

**Speech by the MEC for Education, Ms. Lindi Masina, at the Launch of
the 2026 Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena Campaign held at Mahhushe
Agricultural Secondary School on 12 May 2026**

Programme Director and Head of Department for DARDLEA,
Executive Mayor of Nkomazi Local Municipality, **Cllr P.P. Magagula**,
Executive Mayor of Ehlanzeni District Municipality, **Cllr Terra Shabangu**,
Ubukhosi Bendawo,
My colleague, the MEC for Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and
Environmental Affairs, **Ms. Khethiwe Moeketsi**,
Pastors led by the Moral Regeneration Movement,
Hosting Chairperson of the School Governing Body, **Mr. Nhlanhla Khoza**
Acting Provincial Commissioner for Correctional Services, **Mr Nkosi**,
Leadership of the Education Sector Unions,
Partners from Government and the Private Sector,
Leadership of Associations of School Governing Bodies,
Leadership of Learner Formations: COSAS – Each One Teach One,
Head of Department for Education, **Mrs. Lucy Moyane**,
Ehlanzeni District Director, **Dr. Jabulani Ndlovu**,
Members of Senior Management,
Members of the District Management Team,
Hosting Circuit Manager, **Ms. Lucia Thuli Shungube**
Circuit Managers
Hosting Principal, **Ms. Nelly Khoza**
Principals
Subject Advisors and Extension Officers
Teachers,
President of the Representative of the Council of Learners
Learners,
Parents,
Members of School Governing Bodies,
Members of the Media,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sanibonani.

We are deeply honoured and grateful to gather here today to relaunch and renew the **2026 Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena Campaign**.

Allow me to extend our sincere appreciation to all stakeholders who have ensured that this campaign is not only sustained but strengthened and intensified.

Your commitment affirms that this is not a once-off programme, but a living movement grounded in unity, responsibility and a shared vision for the future of our children across the Province- *the Place of the Rising Sun*.

Today marks the renewal of a movement rooted in community ownership and collective accountability.

The Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena Campaign must continue to inspire every one of us to take full responsibility for our schools and, by extension, the future of our beautiful province - *Mpumalanga*.

It reminds us of a simple but undeniable truth that schools belong to the communities they serve.

It is for this reason that we have joined hands across sectors to mobilise our communities to become the first line of defense in protecting and developing our schools.

We do this because we understand that sustainable development is anchored in what happens in our classrooms, in our schools, and in our communities.

Through this campaign, we are fostering active citizenship, strengthening social cohesion and building a united front to advance the education of the people by the people.

Programme Director, we are deliberate in our call that every school must be recognized as a centre of community emancipation, empowerment, and social transformation.

The objectives of the Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena are clear and free from any ambiguity and are:

- To improve teaching and learning surroundings so that teachers feel valued and respected at all times,

- To restore the dignity of learners and create conditions that enable them to learn and to reach their full potential,
- To promote safe, disciplined, and drug-free school environments, because no child should ever have to choose between education and safety.
- To encourage the planting of vegetable gardens and to enhance food sustainability through education.
- To ensure that school infrastructure is functional, well-maintained, and is reflective of the high value we place on education.

This campaign goes beyond infrastructure and cleanliness. It is about instilling pride, reinforcing values, strengthening accountability and building a culture of excellence within our schooling system.

We are encouraged by the strong partnerships that continue to give this campaign meaning and impact.

Our collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, the Department of Correctional Services, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector is a practical demonstration of integrated governance in action.

These partnerships advance key priorities such as environmental sustainability, skills development, food security, and community upliftment. Together, we are not only building better schools—we are building stronger, more resilient communities.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to:

- **Educators**, who remain the backbone of this campaign and whose daily efforts translate this vision into reality.
- **School Governing Bodies**, whose leadership in mobilising parents towards the success of this campaign is critical to the success of this initiative.
- **Learners**, whom we urge to take pride in their schools, protect them, and respect them, because schools are the reservoirs of their dreams and aspirations.

- **The business sector and civil society**, whose support continues to amplify our impact.

Education remains the cornerstone of sustainable development.

Together with MEC Moeketsi, we will crisscross the province engaging communities, strengthening partnerships and inspiring action at every level.

We wish that this campaign must resonate in every corner of Mpumalanga in every village, every township, every town, and every street.

Let *Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena Campaign* become more than a slogan but a way of life.

Let it be the rallying call of the *Place of the Rising Sun*.

Programme Director, following today's launch, we expect all schools across our four districts to accelerate preparations for their activations which are scheduled as follows

- **19 May 2026** – Nkangala District
- **22 May 2026** – Gert Sibande District
- **26 May 2026** – Ehlanzeni District
- **27 May 2026** – Bohlabela District

Thereafter, we will invite nominations for the **2026 Cleanest School Competition**.

Each of the **71 Circuit Managers** will be expected submit to their respective District one school per circuit by **30 June 2026**.

Districts will adjudicate and submit one winning school to represent the district at provincial level.

The Province will conduct verification and adjudication processes to determine the overall winner.

The **Cleanest School in the Province** will be announced in **September 2026**, aligned with the **International Clean-up Day** celebrations.

This year, the winning school will receive prize money exceeding **R200,000**, as part of our commitment to incentivise excellence and promote sustainable school environments.

As I conclude, we call upon every school to embrace this campaign with innovation, commitment, and inclusivity. Let us involve all stakeholders and respond decisively to this call.

We remain resolute in our belief that when a community protects its school, it protects its future and

When a community invests in education, it invests in its own prosperity.

Let us unite in purpose, act with urgency and build schools that are not only centres of learning but Institutions of hope, development and community pride.

We wish to take this opportunity to appreciate everyone from the Executive Mayors, Abafundisi, Traditional Leadership, the media, our officials and all our stakeholders. **No one is left behind.**

Siyabonga Kakhulu, together, we can. together, we will.

#Rhandzaxikoloxawenacampaign

#Babizebonke

#Aprovince that works for all

I thank you.