

**Speaking Notes to be delivered by the MEC for Education,  
Mr. Bonakele Majuba at occasion of the School Support visit  
at Mantjedu Special School on 29 April 2024.**

Programme and District Director, Mr. DM Maja

Executive Mayor of Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality, Cllr Nomsa  
Mtshweni

Chairperson of the School Governing Body, Ms Merriam Chokwe

Members of Senior Management

Members of the District Management Team

Circuit Manager, Mr. Prince Pule Mokoele

Principal, Ms. Olga Mmamphuthi Mnguni and your management  
team.

Teachers

Representatives of Labour Formations

Sanibonani

Thank you very much for welcoming us in this school- Mantjedi  
Special School.

We are grateful that we are visiting this school at the backdrop of  
the Celebrations of 30 years of Democracy and Freedom of the  
people of our beloved and beautiful Country-South Africa.

Speaking at the occasion of Freedom Day Celebration at the Union Buildings on Saturday, 27 April 2024, President Cyril Ramaphosa said:

“As the democratic state we have worked to restore the dignity of all the South African people, particularly the dispossessed, the marginalised and the vulnerable.

Over the past thirty years, we have sought to implement policies and programmes that advance equality and human dignity in areas like economic empowerment, education, health care, social support and the provision of basic services.”

He further said:

“We are still working to remove the barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from realising their full potential and living lives of comfort, security and material well-being.”

It is for this reason that we elected to undertake this support visit to show our appreciation of the good work done and to confirm our undivided support.

I also wish congratulate Ms. Merriam Chokwe and the entire Members of School Governing Body following their election into the school governing body for the current term.

We wish that you could work in harmony with the school management team and stakeholders to take this Special School to greater heights.

We thank you for availing your precious time to assist in the growth and development of this school.

As a Department, we pledge our undivided support throughout your term of office.

Executive Mayor, Cllr Mtshweni , on the 22nd of February 2024, we convened a meeting with all principals and chairpersons of Special Schools in Platorand Special School at Emakhazeni Local Municipality.

After the deliberations in that meeting, I made a commitment that I need to visit all the 18 Special Schools in the Province before the National and Provincial Elections.

The intention is to leverage the plight of learners with Special Education needs and to ensure that their schools enjoy all the support from the Department and beyond.

I have visited some Special schools since then, and I will continue to do so as I have promised.

Today, we also intend to ignite a flame of hope and to express a shared determination to create conditions that are favourable for children who require mild and intensive care and support.

The founding father of our democracy and former president, Nelson Mandela also said, "Every child is born with the ability to learn and progress."

Let's unlock that potential.

We are quite convinced that Special Schools play an integral part in the education of our children and as such they must not be seen as the step child of the Department.

They deserve to receive and enjoy the same support that main stream schools are benefiting from.

The support we offer to these schools must be seen as an investment into the future.

We therefore do not have any option but to prioritize Special Schools considering the kind of children they cater for.

Their vulnerability must be understood by all of us, and thus every effort must be made to ensure that the learners in this school are at all times safe and protected.

Our collective energy, expertise, and resources must be harmonized to make this vision a reality.

Together, we must unleash the transformative power to improve the support to our Special Schools.

Our view is that there is an abundance of skills and academic prowess which must be nurtured from our Special Schools.

We continue to work together with our special schools to harness our collective energy, expertise and resources to bring this vision to life.

I am here to receive a report that as things stand Mantjedi Special School has turned a new page, it is enjoying stability and that everyone is focused towards a shared vision and that there is a unity of purpose that is emerging.

I am going to be very much pleased Ms Chokwe to learn that your priority is to put the interests of learners in this school first.

My view is that it is possible to bury the hatchet, choose tranquillity, peace and “werksaam ” as it is said in Afrikaans.

I wish to take this time and thank everyone in and outside this school who is playing a role to reclaim the previous glory of this school.

We wish to see the children from this school in the field of play and making a mark at the national and the world stage.

The Department has launched the Wednesday School Sport Day and my wish is to see learners from this school fully participating in sport, music and at the same time exceling in their trades.

Let us not shy away from the responsibilities we have on our shoulders nor be intimidated by the share load. Nelson Mandela once said: “It always looks Impossible until it is done”

It is in our hands to brighten the corner of each and every child in this school.  
Let us therefore ignite that flame.

I thank you.