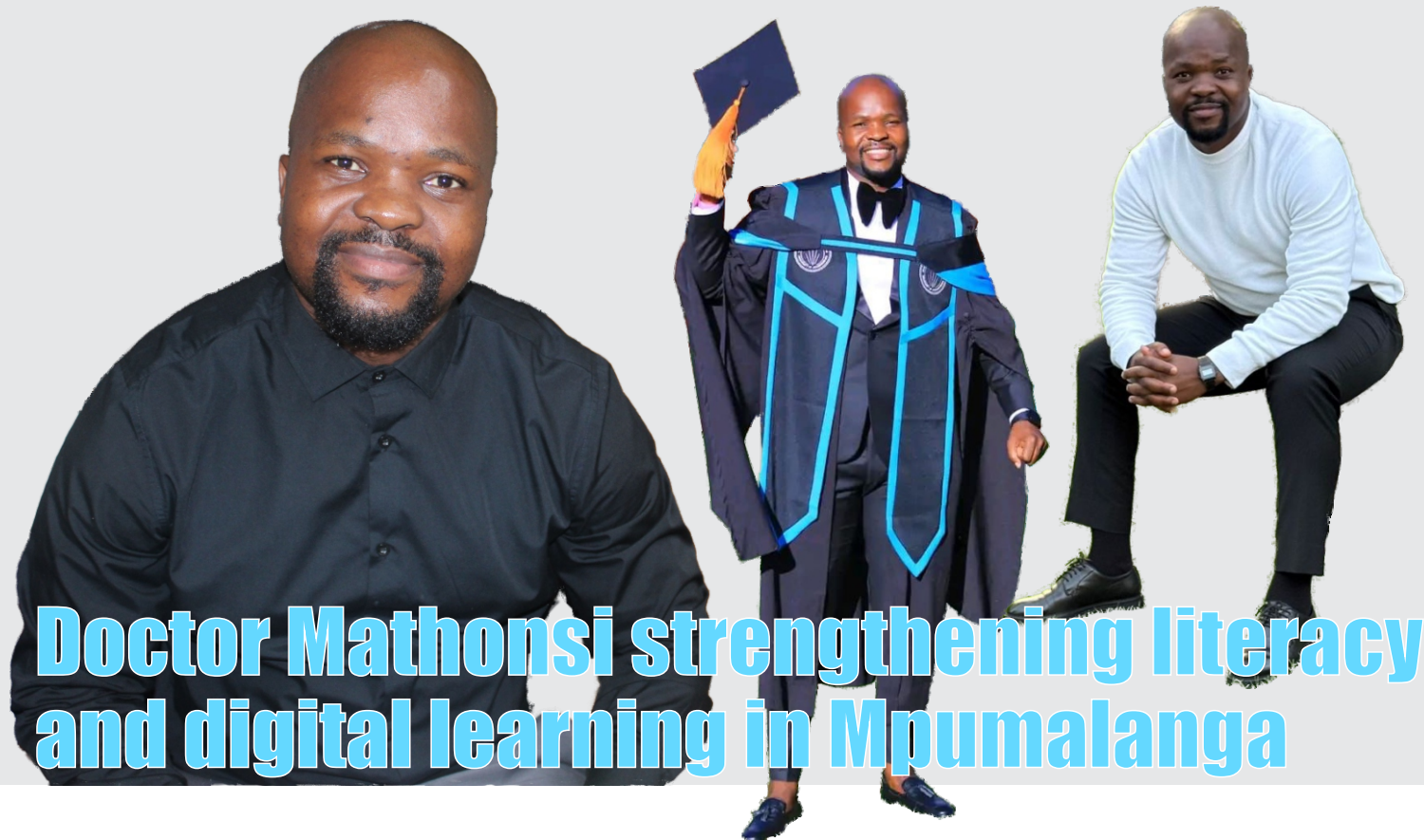
Finally, this edition also carries an important message of opportunity — particularly for matriculants who may require a second chance to complete their studies.

Education remains one of the most powerful tools for transformation, and we encourage everyone to share this information widely with those who may benefit from it. By extending access and encouragement, we contribute to changing lives and opening doors for future success.

As you read through this newsletter, we hope you are reminded of the progress we are making together — in leadership, wellness, teamwork, and opportunity.

Let us continue to build a culture grounded in love, professionalism, collaboration, and excellence. May the spirit of February inspire us not only for one month, but throughout the year, as we work together to strengthen our Department and serve with pride.

*Wishing you an
insightful and engaging read!*



Doctor Mathonsi strengthening literacy and digital learning in Mpumalanga

Meet Doctor Mathonsi, the newly appointed Chief Education Specialist: School Libraries and Computers in Education in the Mpumalanga Department of Education.

a visionary leader dedicated to strengthening literacy, expanding digital access, and advancing quality education across the province.

At a time when education systems are evolving rapidly, Mr Mathonsi assumes this responsibility with a clear and focused mandate: to ensure that every learner in Mpumalanga has access to well-functioning school libraries, meaningful reading resources, and effective digital learning opportunities.

His leadership comes at a pivotal moment, where literacy development and technology integration must work hand in hand to prepare learners for the future.

For Mr Mathonsi, literacy is more than a subject — it is the foundation upon which all learning is built. He believes that when learners develop strong reading skills, they gain confidence, independence, and the ability to engage critically with information.

A well-resourced library, in his view, is not simply a room filled with books, but a dynamic space that nurtures curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning.

In addition to strengthening school libraries, his portfolio includes advancing computer-based education and supporting the effective integration of technology into teaching and learning.

As schools increasingly adopt digital tools, his role is essential in ensuring that these technologies enhance classroom practice, support curriculum delivery, and improve learner outcomes.

Mr Mathonsi's approach is both strategic and people-centred. He recognises that sustainable improvement requires collaboration with district teams, school leadership, educators, and partners.

By working closely with stakeholders, he aims to build systems that are responsive, inclusive, and practical — particularly in schools that require additional support to bridge resource gaps.

His vision aligns with the department's ongoing efforts to improve academic performance, enhance equity, and ensure that no learner is left behind.

Through his role, Mr Mathonsi is helping to shape an education environment where libraries are vibrant centres of learning and technology becomes a powerful enabler of teaching excellence. His work represents a forward-looking investment in the province's future — one learner, one school, and one community at a time.

SIDEBAR PROFILE

Mr Doctor Mathonsi

Position: Chief Education Specialist: School Libraries and Computers in Education

Focus Areas: Literacy development, school library strengthening, digital learning integration

Experience: Extensive experience in curriculum support, and programme coordination within the education sector

Vision: To build a culture of reading and digital excellence in all schools, ensuring equitable access to quality learning resources and preparing learners for success in a modern,

MEC Masina Urges Managers to Prioritise Delivery at Strategic Planning Session



Opening the session, delegates engaged in discussions centred on governance, performance management, operational efficiency, and strategic priorities for the year ahead.

The tone was clear: the Department is determined to move forward with unity, discipline, and renewed energy.

Addressing the leadership cohort, MEC Lindi Masina delivered a compelling call for intensified focus on service delivery, ethical leadership, and organisational unity.

She emphasised that real progress will only be achieved when all branches, directorates, and districts operate as a cohesive system rather than isolated structures.

“My humble plea is that we must intentionally cultivate genuine unity,” the MEC stated. “We must appreciate that, in the execution of our mandates, we are intrinsically interdependent. The success of one branch, directorate, or programme is inseparable from the success of another.”

She underscored that collaboration is not optional but essential. The effectiveness of the Department depends on shared accountability, timely coordination, and collective responsibility.

Leaders were encouraged to reflect deeply on how internal processes either strengthen or hinder service delivery.

MEC Masina challenged managers to confront difficult but necessary questions about efficiency and professionalism. She highlighted the need to eliminate delays, prevent substandard submissions, and reduce unnecessary burdens placed on colleagues due to avoidable operational gaps. According to the MEC, excellence must become the standard across all levels of the Department.

She further emphasised that career progression and professional development should promote competence, innovation, and collective growth — not division or unhealthy competition. Leadership, she noted, must always serve the broader mission of the Department and ultimately the interests of learners.

The Mpumalanga Department of Education convened a two-day Strategic Planning Session at the scenic Blyde River Canyon Forever Resorts in the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality, bringing together senior leadership, education stakeholders, deputy directors, chief education specialists, and managers from Head Office and the four districts: Bohlabela, Ehlanzeni, Gert Sibande, and Nkangala.

The gathering provided a critical platform for reflection, alignment, and strategic focus as the Department strengthens its resolve to position Mpumalanga among the best-performing education systems in the country.

The session was anchored in accountability, performance improvement, and a shared commitment to delivering quality education for every learner.

Strengthening internal communication was also identified as a priority. The MEC urged leaders to foster a culture of transparency and foresight, where proactive planning replaces crisis management driven by external oversight.

A well-coordinated system, she explained, will enhance responsiveness, build trust, and improve overall performance.

In reinforcing governance standards, MEC Masina was unequivocal that the pursuit of a clean audit outcome must not be viewed merely as a compliance requirement. Instead, it should reflect a deep commitment to financial discipline, ethical conduct, and responsible stewardship of public resources. Sound governance, she stressed, is fundamental to sustainable service delivery and public confidence.

She called on all delegates to act with integrity, conscience, and selflessness in executing their mandates.

The Department, she noted, is closer to sustained success than it sometimes realises and with strengthened unity and disciplined implementation,

its strategic goals are within reach.

Throughout the session, critical governance and performance reports were tabled and discussed, reinforcing the Department's dedication to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The deliberations further strengthened alignment between Head Office and district structures, ensuring shared understanding of priorities and measurable targets.

The Strategic Planning Session reaffirmed the Department's collective determination to improve learner outcomes, enhance institutional performance, and build a culture defined by excellence, unity, and ethical leadership.

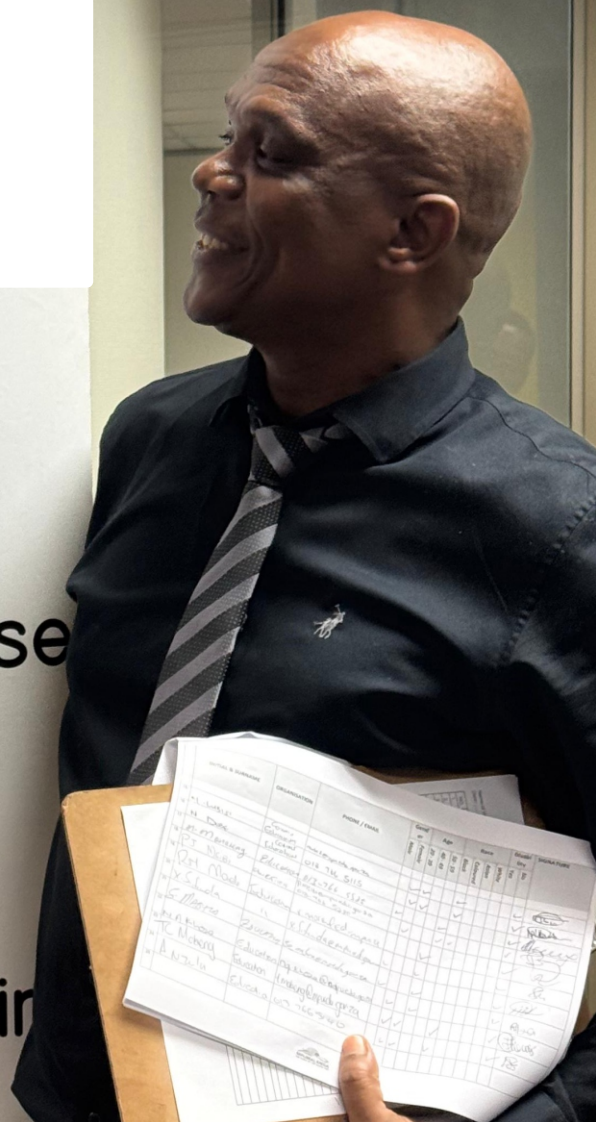
As the Department advances its strategic agenda, the message from leadership remains clear: delivery is the priority, unity is the strength, and accountability is the foundation.

A Department united in purpose. A leadership team committed to action. A future driven by results.



MPUMALANGA EDUCATION PROMOTES EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Kidney function test
- Liver function test
- Cholesterol and Glucose
- Cancer markers
- FBC and Blood group
- HIV testing & Monitoring



The Mpumalanga Department of Education has taken a significant step towards strengthening employee health and wellness by conducting comprehensive health screening services at its head office on the 16th February 2026 at the Ikhamanga Building.

The initiative, coordinated by the Department's Wellness Section, aligns with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993, reinforcing the Department's ongoing commitment to promoting a safe, healthy, and supportive working environment for all employees.

The programme forms part of the Department's broader strategy to prioritise preventive healthcare and encourage a culture of wellness within the public service.

During the health screening event, employees had access to a wide range of professional health services designed to support early detection and overall well-being. These included optometry services to assess eye health and detect vision-

related challenges, orthopaedic evaluations to examine musculoskeletal health, and orthotics support to assist with mobility and physical alignment.

Staff members also benefited from dietitian consultations aimed at promoting healthy eating habits and balanced nutrition.

In addition, audiology services were provided to conduct hearing assessments, while dental professionals offered comprehensive oral health check-ups.

Physiotherapy services supported employees with physical assessments and treatment where necessary, and phlebotomy services enabled blood testing to monitor important health indicators.

Podiatry consultations focused on foot health, and biokinetics services provided guidance on rehabilitation, movement, and physical fitness programmes.



These screening services play a vital role in the early detection of chronic conditions such as hypertension and diabetes, which can negatively affect employee well-being, productivity, and attendance if left unmanaged.

By identifying potential health risks early, the Department aims to reduce absenteeism, improve overall health outcomes, and ensure a more energised and efficient workforce.

The health screening initiative not only ensures that employees are fit for duty, but also contributes to a safer and more supportive work environment. By managing health risks proactively, the Department continues to demonstrate its dedication to employee welfare, recognising that a healthy workforce is essential for the effective delivery of quality public services.

The Department expressed satisfaction with the high

level of participation from staff members, reflecting a shared commitment to personal health and collective wellness.

Employees were encouraged to continue prioritising regular medical check-ups, as early detection and timely intervention remain key to preventing serious health complications.

Through ongoing wellness programmes and preventive health initiatives, the Mpumalanga Department of Education continues to prioritise the well-being of its employees while strengthening service delivery.

For further information regarding wellness programmes and future health screenings, employees are encouraged to contact the Department's Wellness Section on **013 766 5951, 5920, 5952, 5820 and 5910.**

A New Era for Sport & Culture at Head Office



Doctor Mona - Chairperson



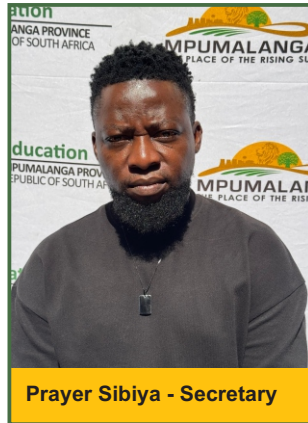
Cindy Shabangu - Deputy Chairperson



Evah Shongwe - Deputy Secretary



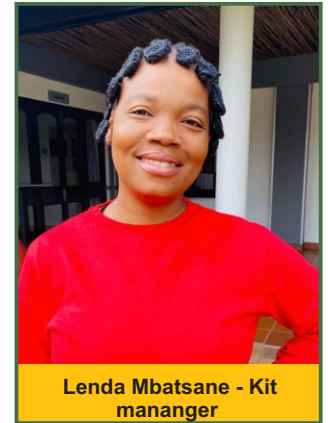
Doctor Ndlovu - Games and tournament organiser



Prayer Sibiya - Secretary



Rubie Rana - Additional member



Lenda Mbatsane - Kit manager

February 2026 marked an exciting milestone for the Department as the Head Office Sports and Cultural Committee was officially elected.

The newly appointed management team assumes its responsibilities with a shared commitment to strengthening staff wellness, unity, and active participation across all units within Head Office.

Sports and cultural programmes remain an important platform for building teamwork, boosting morale, and promoting a healthy work-life balance.

The 2026 committee is poised to lead these initiatives with renewed energy, structure, and inclusivity, ensuring that staff members have meaningful opportunities to engage beyond their daily responsibilities.

The newly elected committee is led by Doctor Mona as Chairperson, supported by Cindy Shabangu as Deputy Chairperson. The Secretariat will be managed by Prayer Sibiya as Secretary, assisted by Evah Shongwe as Deputy Secretary. Doctor Ndlovu takes on the role of Games and Tournament

Organiser, coordinating sporting activities and competitions, while Lenda Mbatsane will oversee logistics and equipment as Kit Manager.

Rubie Rana joins the team as an Additional Member, contributing to the committee's programmes and overall execution of activities.

Under this leadership, the committee will focus on coordinating sporting codes, organising tournaments, and facilitating cultural activities throughout the year.

The aim is to create an environment that encourages participation, strengthens collaboration among colleagues, and nurtures a spirit of unity across the department.

The Department congratulates the newly elected committee and wishes them success as they begin their 2026 term. With collective support and active participation, the year promises to be vibrant, engaging, and impactful for all.

Let us participate, support one another, and make 2026 a year of connection through sport and culture.



THE SPIRIT OF LOVE AND KINDNESS FILLS

The Department embraced the spirit of Valentine's Day in a meaningful and uplifting way as colleagues and officials came dressed in red and white to celebrate the occasion.

The vibrant colours reflected unity, appreciation, and positivity across the workplace, creating an atmosphere filled with warmth, energy, and togetherness.

From the early hours of the day, staff members arrived in high spirits, exchanging smiles, greetings, and words of encouragement. The environment was alive with kindness and friendliness, reminding everyone that workplaces can also be spaces where love, respect, and appreciation are expressed openly.

The simple gesture of dressing in coordinated colours symbolised solidarity and a shared commitment to fostering a supportive organisational

culture.

The positive atmosphere demonstrated the kind of energy that continues to strengthen the Department. It reflected the importance of building a work environment grounded in mutual respect, compassion, and teamwork.

Such initiatives contribute not only to morale but also to a sense of belonging among employees, which is essential for effective collaboration and service delivery.

Valentine's Day served as a reminder that love is not limited to personal relationships at home, but can also be expressed in professional spaces through kindness, understanding, and grace.

A workplace that promotes care and consideration among colleagues creates a healthy and motivating environment where individuals feel valued and respected.



THE WORKPLACE THIS VALENTINE'S DAY

This spirit of appreciation also contributes significantly to employee wellness. When staff members feel supported and acknowledged, it positively influences their mental and emotional well-being.

A healthy work environment enhances productivity, improves teamwork, and encourages employees to perform at their best. In this way, fostering a culture of love and respect directly supports organisational effectiveness and service excellence.

As February is widely recognised as the month of love, the Department encouraged employees to carry this spirit beyond a single day.

The message was clear: love, kindness, and grace should not be confined to special occasions, but

should form part of daily interactions throughout the year. By continuing to show empathy, patience, and mutual respect, the workplace becomes not only productive but also inspiring and enjoyable.

The celebration highlighted the importance of creating a positive organisational culture where employees uplift one another and work together with shared purpose.

Through simple acts of kindness and appreciation, the Department continues to nurture an environment that values humanity, teamwork, and excellence.

By embracing this spirit daily, the workplace remains a space of collaboration, motivation, and shared success — strengthening both employee well-being and overall performance.

SECOND CHANCE

MATRIC SUPPORT PROGRAMME

PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR:

- NSC SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMS
(MARCH)
- NSC PROGRESSED LEARNERS
(JUNE)
- AMENDED SENIOR CERTIFICATE
(JUNE)
- PART-TIME NSC CANDIDATES
(NOVEMBER)

SUPPORT AVAILABLE VIA:

- FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES
- DIGITAL ONLINE/OFFLINE PROGRAMME
- TELEVISION/RADIO BROADCASTS
- MULTIMEDIA PLATFORMS
- MZANZI LIBRARIES ONLINE

SUBJECTS OFFERED:

- ACCOUNTING
- AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
- BUSINESS STUDIES
- ECONOMICS
- ENGLISH FAL
- GEOGRAPHY
- HISTORY
- MATHEMATICS
- MATHEMATICS LITERACY
- LIFE SCIENCES
- PHYSICAL SCIENCE

THE BENEFITS:

- ✓ LEARNERS ARE ABLE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NSC OR SC AND OBTAIN A GRADE 12 MATRIC CERTIFICATE
- ✓ INCREASE LEARNER RETENTION
- ✓ INCREASE COMPUTER SKILLS, JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREER PATHING
- ✓ LEARNERS ARE ABLE TO ACCESS BURSARY OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER STUDIES

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Second Chance
Matric Support Programme

