

**SPEECH BY THE MEC FOR EDUCATION, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
MS LINDI MASINA ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF
THE 2025 NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION RESULTS
13 JANUARY 2026 | LILIAN NGOYI COMMUNITY HALL, SECUNDA**

Programme Director and Acting Head: Education, **Ms. Gugu Mashiteng**;

Honourable Premier of Mpumalanga, **Mr. Mandla Ndlovu**;

The Acting Head: Education has clearly established the Protocol and has brilliantly acknowledge Everyone.

Sanibonani.

Today, we converged to announce the outcomes of the 2025 National Senior Certificate Examinations and to celebrate a school journey defined by hope, resilience, collaboration, and triumph.

We gather to honour the Class of 2025 and to reflect on a school year that will forever stand as a defining chapter in Mpumalanga's education story.

The year 2025 demonstrated what is possible when leadership is decisive, policy direction is clear, communities, educators, parents, and learners are mobilized behind a shared and compelling vision.

From the very beginning of the 2025 school year, Mpumalanga Province proved that progress is achievable when government, communities, teachers, and learners stand and work together.

The Hon. Premier, **Mr. Mandla Ndlovu**, led from the front by supporting us from the very school day in 2025 and we are still enjoying that support today. His visible leadership reinforced a clear message across the system that performance, discipline, and accountability are non-negotiable.

We salute my predecessors for their tireless efforts.

As we gather today to celebrate the release of our matric results, I would like to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who have paved the way for our success.

To our predecessors, I salute you. Your tireless efforts, dedication, and perseverance have laid the foundation for our achievements. Your legacy continues to inspire and motivate us to strive for excellence.

We acknowledge the challenges you faced, the obstacles you overcame, and the sacrifices you made to ensure that we had access to quality education. Your impact on our lives is immeasurable, and we are forever grateful.

As we celebrate our results today, we do so with humility and appreciation for the path that was paved for us. We promise to build upon your legacy, to strive for greatness, and to make you proud.

Thank you for your hard work, your wisdom, and your unwavering commitment to education. We stand on your shoulders, and we are honored to follow in your footsteps

We are equally humbled by the dedication and passion of our educators.

Our teachers, the heartbeat of our education system, once again proved that Mpumalanga is rich in talent, dedication and patriotic character.

Their dedication was recognized nationally when **Mr. Thulani Sibiya** was crowned the **Overall Best Teacher in South Africa** at the 2025 National Teaching Awards.

His recognition symbolized the daily commitment of thousands of educators who inspire learners, support them through adversity, and prepare them with discipline, care, and professionalism.

Their work remains the foundation upon which all our achievements stand.

We truly salute our teachers.

Programme Director, our efforts in 2025 were guided by enduring values of access, inclusion, and equality.

These values were powerfully reaffirmed during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter, which proclaimed that *the doors of learning and culture shall be opened to all*.

This historic commitment was further strengthened through the enactment of the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, which reinforced the authority of the state to safeguard the best interests of learners, strengthen school governance, promote social cohesion and ensure that public education serves the collective good.

These policy developments align with our determination to create learning and teaching environment where all children grow together, learn together, and prosper together, free from exclusion and discrimination.

Throughout the year, the Department intensified efforts to improve school surroundings through initiatives such as the ***Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena*** Campaign which we implemented alongside the Departments of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, Correctional Services, and members of the business community. This campaign reaffirmed that education thrives in clean, safe, and welcoming surroundings.

In this regard, we once again congratulate **Thandanani Primary School** for winning the 2025 Cleanest School Award.

Another highlight of 2025, was Mpumalanga becoming the first province in South Africa to host the G20 Education Working Group Indaba, followed by

the hosting of the G20 Education Ministers' Session at the iconic Kruger National Park.

These milestones confirmed global confidence in our leadership and in our growing contribution to international education discourse on equity, access, and skills for the future.

Indeed, Mpumalanga has positioned itself as a trendsetter.

As we celebrate this progress, we do so with honesty, integrity and humility.

We acknowledge that the year also presented areas requiring improvement, particularly in governance systems, financial management, audits, and infrastructure delivery.

We are determined to strengthen these systems to further earn public trust through performance, accountability, and transparency.

Programme Director, on 06 January we launched the 2026 Back to School Programme at **Mathupa Primary School** in the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality .

We assured the provincial community that all necessary resources had been provided to ensure that learning begins on the first day and in the first period.

We therefore call on communities to work with us to ensure uninterrupted teaching and learning across the province when schools reopen tomorrow.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to delivering quality, equitable, and inspiring education in every classroom across Mpumalanga.

To every learner, educator, parent, official, partner, and community member, your contribution shaped this remarkable year.

Your belief in the power of education continues to inspire us to move our province forward.

Indeed, the Sun has risen brightly over Mpumalanga, revealing our path with hope, confidence, and optimism.

As we enter 2026 academic year, let us move forward strengthened by our collective achievements and energized by a shared commitment ensuring that no child, no school, and no community is left behind.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

Programme Director, I have the honour and privilege to present to the people of the Place of the Rising Sun, the outcomes of the 2025 National Senior Certificate Examination.

These results were approved and certified by the only competent body Umalusi on Friday, 09 January 2026. We are truly honored that the CEO of Umalusi, **Dr Mafu Rakometsi** has graced this occasion.

It is also encouraging that for the past 14 years, Mpumalanga Department managed an incident free National Senior Certificate Examination where there were no question paper leakages.

In essence, Programme Director, we mean that the results I am announcing are credible.

It gives me pleasure to announce that the Class of 2025 registered **69 510** candidates and that **67 114** candidates wrote all the subjects on offer.

The provincial pass rate target for 2025 was set at **90%**.

It is therefore my pleasure to announce that the 2025 Grade 12 Class in Mpumalanga Province achieved an overall and impressive **86,5% pass rate**.

This is truly exciting and represents a **1.5%** improvement from the **84.99 % rate achieved in 2024**. Well done and Congratulations to the Class of 2025.

Programme Director, what is particularly encouraging is that **28 610** learners are qualified to register for bachelor programmes. This is an improvement from the **27 885** learners who obtained bachelor passes in 2024.

These **28 610** learners are now eligible to further their studies in universities across our country and abroad.

These signals expanding opportunities and the deliberate efforts to empower the people of this Province.

Furthermore, **19 603** learners qualified to enroll for diploma programmes, representing an increase of **29.2%** learners compared to the **17 775** who qualified in 2024.

This confirms steady progress in broadening post-school pathways aligned to national development and labour market needs.

Programme Director, the performance of our Provincial Districts is as follows, presented in alphabetical order:

- Bohlabela District recorded a **83.5% pass rate**, improving from **78.6% in 2024**, an increase of **4.9%**.

Well done to **Dr Khathu Khomola** and your team for this progress.

- **Ehlanzeni District** achieved an impressive **88,0%** pass rate, a slight decline from **88.43% in 2024**. Ehlanzeni District is still the overall best district in the Province .

Well done to **Dr Jabulani Ndlovu** and your team.

- **Gert Sibande District** registered an impressive **87,1% pass rate**, equally a slight decline from the **87.67%** obtained in **2024**.

Well done to Mr. PP Magagula and your team.

- **Nkangala District** achieved an impressive **87,4** pass rate which is an improvement of **2.1%** from **85.24% in 2024**.

Well done to **Mr. Douglas Maja** and your team.

What is significant is that all our four districts have performed above the **80%** the pass rate threshold this time around.

Programme Director, I therefore request the Executive Mayor of Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, **Ciir NG Zuma** together with the Provincial Deputy

Speaker, **Mr. Sam Masango** as I invite all the four District Directors on stage to be appreciated by the Provincial Community for the work well done.

PERFORMANCE OF MUNICIPALITIES

Programme Director, out of the **17** Municipalities in the Province, **Emalahleni Local Municipality** obtained position one this time around after passing **3 776 out of 4 015** learners which constitute a **94.0 %** pass rate.

CIRCUIT PERFORMANCE

Programme Director, the Department has **71** Education Circuits and out of these Circuits, **Mashishing Circuit** is our overall best performing circuit in the Province after recording a **97.3%** pass rate.

The best circuit in **Bohlabela District** is Mashishing Circuit with **97.3%** pass rate, improved by **2.5%** from **94.8%** of 2024. Well done to the Circuit Manger, **Mr. Gerald Mokoena**.

The best circuit at Ehlanzeni District is **Whitehazy 1** Circuit obtaining **94.7%**, a decrease by **0.6%** from **95,3%** of 2024. Well done to the Circuit Manager, **Ms. Thandi Masango**.

In **Nkangala District**, **Steve Tshwete 2** Circuit is the best performing Circuit after registering a **97.0%** pass rate. This constitutes an improvement by **2%** from **95.0%**. Well done to the Circuit Manger, **Mr. Daniel Makuse**.

In **Gert Sibande District**, Chief **Albert Luthuli** Circuit is the best performing Circuit after registering a **95.1%** pass rate. This constitutes an improvement of **2%** from **93.1%**. registered in 2024.

Well done to the Circuit Manger, **Dr. AM Mngomezulu**.

Programme Director, the most improved circuit in the province is KwaThandeka (Amsterdam) in Gert Sibande District and it obtained **91,7%** pass rate. This is an improvement of **12,6%** pass rate from the **79,1%** obtained in 2024. We congratulate **Mr. Thokozani Mahlangu** and your team for this achievement.

It is worth noting that **62** out of the **71 circuits** performed above **80%**, which is remarkable.

What further impressed us, is that there is not a single circuit in the Province which performed below the **70%** pass rate.

We congratulate all Circuit Managers and their teams for this outstanding performance.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Hon Premier, out of the **582 schools** which administered the 2025 National Senior Certificate Examination, **56 schools** were able to pass all learners who wrote the examination, thus recording a **100% pass rate**.

Congratulations to the principals and I request that they all stand up for this house to appreciate them.

379 of these schools performed between the **80%** and **99% pass rate** bracket while **93** schools performed above 70% pass rate this time around.

Hoërskool Nelspruit is the overall best performing school in 2025. This school had **275** registered learners and all of them passed. It recorded a combined total of **402** distinctions in various subjects. We congratulate the Principal, **Mr. Frederick Willem Van der Merwe** and his team, **well done**.

The most consistent improving school is **Sizwakele Secondary School** in Highveld Ridge West Circuit at Gert Sibande District. This school has been performing above **80% since 2022**.

In 2020 it obtained **59% pass rate** and this time it obtained **91,9%** pass rate with **121** bachelors. Congratulations to the Principal, **Mr. Sefako Moemisi** and your team.

We wish to take this opportunity to congratulate all our schools for this performance.

BOARDING SCHOOLS

The performance of our boarding schools this time around is as follows:

eMakhazeni Boarding School recorded a pass rate of **93.9%** compared to **77.1%** recorded in 2024.

eZakheni Boarding School recorded an improvement of **94.6% pass rate** compared to **91.5%** obtained in 2024.

Shongwe Boarding School registered a pass rate of **95.5%** compared to the **98.4%** obtained in 2024.

Izimbali Boarding School which is also an MSTA Sub Hub registered a pass rate of **97.6%** against the **100%** of 2024.

Steve Tshwete Boarding School registered **87.5 pass rate** compared to the **87.8%** of 2024.

Thaba Chweu Boarding School registered **100% pass rate** compared to the **97.6% pass rate** of 2024. We also extend our appreciation to all who played a pivotal role in this achievement.

PERFORMANCE OF THE UBUHLEBUZILE E-LEARNING FULL SCALE PILOTING SCHOOLS

Hon Premier, there are eight schools in the province, two from each District which are implementing the Ubuhlebusile e-learning in full scale. This means that all learners from grade eight to 12 use tablets.

We had an interest in their performance, and it gives me pleasure to indicate their performance in no particular order.

From **Bohlabela District**, Makhosana Manzini Secondary School obtained **93.3% pass rate** and Acorn to Oaks Comprehensive High School obtained **79.8% pass rate**.

From **Ehlanzeni District**, Khumbula Secondary School obtained **89.0% pass rate** and Driekopies Combined Secondary School obtained **82.2% pass rate**.

From Gert Sibande District, Izimbali Boarding School obtained **97.6% pass rate** and Ubuhlebuzile Secondary School obtained **91.1% pass rate**.

From Nkangala District, KwaNdebele Science Secondary School obtained **96.9% pass rate** and Ramasodi Technical High School obtained **66.2% pass rate**.

Well done!

PERFORMANCE OF NO-FEE SCHOOLS

Programme Director, there are **487 No-Fee Schools** in the Province that sat for this National Senior Certificate Examination in 2025. Out of this number, **27** schools obtained 100% pass rate. **353** schools obtained results that are above 80% and **439** schools performed above 70%.

We are encouraged by this outcome, and we must continue to pay special attention and support all the No-Fee Paying Schools to ensure sustainable improvement.

Programme Director, the overall best quintile 1 school in the province is **Highveld Secondary School at Mashishila Circuit** in the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality. This school also obtained **100 % pass rate**.

Our concern is that **48** schools which constitute **9,9%** of the No-Fee Schools performed below **70% pass rate**.

SUPPORT TO LEARNERS

Hon Premier, government efforts to free the potential of the girl child are showing impressive outcomes.

Out of the 58 084 candidates who passed, **49,1%** are girls, **compared to 37,5%** boys.

In this regard, the number of girl learners who passed the 2025 National Senior Certificate Examination exceeds that of boy learners.

In 2024, the pass rate for girls stood at **47,7%** and this year we are proud to report an improvement of **1,4%**. *Aphasa Kahle Amantombazane*

Programme Director, the province recorded a **62.9 % pass rate** in Mathematics, compared to **-66.3 %** in 2024, representing a decline of **3.4%**.

Furthermore, two learners obtained **100% in** Mathematics, while two learners in Business Studies achieved a perfect score of **300 out of 300**.

In Physical Sciences, the provincial pass rate improved by **1.1%** and improved to **74.7 %**, compared to **73.69%** registered in 2024.

These outcomes present the steady progress being made in strengthening quality passes in these subjects which is encouraging.

Programme Director, allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate all learners who have successfully passed the National Senior Certificate Examination.

Their achievements confirm the hard work, determination, resilience, and belief in the transformative power of education.

Programme Director, Section 7, Subsection N of the Provincial Ephraim Mogale Bursary Scheme provides that I may use my discretion as the MEC for Education to award bursaries to learners who performed outstandingly.

I therefore take this opportunity to indicate that all our 2025 top learners who are in attendance will each receive a full bursary from the Provincial government.

The bursary will cover full tuition, accommodation, meals, learning materials, and a monthly stipend.

These bursaries will support learners for the duration of their studies at any public university in our country.

In addition, the same bursary support will be extended to learners with disabilities and learners with albinism within our province.

We are grateful that the Road Accident Fund made a commitment to provide a full bursary to three disable learners.

This is our resolute commitment to inclusivity, equality, and the principle that no learner must be left behind because of circumstance, condition, or disability.

Programme Director, the achievements we celebrate today demonstrate that education, guided by purpose and collective responsibility, remains the most powerful instrument for national building.

As expressed in a principle often cited in governance practice:

“When the people have faith, the nation has strength; when the nation has strength, the future is assured.”

The results we have announced today are therefore not the success of individuals alone.

They are the product of collective effort, shared sacrifice, and coordinated action by learners who persevered, educators who stood firm, communities who supported, and a state that remained focused on long-term development rather than short-term gain.

As we move forward in 2026, we do so with confidence and resolve.

Step by step, year by year, generation by generation, we are building an education system that serves many, strengthens social cohesion, and prepares a skilled, disciplined, and capable generation for the future.

Let us continue to move forward with unity of purpose, firmness of resolve, and unwavering belief in the transformative power of education.

The future is not a distant promise, it is being built here and now, through learning and collective commitment.

I take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to everyone who supported the course of education.

I also take this opportunity to appreciate the support we received National Collaboration Trust (NECT), with their **R14 Million** investment in support of education activities in our province.

We are grateful to the business sector for the sponsorship. Thank you for honoring us with your presence.

Together, we will continue to move forward.

Together, we will continue to build.

Together, we will continue to educate the people of the Place of the Rising Sun.

When the Sun Rises, We Work Hard to Deliver.

Let's continue to fly the Mpumalanga flag High.

Once more, Congratulations to the Class of 2025.

Ngiyabonga.