

Speech to be Delivered by the MEC for Education Mr. Bonakele Majuba at the Occasion of the Launch of the Wednesday School Sports Day Programme held at Themba Sinamela Stadium in Mhluzi, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality on 10 April 2024

Programme Director, **Mr. Bheki Letswalo**

MEC for Sport, Culture and Recreation, **Mrs. BT Shongwe**

Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Cllr Mhlonishwa Masilela

Executive Mayor of Nkangala District Municipality, Cllr TD Ngwenya

President of MPUSSO, **Mr. Robert Chiloane**

Provincial Chairperson of Mpumalanga Sport Confederation, **Mr Linda Zwane**

Leaders and Representatives of Sports Clubs, Associations and Federations

Members of School Governing Bodies

Members of Senior Management

Members of the District Management Teams

Circuit Managers

Representatives from the Sport Fraternity

Representatives from the Media

Principals

Teachers

Learners

Ladies and Gentlemen

Sanibonani,

As the country celebrates **the Freedom Month**, we elected to free and showcase the abundance of talent that our learners possess.

Thank you very much to everyone who worked towards the success of this day.

It is true that our children need to learn, play and be productive in everything they do.

Executive Mayor, **Councillor Masilela**, there was no better location to launch this occasion than this one, since the late Minister Steve Tshwete was the first Minister of Sports for the Democratic Dispensation.

We know that He (Steve Tshwete) must be smiling wherever he is, seeing us launching the Wednesday School Sports Day Programme.

Our intention is clear that henceforth in this Province, School Sports must occupy its rightful position. It must enjoy full commitment, growth, development and must be a vehicle to free the potential of all our children.

It is our intention to achieve the Wednesday School Sports Day initiative in a more integrated manner where *No One will be Left behind*.

This programme must at all times be inclusive, integrated well-coordinated and foster social cohesion.

We wish to extend our appreciation to the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation under the Stewardship of **MEC Shongwe** for holding our hand towards the re-introduction of the Wednesday School Sports Days in the Province.

Equally, I wish to appreciate the leadership of SAFA for persuading us towards this long overdue journey.

The Wednesday School Sports Programme must be an integral part of every school curriculum and must take place in every corner of our Province.

As we launch the Wednesday School Sport initiative, we forge forward a partnership with the education sector unions, all sports federations, school governing bodies, community sports clubs, business and other relevant stakeholders, to use school sport in developing functional and vibrant learning and teaching institutions.

We are compelled to use school's sports to maintain harmony between schools and community sports bodies.

We must resist the temptation of un-healthy competitions, but use sports to create a favorable environment for our children to enjoy being at school.

Our desire is to broaden school sports such that the majority of our learners find space in all the national teams as well as on the international stage.

Every learner must in a way participate in **one or two** sport codes given their diversity and accessibility.

Our children must be spoiled for choice, since there are a variety of sport code such as **in- door, out –door and indigenous games.**

Therefore, there may be no reason why our learners may not participate in **one or two** sport codes in our schools.

We are grateful that the fixtures for today's games are integrated with boys and girls participating in some of the codes, this must be a trend going forward.

We also need to intensify the involvement of learners with special education needs in this programme.

The participation in sports must happen across all schools in an age and/or grade appropriate way, based on the principle of equity and access.

We must ensure that there must be no sport codes for a selected section, which others are not able to access.

Therefore, the issue of access to all sport codes by all our children remains paramount.

We truly hold the view that sports promote the development of basic motor skills especially at primary school levels.

It is imperative that we recall the instrumental role sports play in the holistic development of our learners and the overall wellbeing of the community.

Today, we are igniting a flame of hope, progress and prosperity through schools' sports.

Let our children play, learn and free their true potential.

Thank you to all for making this day a resounding success.

Let the games, in our schools, in our province, take the centre stage every Wednesday.

#Babizebonke

#Rhandzaxikoloxawenacampaign

Ngiyabonga

