



SPECIAL MATRIC EDITION

# Sky is the limit

for SA's top learner Kelly Prowse as she enrolls for Acturial Science at UCT

# I want to help humanity says Top Matric Learner Husnaa Haffejee

By Phuti Mosomane



Meet the 'Top Dogs' of the Class of 2022: Kelly Prowse (L) and Husnaa Haffejee (R).

Husnaa Haffejee, a top matric 2022 learner from the Al-Falaah College in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, has big dreams of helping humanity.

Haffejee revealed to Inside Education that she intends to study medicine at the university of KwaZulu-Natal, and says her dream is to cure diseases that affect the most poor and vulnerable as being "part of helping humanity".

"So many people lost their lives, I would like to become a medical doctor so that way I can be, in some way, able to be of service to humanity. I want to make my job to find cure to deadly diseases," she said.

Husnaa said her career choice was inspired by the emergence of COVID-19, and how not ready the world was.

"I want to be part of the solution to the crisis facing humanity," she added.

Kwazulu-Natal, being the most improved province, achieved 83%, becoming the third top performing.

Haffejee's school was one of eight KZN schools that did well in all five quantiles, and in technical Mathematics and Physical Sciences.

The 17-years old received 8 distinctions with 100% in Mathematics, physical

science and accounting. Her University options, applied and accepted, included WITS University, Stellenbosch University and the University of Cape Town.

In an interview with Inside Education, Haffejee said her secret to success was based on the belief that everything that seems to be difficult in life will always have a solution.

“It’s important not to have a defeatist mindset towards obstacles in life and to keep on trying and persevering no matter how difficult it is. This year I struggled a lot, I had anxiety deriving from the high expectations that people had from me. I decided to work on myself, I kept trying and put in more effort,” the softly spoken learner said.

She said it was important for the matric class of 2023 to focus on reading and understanding lessons from early days in the academic calendar. “They must push and keep learning and be aware

that all the hard work will produce results at the end,” she said.

Her great matric results earned her a special meeting with the MEC for education Mbali Fraser. She said her experience was great.

She joined the Al-Falaah College in Grade 5 after her parents decided to return to South Africa from the United Kingdom (England).

Since then she managed to score full scholarship throughout her high school career, maintaining position number one since Grade 5.

Above from her hard work, she gives much credit to her religion, Islam, she said it has assisted her greatly in becoming who she is.

“I have represented the school in numerous competitions and in Grade 6, I received a gold medal for placing



Minister Angie Motshekga congratulating one of the top learners



Top matric learner Husnaa Haffejee is now a Medicine student at the University of Kwa-zulu Natal

among the top 1% in the world in the international ICAS exam," she said

In her matric year, she participated in the National Afrikaans Olympiad and Alhamdulillah placed first in KZN and third in the country. This achievement was notable as she was the only non-Afrikaans name amongst the top achievers: I hold this particular achievement dear to me as when I initially returned from England, I did not know a single word of Afrikaans and was tackling an unknown subject.

"I would like to especially thank my parents, who have always stood by me and encouraged me to pursue my ambitions."

"Whenever I doubted myself, they were always there to reassure me of my abilities and I will be eternally indebted to them. I would also like to thank my grandparents, who have always kept

me in their duas, my wonderful sister who I could not do without and family and friends who have supported me. As they say, no man is an island, and I could not have come this far on my own," she said.

Haffejee shared the top matric achiever award with Kelly Prowse from Rustenburg Girls High School in Rondebosch, in the Western Cape, a province which has achieved 81.4% pass rate, an improvement of 0.2% from 2021.

Prowse told Inside Education that she was completely shocked by the announcement.

"I am completely shocked by the results. I am absolutely amazed, and all my hard work has paid off," she said, adding that she did not expect to get the award.



Kelly Prowse has enrolled at the University of Cape Town to study Actuarial Sciences.

“It didn’t really sink in and I haven’t really digested the feeling. I am happy and very proud of myself that all the hours of hard work, consistent efforts, perseverance and not giving up have finally paid off,” Prowse said.

Prowse, who is also a top learner in Mathematics nationally, said teachers did everything to ensure that all learners do catch-up lessons; it was a busy year to the end.

For the class of 2023, Prowse said: “I say go for it and enjoy yourself. It’s your final year. Work hard.”

Prowse is going to study Actuarial Sciences at the University of Cape Town in the Western Cape.

Asked as to why she chose the degree focus, she says: “I love my math and science”.

Haffejee and Prowse, like many Grade 12 graduates, were confronted with many challenges such as the COVID-19, which meant that a rotational timetable was introduced and load-shedding was implemented.

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga said their performance goes to show hard work, and resilience.

She said the Class of 2022 has clearly demonstrated that with all requisite support and intervention programmes, the country can produce the best.

“The unquestionable resilience our school community has shown, against such a devastating pandemic; and other challenges, such as the persistent load shedding, and sporadic service delivery protests, cannot go by unnoticed,” Motshekga said.

# Changing lives and brightening futures through education.



At Anglo American, we've long believed that the greatest investment we can make in our country's future is to give our children access to high-quality education. That's why we've invested heavily in education and skills development in South Africa over several decades as part of our Sustainable Mining Plan. In the past five years alone, we have invested more than R100 million per annum, largely on infrastructure, and teacher and learner support.

In 2018, in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education, we launched the Anglo American South Africa Education Programme to provide wide-ranging and quality education for an estimated 222,000 learners, and support for 2,300 teachers at 109 schools and 110 early childhood development sites (ECD) in communities around our mining operations.

In 2022, we launched Phase 2 of the Education Programme, with the ambition of reimagining education to improve learner outcomes even further. It will see us make an additional investment of R510 million to improve educational outcomes in 85 new schools and ~80 ECD centres in communities in the Limpopo, Northern Cape, and North West provinces. It was a bold commitment to fundamentally change the way children in our host communities learn and develop. The results exceeded expectations. Around 70% of our supported schools improved their physical sciences results. They delivered a 30% increase in the number of matriculants. Eight schools were in the top 30% nationally.

We also rolled out our ICT intervention to the 109 phase one schools, which included installing technology infrastructure and devices; providing ICT courses and training to improve digital literacy and skills; creating a student engagement platform to support primary and secondary learners; and providing ongoing support to ensure sustainability of the programme. For Anglo American's global head of education and community skills, Zaheera Soomar, the biggest impact of the programme has been the way that education has become a key building block in creating thriving communities. Thousands of learners weren't just given hope: they were given the skills and opportunities they need to get jobs and participate in the digital economy.

In 2023, we'll be putting a greater emphasis than ever on giving the youth in our communities the skills they need to leave school job-ready; focusing more than ever on learner support; and creating after-school programmes like career guidance, food gardens, and sporting activities.

**Our children deserve no less.**



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# Free State overcomes great odds to make it to the top again

By Charles Molele



FREE State Education MEC Tate Makgoe says the Class of 2022 has gone the extra mile to ensure the province's dominance of the matric results yet again.

The Free State remains the leading province again this year with a pass rate of 88.5%, an increase of 2.8% from 2021,

Makgoe said this was despite the challenges of Eskom's load shedding, disruption of schooling due to community protests, some schools being torched and other socio-economic challenges.

"Despite the fact that Intuthuko-Katleho Secondary School in Vrede was burnt down, the school obtained an

impressive 87.6% pass rate and 35.8% bachelor passes," said Makgoe.

"We're encouraged by the notable resilience of our basic education system. The performance of the Class of 2022 in the face of the challenges mentioned above are a consequence of systemic interventions for strengthening and raising performance at all levels of the system."

He said, among others, the provincial strategy for improving literacy and numeracy has assisted in improving education quality in the Free State, adding that it has also strengthened the teachers' capacity to teach, in particular, the literacy and numeracy curriculum.

These sort of interventions, said

Makgoe, included but were not limited to five days December camp in Grade 12, weekend classes, vacation support program, community radio broadcast revision program and provision of learning support materials in addition to textbooks.

Other key interventions focused on improving performance in Mathematics, Physical Science, and Accounting and supporting underperforming schools and their principals.

"The aim of this all-inclusive support program was to safeguard every child's right to education, as set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child," he said.

"All the efforts we have made have positioned and empowered the class of 2022 to raise the bar and obtain the number one spot in the 2022 NSC results."

Makgoe said the education department was pleased to announce that all districts in the Free State have achieved more than 85% in 2022.

"Our Star district in 2022, is Motheo District at 90.08 %, – an improvement of 2.18% from 2021. Motheo District – the district 'on the rise to greatness' has also obtained an unprecedented whopping 49.5% bachelor passes."

"Two Free State Districts reached the Top 2 position nationally, it is Motheo District in the first position and Fezile Dabi District in the second position. Xhariep District and Thabo Mofutsanyana District are at positions six and seven respectively."

He said like 2021, 2022 was also extremely difficult for everyone and as such the approval of the result of this class, has some significance.

"We congratulate our officials in the province for not dropping the ball in the administration of the 2022 NSC examinations. This indicates that our systems are resilient enough to surmount adversities that confront us and do what is best for our learners," said Makgoe.





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# Interventions in township schools bear fruit

By Edwin Naidu



Gauteng MEC for Education, Matome Chiloane

Not wishing to rest on its laurels, having achieved a pass rate of 84.47%, Gauteng MEC for Education, Matome Chiloane, wants the schools which failed to perform in 2022 to pull up their socks.

Gauteng showed a 1.7% improvement from the 2021 rate of 82.8% but Chiloane wants to raise the bar.

“As a province, we must also attend to schools that consistently perform below par. Underperforming schools must also be resolved as 53 public and independent schools achieved less than 65% compared to 69 public and independent schools in 2021,” he said.

The MEC added that the department would meet with the school management teams of all public schools that performed below 65%

and kickstart a process to address poor performance. This will include a review of management and teaching personnel. A rapid school evaluation will be undertaken, and an academic improvement plan will be designed and implemented.

However, an upbeat Chiloane said that 15 districts in Gauteng had performed above 80%, with four among the top 10 performing districts in the country, having achieved pass rates of more than 85% each.

“What is also worth noting is the positive trend of more schools in Gauteng achieving a 100% pass rate. In 2021, 131 schools aced the exams with a 100% pass rate. The figure has risen to 149 schools for the 2022 matric exams. Similarly, more schools achieved a pass rate above 95% in 2022 than in

the previous year. In 2022, a total of 290 schools achieved above 95%, compared to 265 in 2021.

Chiloane was pleased with the performance of learners at township public schools and congratulated the principals of the 107 township public schools, including nine pupils with special education needs that achieved a pass rate of above 90% for the sterling work done.

It was a major improvement on the previous year when only 61 township public schools achieved above 90% last year. Notably, Imbali Combined School in Orange Farm achieved a 100% pass rate and a 97% bachelor's pass rate.

Gauteng produced the highest number of bachelor's passes nationally. Of the 113 006 candidates who passed their matric, 58 119 (43.4%) achieved a bachelor's pass.

Nationally, Gauteng contributed 20.8% of all bachelor's passes achieved countrywide. It also obtained 43 300 distinctions, the second highest in the country.

"Township schools achieved slightly higher results than 2021, with township schools achieving a pass rate of 80.7% compared to 79.6% in 2021, and non-township schools achieved 89% compared to 89.4% in 2021, a slight decline."

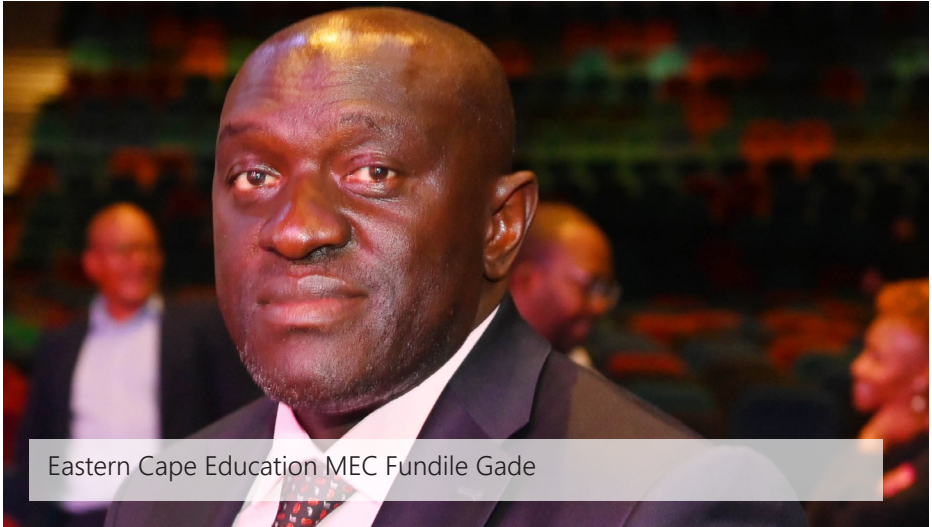
Chiloane said he was pleased that the interventions in township schools had begun to bear fruit with Grade 12 pupils in township schools benefiting from teaching and learning through investments made in technology in the classroom. This was in addition to the supplementary learning programmes over weekends and school holidays.



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# Eastern Cape MEC aims for 80% Matric Pass rate in 2023

By Phuti Mosomane



Eastern Cape Education MEC Fundile Gade

The Eastern Cape province Class of 2022, the third most improved in the country, achieved 77.3% pass percentage, a 4.3% improvement to 73% pass of the Class of 2021.

Eastern Cape Education MEC Fundile Gade tells Inside Education that he is happy with the 2022 matric performance but now aims for 80% in 2023.

“We are quite very happy as a province, we have achieved the target that we wanted. We are consistent with the 5% for the past three consecutive years.”

“We want to target 80% on the last leg [2023] of the last sitting of this administration. Looking at the systems that we have put together in the last

few years, we are going to achieve that. I made a promise that I will leave this job with the province on an 80% pass rate,” Gade said.

He said the province does not have any district that received below 70% of the pass rate, thanks to the collective effort of principals and teachers working with the communities.

“I am happy that Alfred Nzo has improved as a rural district despite a huge infrastructure backlog, and being confronted with huge poverty- it has surpassed its own expectations. We will have to find a way to engage so ensure that we sustain the growth,” Gade added.

The Alfred Nzo district is number 1 in

the province out of 12 districts and 29 in the country out of 75 districts.

"Very much excited, in the light of the limited resources the district has, in 2021 we were standing at 73.3% and we improved by 9% with a reasonable increase of bachelor passes. We are at 40% with subjects like business studies that are leading nationally and accounting leading provincially."

"Five provincial achievers from five schools, that they are not coming from one school, shows that there is commitment across the District," District Director Monwabisi Mbangeni said in an interview with Inside Education.

Mbangeni says the district, with 82.7% pass rate, is the second most improved in the province and is leading out of 12 districts.

Areas of concerns? MEC Gade reveals to Inside Education that his plans are to improve the quality of the results, to stabilise the districts and improve the performance of rural schools.

"The only thing needed now is to take the province to the league of the 80%. I must say that I am happy with the performances by the principals. I must emphasize that we have a solid layer of principals"

"I am certain that we can run the provincial educational system without the district model purely because of the maturity, commitment and sacrifices that school principals and teachers have shown over the years with limited resources and scarcity of infrastructure," he added.

Gade says Eastern Cape is a math and science province, it has more learners doing math and science more than any other province.

The National Senior Certificate (NSC) Grade 12 class of 2022 is the 9th cohort to sit for the National Senior Certificate Examination based on CAPS, with a significant increase in the number of full-time enrolments from 95 787 in 2021 to 101 588 in 2022.

This cohort entered Grade 1 in 2011 and had a fairly stable and conducive



teaching and learning environment up to 2019, as the 2020 academic year was ravaged by COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the high enrolments in the class of 2022, the total number of children that passed the National Senior Certificate stands at 73 386 making it 6616 more learners passing in 2022 compared to 2021.

Top achiever in the Eastern Cape is from East London based Hudson Park High School, Laai'qah Bedford, who obtained seven distinctions in Afrikaans first additional language, English home language, Mathematics, Accounting, Physical Sciences, Business Studies and Life Orientation.

Gqeberha born 18 years old, will be studying actuarial sciences at Stellenbosch University.

The number of Bachelor passes increased by 2.5 % from 34.3% in 2021 to 36.8% in 2022. In real terms it means:

- 34974 learners have a Bachelor pass
- 24465 learners obtained a Diploma pass
- 13923 learner a Higher Certificate pass Subject Performance

Subject performance, across the spectrum, has improved. Of the 53 subjects that were written, 23 subjects have shown an upward trajectory, 21 subjects dropped by low margins and 9 remained unchanged. High enrolment subjects, with no less than 10 000 learners for the specific subject, exhibited commendable improvements. Trends analysis between 2021 and 2022 shows the following commendable subject performance improvements:



- Accounting improved from 76,4% to 76.9%
- Economics improved from 73,4% to 78.6% 3
- Geography improved from 73,8% to 77.8%
- Life Sciences improved from 70,8% to 72.2%
- Physical Science improved from 62,3% to 70.5%
- Mathematics Literacy improved from 72.3% to 83.1%

There was a decline, although marginal, in five high enrolment subjects. Trends in decline are as follows:

- IsiXhosa Home Language dropped by 0.2% from 99.7% to 99.5%
- English First Additional dropped by 0.2% from 98.8% to 98.6%
- Math dropped by 0.5% from 46.6% to 46.1%
- History by 2.1% from 89.3% to 87.2%
- Business Studies declined by 5.1% from 80.6% to 75.5%

However, the decline is equally an opportunity to design new turnaround plans that will eliminate marginal declines altogether.



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# Beating the odds

By Edwin Naidu



Minister of Education for the Western Cape, David Maynier

The Western Cape matric Class of 2022 has beaten the odds and increased its provincial matric pass rate to 81.4%, with 49 102 candidates passing their exams – the largest number of successful candidates in its history.

Minister of Education for the Western Cape, David Maynier, said every single successful candidate received a matric pass that makes them eligible to apply to universities or colleges.

“This means that we have extended opportunity to nearly 50 000 young people who are now ready to take the next step into higher education and skills development, which is great news,” he said.

In addition, five candidates were recognised by national minister Angie Motshekga as the best of the best – including the top candidate in South Africa.

Top candidates in Quintile 5:

1st place: Kelly Grace Prowse (Rustenberg Girls’ High School)

2nd place: Simone Anna Mart Louw (Bloemhof High School)

3rd place: Kenneth Janson (Hoër Jongenskool Paarl)

Top candidates in Quintile 3:

2nd place: Athenkosi Khonzani (Centre of Science and Technology – COSAT)

“What makes this achievement all the more extraordinary is that the matric Class of 2022 was at the greatest disadvantage due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and other disruptions during the exam period,” he said.

He said this class was one of the last to go back to school in 2020, and were



Kelly Grace Prowse (Rustenberg Girls' High School)

not at school every day during 2021. Their curriculum was trimmed for three years, but the matric exams tested the full content. And they did not have any exam practice in Grade 10 and 11.

“In matric, they have struggled with the ongoing challenge of load-shedding. While we were able to conduct all of our exams successfully despite the power cuts, they left many learners in the dark in the evenings when they needed to study.”

Furthermore, candidates in Cape Town had the added disruption of a major taxi strike during their exams. Due to the extraordinary efforts of our schools, parents, and learners, our candidates were all able to write their exams during the strike.

Maynier celebrated the release of the results at the Hector Peterson Secondary School in Wallacedene, a school which has produced excellent

results despite the surrounding community facing so many challenges. They achieved a 92.6% pass rate in the 2022 matric exams – a 14.1 percentage point increase from last year.

Moreover, 55% of their candidates achieved bachelor’s passes – up from 40.2% last year. And they did this all while increasing the number of candidates writing from 204 to 229.

Maynier thanked principal Mike Mavovana and the matric teachers of Hector Peterson Secondary School, for the support they have given their learners. “They have shown incredible grit and determination, and should be very proud of their achievement.”

“We encourage all learners who did not achieve their desired marks to apply for a re-mark or re-check if they do not feel their results reflect their performance, or to write the supplementary exams in June,” he said.



Simone Anna Mart Louw (Bloemhof High School)



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# Kwazulu Natal recognised as the most improved province

By Edwin Naidu



KwaZulu-Natal Education MEC Mbali Frazer

KwaZulu-Natal Education MEC Mbali Frazer was all smiles when the province was acknowledged for showing best improvement in its 2022 final grade 12 exam results.

Although the Free State was the top-performing matric class, with an 88.5% pass rate, the former teacher and trade union leader, was thrilled that KwaZulu-Natal made good on her demand for better following her appointment after a reshuffle in August 2022.

KwaZulu-Natal had the biggest improvement at 6.2% from last year, which puts them at 83%. The Western Cape comes next with 81.4%, again with an increase of 0.2% from last year."

Frazer told media that she was not expecting anything less than 80% and actually wanted a 100% pass rate. In addition to learners dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the national load-shedding crisis, KwaZulu-Natal experienced unrest in July 2021 and floods in April 2022.

Speaking after the launch of the results, Frazer said a "quality education is the minimum necessary to prepare individuals to participate in the economy and society.

In 2022, the department accelerated its drive to make schools ICT innovative hubs with the rollout of coding and



robotics.

“We started the year by developing a Provincial Academic Improvement Plan which was also tailored by all our 12 districts to suit their academic needs. Among the aims of our Plan was to improve the provincial pass percentage from 76.8% to a maximum of 100% and a minimum of 80%. We must emphasise the point that our target was and is always 100% performance. This is important to mention because as a Department we want all our learners to succeed,” said Frazer.

After recording a 76.8% pass rate in 2021, KwaZulu-Natal has re-joined the league of sister provinces that are in the 80% bracket. Out of the 164 308 of learners who wrote the 2022 NSC Exams, 136 388 passed. The number of our schools that obtained 100% pass rate also increased significantly from

145 in 2021 to 212 in 2022. The number of schools that performed below 75% from 713 in 2021 went down to 435 in 2022.

Frazer added that the quality of our results is indicative of the sterling work of district teams and educators as well as the dedication of our learners to their academic work. Bachelor passes have increased from 61 856 in 2021 to 69 849 in 2022. There’s also been an increase in the number of diploma passes from 42 128 in 2021 to 43 908 in 2022. The number of higher certificates decreased from 23 945 in 2021 to 22 560 in 2022.

The 2023 academic year might have just started but we are already steadfastly working hard with the aim to raise educational standards, boost learner achievement, and strengthen the educational system.

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# Mpumalanga makes its mark

By Edwin Naidu



Provincial MEC for education in Mpumalanga, Bonakele Majuba

Provincial MEC for education in Mpumalanga, Bonakele Majuba, welcomed the improvement in results in the province.

Mpumalanga achieved a 76.8% matric pass rate, an improvement of 3.2% compared to 2021.

“Some 22 576 of these learners qualified to further their bachelors study programmes, while 18 068 of them qualified to pursue diploma-related courses. The province has four districts, and all four improved their results,” he said.

Bohlabela District obtained a 79.3% pass rate, an improvement of 5.1% compared to the 74.2% obtained in 2021. It was the overall best performing district in the province in 2022.

Out of the 17 municipalities in the province, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality obtained top place with 2 150 learners passing, which is a 86.7% pass rate. This was the second time in a row they achieved this feat.

On 20 January, the Mpumalanga Department of Education announced the 2022 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination results at the University of Mpumalanga.

The top 10 learners in the province attended, as well as the top learners in mathematics, physical sciences, technical mathematics, technical sciences and accounting.

The overall best learner was Penelope Bathobile Nkambule (17) of Highveld Secondary in Elukwatini. Penelope achieved distinctions in all her subjects.



She was second in quintile 1 schools in the country and plans to study accounting at the University of Pretoria.

In second place was Naledi Ramashu of Hoërskool Bergvlam, third was Jomarié du Toit of Hoërskool Nelspruit, in fourth place was Jacques Klopper of Hoërskool Bergvlam and fifth was Paul Harley of Hoërskool Nelspruit.

Of the Class of 2022, 71 369 full-time learners registered to write, the biggest number ever to be registered in the history of the writing of NSC exams in this province.

Out of this number, 67 367 wrote all the subjects for which they had registered, and 51 751 of these learners passed.

White Hazy Circuit registered a pass rate of 63.4% last year and improved

its results by 20.3%, making it the most improved circuit when it registered a 83.7% pass rate this time around.

Hoërskool Middelburg in Steve Tshwete Circuit 1 in Nkangala was the overall best performing school in the province.

The most improved school was Phola Secondary School in White Hazy Circuit 2 in the Ehlanzeni District.

Some 471 no-fee schools in the province sat for the 2022 examinations. Out of these, 12 schools obtained 100%, 212 obtained results above 80% and 313 schools performed above 70%. Mpumalanga also made its mark on the national platform.

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# Resilience and hard work behind Limpopo's Improved Matric results

By Charles Molele



Limpopo MEC of Education, Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya

Limpopo MEC of Education, Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya says it is only resilience and hard work that was able to lift the province from below 70 percent and propelled it to dizzy heights.

Limpopo achieved a matric pass rate of 72.1%, making it the second best-improved province, with a 5.3% increase from the previous year's results.

The mostly rural province has achieved a matric pass rate of between 60% and 80% in the past five years.

She said she was proud of the learners'

achievements amid challenges such as Covid-19 pandemic and load shedding. She said all the schools in the province had extra classes for Grade 12 on weekends.

"They were either taught by expert teachers or a continuation of what they were taught during the week," said.

"I want to commend parents and guardians for walking with us in this journey, your psychological and financial support cannot go unnoticed." She said the implementation of a focused intervention strategy to help poor performing districts and schools was imperative in the improvement of matric results in Limpopo.

"Our Grade 12 learners from Sekhukhune East were taken to camps at Tivumbeni College in Mopani for two weeks on a catch-up programme and that has brought a huge difference," she said.

"Learners who were enrolled in Gateway subjects from various schools in the Capricorn North District had on-site camps. Learners clubbed under one roof had sufficient time with expert teachers."

She said her department's intervention strategy was also to target the poor performing districts that contributed



to the low percentage obtained by the previous cohort.

“In our assessment and reflection of the root cause of our poor performance, we collectively agreed that we need to channel resources and expertise to Sekhukhune East and South Districts as well as Mopani East,” she said.

“These are the districts that performed below 60 percent pass rate in 2021.”

Lerule-Ramakhanya said the intervention strategy also demanded that enrichment camps were run in all the 10 Education Districts.

“I visited some of the camps in July last year and I was impressed with the commitment shown by our educators and the school governing bodies,” she said.

“The camps are usually staged during school recess where educators are supposed to be spending time at home with their families, but our educators put the interest of the learners ahead of anything, your devotion to your work is unparalleled.”

According to Lerule-Ramakhanya, a total of 111 618 learners had registered for the academic year, making them the highest number of Grade 12 learners administered by the province.

However, only 110 295 learners managed to write all their subjects.

The matriculants managed to produce 32 878 bachelor passes, an increase of 4803 when compared to the 28 075 bachelor passes attained in 2021.

They also produced 19 733 distinctions, 1982 more than 2021’s 17 751 distinctions.

“The Class of 2022 had the highest number of matric learners in the history of the exams that we have administered as a Province,” said Lerule-Ramakhanya. “I am delighted Premier [Stan Mathabatha] and our stakeholders that your intervention and support was not in vain. The long hours, the sweat and the hard work has paid dividends.”

But Jacques Smalle, DA’s Limpopo Spokesperson on Education, has questioned why the results in Limpopo were being celebrated.

Smalle said that although Lerule-Ramakhanya and her department are patting themselves on the back for Limpopo's increased pass rate, the province still achieved the lowest matric pass rate of all the provinces.

"The DA is extremely concerned that a total of 153 360 learners were enrolled in grade 10 in 2020; yet only 110 295 learners wrote NSC exams in 2022 with only 79 493 learners passing the exams," said Jacques Smalle, DA's Limpopo Spokesperson on Education.

"This means that only 51.8% of learners who were grade 10 in 2020 passed the 2022 NSC exams in Limpopo, and 43065 learners dropped out between grade 10 and this year's exams."

Smalle said the DA was concerned that Limpopo also has two schools that have achieved less than a 40 % pass rate since 2018.

"Underperforming schools usually have a track record of poor performance, and it is the duty of the provincial and national departments to address the systemic problems at these schools," he said.

"It is also concerning that only 49.9% of the 47 971 learners who took mathematics passed."

He added: "Allowing schools to underperform and produce such poor results, while having so many learners drop out will only exacerbate the youth unemployment and poverty crisis Limpopo is already facing."

"Learners will be deprived of opportunities such as higher education and employment that may improve their lives and that of their families."

Meanwhile, the Mogalakwena District was announced as the the top performing and most improved district in the province with a 78.3% pass in terms of the overall percentage pass.

Northern Academy Secondary School, on the other hand, was named the best performing independent school in the province with 200 bachelors out of 439 learners.

The top three learners in the province - Tladi Moeletsi Lehumo, Makwela Tshupo and Maduwa Godiso - came from the Capricorn South, Mopani East and Vhembe East districts.



# MEC Monakali wants Northern Cape to be amongst the top three provinces

By Charles Molele



Northern Cape Education MEC for Education Zolile Monakali

Despite challenges, Northern Cape Education MEC for Education Zolile Monakali says he was looking towards the future on how to improve matric results in his province.

Monakali said this year's matric results have shown that the province has improved and was on the right track after finishing second last with 74.2%, an improvement of 2,8% from 2021.

Monakali said the aim now was to be part of the top three provinces in 2023.

"Despite challenges and some budget constraints in our province we must concentrate on 2023 and our targets, and how we can improve our matric results in the Northern Cape," said Monakali.

"We must make sure that all necessary

interventions are made despite the shortage of resources and infrastructure. We are going to do better this year. We are going to perform at the level of all other provinces."

Monakali said budgetary constraints and a shortage of resources was largely responsible for the Northern Cape being placed second last on the leaderboard of the NSC exams for 2022.

"The Class of 2022 has been at the epicenter of the Covid-19 pandemic that has wreaked havoc on the education system since they were in Grade 10," said Monakali.

"The marks are stabilising and showing an improvement although it is still 6% below the national average. Obviously, we would like to see the Northern Cape back in the top three provinces. However, a lot of work needs to be





done.”

Monakali said, however, that he was satisfied with the achievements by the Class of 2022.

“Last year the national average was 76.4%, so the target is continually shifting,” he said.

“We have done better in the past and we hope that the Class of 2023 will exceed our expectations.”

Northern Cape premier Zamani Saul said the National Senior Certificate matric pass rate in the province has been on an upward trajectory for the past two years.

“Our education system in the Province is stabilising and we are witnessing a gradual improvement in our Matric results over the past three years; in 2020 we stood at 66% in 2021 at 71.4% and in 2022 at 74.2%,” Saul said.

“It is quite noteworthy that all these improvements have not matched or surpassed the national average, which for the year under review stands at

80.1%. We are about 6% below the national average and this demonstrates the kind of work and planning that we must put up this year.”

Saul added: “The Class of 2022 has done remarkably well and excelled academically against all odds. We should be mindful that the Class of 2022 was in Grade 10, when the COVID pandemic wreaked havoc in our country, more especially in the education sector. With a considerable learning backlog and very little exposure to formal assessments, with their dedication and commitment, they have shown us what can be achieved.”

The Northern Cape registered 13 831 full time candidates for the 2022 NSC exams.

This is the biggest cohort of candidates which have registered for the NSC exams compared to the previous years. A total of 13 574 candidates wrote all subjects in the 2022 NSC examination, 10 072 candidates successfully completed their final examination, bringing the overall pass rate of the Northern Cape to 74, 2%.

# The darkest nights produced the brightest North West stars

By Phuti Mosomane



NORTH West Education MEC Viola Motsumi says the class of 2022 and the teachers displayed resolute character, tenacity and resilience.

“You are a special cohort, my boys and girls. Thank you for not allowing any external force to derail you. It is true that the darkest nights produce the brightest stars,” she said.

She said the learners prevailed over the stark realities stemming from the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown restrictions, Eskom loadshedding, inclement weather, floods, community service delivery protests that “could have easily taken you off the rails of achieving your academic goals. Indeed, you stood the test, and for that we salute you.”

The Class of 2022, the largest enrollment since 2017, is the ninth cohort of learners to write the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) aligned to National Seniors Certificate (NSC) Examinations. They enrolled for Grade 1 in 2011 when the NSC was written for the third time in Grade 12.

She said that the Class of 2022 was the hardest hit by the impact of Covid-19 pandemic and its related lockdown restrictions. Due to this, they were subjected to trimming of content in the annual teaching plans.

In 2017, North West obtained 79.44% and maintained (position 4), 2018, improved to 81.11% (position 4), 2019, improved again and obtained 86.80% (position 4), then in 2020 dropped



to 76.19% (position 3). In 2021, the province rose again and obtained 78.2% (position 4).

The North West Class of 2022 obtained a pass rate of 79.8%, (which is an increase of 1.6 % from 78.2% of 2021).

The pass rate is still below the province's annual performance plan target for the 2022 matric pass rate was 85%.

Out of 444 schools that presented Grade 12 in 2022, 338 (that is 76,1 % of the schools) performed at 70% and above.

In total, the number of candidates who achieved Bachelor passes is 14 733 (33.62%) compared to 13 872 of the Class of 2021. The number of passes with a Diploma is 12 370 (28, 2 %) higher than 10 794 attained in 2021. Passes with Higher Certificates is 7 853 (17, 9%) which is an improvement from last year of 7 470. And four (4) candidates in Special Needs Schools passed with an endorsed NSC. In total, 34 960 candidates out of 43 823 passed their matric in 2022, and 7 903 distinctions were achieved in various subjects

including in Life Orientation.

The best performing candidate for the North West Class of 2022 is Wadee Safiyyah from Zinniaville Secondary in Bojanala District as she ascends the stage. Zinniaville obtained six distinctions. She scored 1 706 marks in all subjects excluding Life Orientation.

Motsumi said learners in farm schools and special needs schools in the North West must be given the same opportunities to succeed in life as their peers in ordinary schools.

The following Farm Schools and Special Needs Schools performed well.

Against all odds, Onkgopotse Tiro Comprehensive Farm School in Ngaka Modiri Molema District obtained 81, 97% pass rate. 50 out of 61 candidates passed. Meerhof Special School in Bojanala District achieved 100% pass rate. All 22 candidates passed.

Only two (2) Districts obtained a pass rate of 80% and above. Congratulations to all District Directors and their teams. Dr. Kaunda received 80,78%,

an improvement from 79,3% in 2021. Bojanala received 81.4% a decline from 81.6% in 2021.

The best performing local municipalities are Madibeng at 83,78%, followed by Rustenburg at 83.17%, Kagisano Molopo at 82.66 % and JB marks at 81,38%, Maquassi Hills (80,90%), Ramotshere Moiloa ( 80,83%), Moretele (80,45%), and Matlosana at 80,42%.

While only seven of the local municipality performed above 70%, namely, Mahikeng (79,87%) Naledi (79,34), and Ratlou (with 78.94%), Moses Kotane (77,23), Greater Taung ( 76,89), Tswaing (76,89),Ditsobotla ( 73,75%). Three local municipalities performed below seventy percent threshold, namely Mamusa (69,55), Lekwa -Teemane (69%) and Kgetleng River (66,79). We hope for a better performance from them next time around.

The best performing school in the province is Sunrise View Secondary School in Bojanala District which obtained 100%.

It is a quintile four school, it presented

180 candidates of which 135 obtained Bachelors, 38 Diplomas, 07 Higher Certificates.

For the 2022 academic year, 26 schools achieved 100% pass rate compared to 28 of 2021. 234 schools attained pass rate of over 80%, compared to 216 in 2021.

Top Performing Schools based on highest number of subject distinctions (excluding Life Orientation), number one is Rustenburg High School with 197 distinctions, number two is Ferdinand Postma with 167 distinctions, and on the third position is Potchefstroom.

In the province, there are 106 schools which attained less than 70% pass rate compared to 114 of 2021. The most improved school from the previous year is Kutlwano Combined School with 100% from 43% of 2021.

In 2023, MEC Motsumi said in improving basic education, several aspects need to be addressed, and this include improving school management, eradicating infrastructure backlogs, develop human capacity, and regularly test teachers in subjects they teach, amongst other.



"I have since my appointment as the MEC, used social media platform to interact with communities," Motsumi said encouraging the youth to interact with her online.

To continue the winning trend, MEC said the department will strengthen School Based Assessment by intensifying monitoring and moderation processes that look into the quality of teaching, learning and assessment: "We will hold quarterly feedback sessions with Subject Advisors who in turn would empower subjects and grade teachers."

"Accountability will be enhanced throughout the system, where everyone at each level of the assessment activities must be held accountable for the processes they are in charge of, failure to conduct moderation by SMT and Curriculum officials will be treated as a misconduct for which consequence management would ensure without fear, favour or prejudice. The future of our children is not for sale!"

Meanwhile the Speaker of the North West Provincial Legislature Basetsana Dantjie congratulated the North West Province's matric class of 2022 on acquiring 79,8% pass rate which is an

improvement of 1,6% from 2021 school year.

"The legislature is proud and honoured by our learners who achieved a high percentage during the 2022 matric examinations and we would also like to thank the teachers and all responsible stakeholders who contributed on ensuring that the learners perform very well.

"The support system given by the Department of Education has yielded positive results as seen with the improvement on the results and it shows that the department's efforts are working. We would also like to thank the parents of the learners as the journey has not been easy as most of them come from disadvantaged communities but they showed resilience. Indeed " ngwana sejo wa tlhakanelwa," said Dantjie.

Dantjie urged all the stakeholders including financial institutions to support learners with bursaries so that learners can enhance their studies at different institutions of higher learning throughout the country.



# DG's Technical Report shows the Class of 2022 rose above the challenges

By Edwin Naidu



Mathanzima Mveli, Director-General Basic Education

Despite challenges, the performance of the Class of 2022 in the National Senior Certificate examination has shown resilience and resolve to overcome the odds, producing evidence of a maturing schooling system capable of dealing with unexpected challenges, according to Mr Mathanzima Mveli, the Director General of the Department of Basic Education.

Some of the challenges for matriculants alluded to by the country's top ranking education official, included curriculum and assessment changes, however, they were possibly among the worst affected class in relation to the effects of COVID-19. The Class of 2022 were in grade 10 when the pandemic resulted

in lockdown and a transition to online learning.

It did not stop with the effects of COVID-19, Mveli points out that matriculants were hit just as ordinary South Africans and business by uncertainty and disruptive load-shedding brought on by national electricity utility Eskom's ongoing power challenges. Furthermore, he adds that pupils in communities throughout the country were affected by service delivery protests disruptions. However, amid indications that the Class of 2022 was the strongest cohort in the last three years, the DG says the results display a strong signal of recovery and renewal.



In fact, he says the system has shown significant improvements across all areas, reserving special commendation and appreciation to learners, parents, educators and all stakeholders.

Mweli's assessment of the Results of the Class of 2022 was contained in the DG's Technical Report on 19 January 2022, which was clear that the results reflect: "Beyond Doubt! A system on the rise".

However, the challenge for the Department over the next seven years is clear.

"By 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes. The performance of South African learners in international standardised tests should be comparable to the performance of learners from countries at a similar level of development and with similar levels of access."

That is the future. But for now, says

Mweli, the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination results is one of the most important barometers to evaluate the success of the sector.

Yet, providing context of the entire education sector by unpacking the size and shape of the sector, he says there's currently 13 419 971 learners in the system, with 450 993 educators at 24 871 schools.

South Africa's Official languages are English, isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Afrikaans, siSwati, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, and South African Sign Language.

Progress in the sector has also been confirmed in the international and regional assessment programmes. The establishment of the Systemic Evaluation Programme will provide the DBE with performance trends in Grades 3, 6 and 9. The establishment of the General Education Certificate (GEC) will provide a standardised assessment at the end of Grade 9. Critically, the

Department is measuring performance against Social Justice Principles, namely, Access, Redress, Equity, Quality, Efficiency & Inclusivity.

Laying the foundation through the Early Childhood Development is vital, especially at province, district and school level with the department ensuring the establishment of standards and targets used to monitor progress.

More so at classroom level, the aim is to provide a standard against which teachers can measure learners' reading subskills. This involves identifying early on learners who are at risk of not learning to read for meaning by age 10 supporting remediation. Adopting a proactive stance by helping teachers adapt their instructional focus to meet the learners' needs at their reading level also forms part of the strategy to ensure successful outcomes.

In turn, Mweliso says there were distinct features for learner support, notably: Increase in:

- the number of residential camps (16.7%) than previous year (13.2%),
- the number of learners supported,
- the number of weekend support programmes;
- Number of subjects offered in the support programme than previous years,
- More languages offered in the support programme than previous years
- Remote Digital Learning (RDL) offered curriculum and psychosocial support programmes, and,
- Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) offered through Tswelopele and Woza Matric programmes.

Consequently, there has been a general improvement in the critical areas of access, redress, equity, efficiency, quality and inclusivity.

Concerning access, his report indicates that 752 003 fulltime candidates enrolled to write the NSC examination. More learners wrote (725 146) the examination





than in 2021 (703 599). Compared to 2021, 580 555 FT candidates attained an NSC, an increase of 41 819 from the previous year. There were 22 783 more candidates attaining admission to Bachelor Studies compared to 2021 , while 448 392 (71.27%) of social grant learners attained an NSC.

On the Redress, there were 387 401 candidates (77.2%) from “no-fee” schools obtained an NSC compared to 170 080 from “Fee paying” schools. In addition, 169 903 (33.9%) of the 501 758 “no fee” learners attained admission to Bachelors Studies, while 273 065 (55.7%) of the 490 231 “no-fee” learners have access to a Higher Education study. The admission to Bachelor studies for “No fee” schools increased to 169 703 (64.4%), compared to 93 899 (35.6%) from “Fee-paying” schools. This was an increase by 3 235 (6.7%) up from last years (6.68%) of the progressed learners obtained admission to Bachelor Studies..

Concerning Equity, 422 478 girls,

compared to 329 522 boys entered the NSC examination (92 956 more girls than boys); while 326 894 girls, compared 253 661 boys, passed the 2022 NSC examinations. Regarding university acceptance, 161 235 girls attained admission to Bachelor Studies compared to 117 579 boys. In terms of performance, 65.0 % of the distinctions were attained by girl candidates, including distinctions in critical subjects such as Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, Mathematics, and Physical Science.

On the subject of Quality, the technical study noted Improvement in Agricultural Sciences from 75.4 % to 75.8%, Economics from 67.9% to 71.5%, Geography from 74.3% to 81.3%, Accounting from 74.7% to 75.4% and Physical Sciences from 69.9% to 74.6%. In addition, there was an increase in subject performance at the 40% level: Agricultural Sciences from 48.7% to 52.0%, Economics from 40.3% to 46.9%%; Geography from 43.2% to 52.2%; and Physical Sciences





from 44.4% to 49.7%. The number of bachelors increased from 256 031 in 2021 to 278 814 in 2022.

The number of distinctions went up from 211 745 in 2021 to 218 770 in 2022. In total, 472 171 candidates (65.1%), who achieved admission to Bachelor and Diploma studies, are eligible to register for studies at higher education institutions. Only 4 of the 75 districts performing below 70%. Forty-two (42) of the 75 districts perform at 80% and above compared to 26 in 2021.

Mweli's technical report notes that on Efficiency, 20 975 (43.4%) of the progressed learners that wrote all seven subjects met the requirements of the NSC. Progressed learners got distinctions in 238 subjects, while 79.0% of the learners with special education needs, who wrote the 2022 NSC examinations met the pass requirements of the NSC. Learners of 18 years old passed at 88.2%, 17 at 90.6%, 16 at 92.4% and 15 at 83.9% met the

requirements of NSC.

Furthermore, 775 630 out of 1 177 089 learners who were in Grade 1 in 2011 enrolled for the Grade 12 in 2022 and 580 555 passed. Only 3.9% learners enrolled did not write the Exams. But 47 (71%) were retained on raw marks, three adjusted downwards and 16 upward in terms of Umalusi Standardization decision. In terms of standardization outcomes of Umalusi of the 66 subjects, 47 (71.2%) were retained as raw marks, 16 (24.2%) adjusted upwards and 3 (4.5%) downwards.

There is general improvement in the areas of access, redress, equity, efficiency, quality and inclusivity, Mweli concludes.

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# Telkom Foundation Trains Classroom Assistants To Help Teachers Use Tech

By Phuti Mosomane



Telkom Foundation head Sarah Mthintso

The Telkom Foundation has intensified its efforts of integrating the use of ICT in the education system, by training 120 unemployed young people who will provide technological support to schools.

The programme, which is being conducted in partnership with the Gauteng Department of Education, is expected to produce its first cohort of assistants in March 2023, who will be placed in schools across the province. Their role will be to aid teachers to maneuver various technologies to help them effectively integrate them into the teaching process.

Speaking to Inside Education, Telkom Foundation head Sarah Mthintso said the use of technology was not intended to replace the skill educators brought to the classroom, but rather

to supplement their teaching process. In a country where many schools have limited access to resources, Mthintso said technology made it easier to bring the practical aspects of lessons into the classroom, to enhance the experience for learners.

“We are dealing with very capable teachers in the system. Our role is not to make them unlearn what they know, but really to work with them to supplement their pre-existing knowledge so that the knowledge can be enriched,” she said.

“If a teacher, for example, is using technology but struggles with [knowing] where to press if they want to access a particular functionality, there will be those young people that are deployed in the schools to support the teachers,” she added.

Teacher training forms an integral part of the Telkom Foundation's efforts towards improving South Africa's matric pass rate, especially in the subjects of mathematics and science. At present the Foundation also holds after-school sessions with teachers, where they are trained on ways to best use ICT to enhance the experience of learning.

In 2017 the Foundation launched its Connected Schools Programme, through which it provided ICT infrastructure to selected schools in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape. In addition to this, the Foundation also provided supplementary academic support to learners from Grade eight to Grade 12 in the form of Saturday classes and holiday camps.

Since the launch of the programme, the Foundation has gone on to support 25 top-achieving learners who are now at various universities across the country. These are learners who attended the

Foundation's Saturday school classes and were involved in it's Digital Skills Programme, where they are exposed to fields such as coding and artificial intelligence. These learners achieved between four and seven distinctions in their final National Senior Certificate exams, in subjects such as maths and science.

The 25 students were currently enrolled for further study in fields such as Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Fine Arts using digital technologies. Mthintso held the belief that, without the involvement of the Telkom Foundation in exposing learners to technologies, they likely would not have been influenced to consider career opportunities in STEM fields.

"We check when we start with them... what they would like to be when they finish matric. Very often when we get to these spaces children say they want to be teachers, nurses and policemen. But once they get into the space and they are exposed to a variety of careers, then



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they start thinking about [fields such as] computer sciences,” she said.

Due to the success witnessed from this first cohort of learners, Mthintso said she and her team would pursue the possibility of adding another cohort of learners to support through to the higher education system.

With South Africa facing persisting electricity challenges, schools and other learning institutions have not been spared. This has threatened to impede the optimal functioning of the Foundation’s learner support programmes. This is especially true for learners in less privileged areas where resources to counter the effects of load shedding are inaccessible.

“The energy crisis affects every facet of our society and I can’t say we have not been affected. We have been affected because the majority of the areas we are seeking to impact are areas that are lacking in the main,” Mthintso said.

“So you will find that we want to run a class in the afternoon and there is load shedding. And because the stages vary, you plan around stage four and suddenly they introduce stage six and you can’t necessarily be fully prepared,” she added.

To tackle this challenge, all lessons are recorded and uploaded on the Foundation’s learner management system, making it possible for learners affected by power cuts to refer back to them at a later stage without incurring

any data costs.

The Telkom Foundation currently focuses its learner and school support initiatives on the secondary phase of education where it attempts to increase learner uptake of maths and science as subjects. However, several learning gaps are identified as developing at primary school level where declining levels of maths and science competency began to present themselves in learners.

According to Mthintso, once learners reached Grade nine, the Foundation conducted assessments to determine their levels of competency in mathematics. This included testing each learner’s abilities in mathematical concepts learned in grade 3, grade 6 and grade 9. With varying levels of complexity at each phase, this diagnostic was important to identify where learning gaps were appearing and thus find possible remedies for them.

Asked whether the Telkom Foundation would consider focusing its efforts on learners in lower grades to target them before they lost interest in maths, Mthintso said what was more important was ensuring continued collaboration with the Education Department and other organisations that had already tasked themselves with providing support in the foundational phase of learning.

When the Telkom Foundation began recruiting learners into its Digital Skills programme, one area it was deliberate about was the recruitment of girl

learners. Once the programme took off, the Foundation began to identify some worrisome patterns that it had to mitigate. One of these was an apparent limited interest from girl learners as compared to their male counterparts in areas such as coding. During the Covid-19 lockdown another worrying pattern presented itself in the gender disparities in online learning. In some instances, a girl learner would be absent from their online learning due to the obligation of household chores, while a boy learner from the same household was free to attend classes without the same domestic pressure.

“Our girl children would be expected, during lessons, to perform household chores. That for us was interesting to observe. We paid a lot of attention to this and had to engage the parents in order for them to understand the importance of allowing and enabling girl children to attend classes in a similar way that they would with boys,” Mthintso said.

Mthintso said it was important for the Foundation to look at children holistically, which included looking at the social and environmental [factors] that could affect their learning. A product of township education herself, the Telkom Foundation head said she made it a point to make sure the learners understood and valued the opportunities presented to them by the organization.

“I’m a product of a township education myself. I matriculated in Tembisa and I did not have the privilege of going to

very affluent schools. So when I sit and look at the children, I literally see myself through their journeys,” Mthintso said.

“We have children who develop websites for their schools. We have children who are to this day sitting at their computers coding. Those are things that bring me a lot of joy. Those are things that wake me up in the morning”.

Ultimately, Mthintso said the Foundations’ commitment to education stemmed from the belief that it was only through education that many of the issues faced by young people could be addressed. As such, the Foundation’s efforts were informed by a working model that focused on each learner holistically in order to better them academically and socially as well as improve their future prospects.

“We believe that integrating technology in education begins to open up greater opportunities whilst at the same time addressing issues of broader access to quality education,” Mthintso said.

The Foundation said it would continue to work with various partners, including the Department of Basic Education, to address challenges faced by South Africa’s Education system.

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# Dreaming of serving the greater good

By Phuti Mosomane



Ntsako Cheride Maluleka, an 18 years old female from Soshanguve in Gauteng province is enrolled to study BSc in Chemistry at WITS University in Johannesburg.

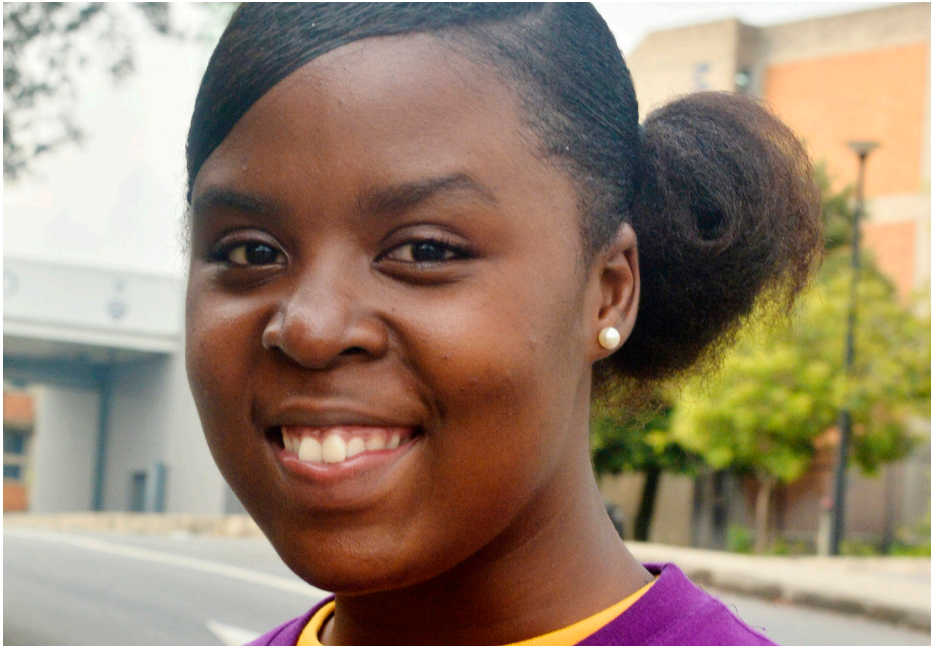
A second and last born the family of four, she lived with both parents, her unemployed mother Annah Mamoraka Maluleka and father Michael Maluleka, who works at South African Defence force as an army.

She passed matric in 2022 with seven distinctions at Reitumetse Secondary School in Soshanguve Block L. She used a public transport (taxi) to get to school. At times, she said it was difficult to get to school on time especially for morning classes because the taxi would take time going around to pick up other people. But despite this, thanks

to Telkom Foundations she defied all odds.

"The Telkom program helped me to close the content gap caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We had an early start and went on a study camp on the 6th of January at Wild Waters with the purpose of covering the lost lessons which were not done in Grade 11. We were given multiple resources. We also attended Saturday classes which helped a lot with understanding the Grade 12 syllabus in more illustrative way.

"Through the Telkom Foundation, we undertook a world of work sessions which helped with personal growth. On the 26th or 28th of October last, we attended a camp where we were helped to catch up on what we might have missed during the year and to make sure we were prepared very well



for our final exams.”

“The biggest assistance also came from the teachers who also provided resources, allow me to try things on my own and to be available all the time when I had clarity seeking questions”.

Although she received a 100% pass in Mathematics, and 98% in physical science, she feels that she could still have done much more.

“Mathematics result also serve as a confirmation that I have the ability to achieve greater good,” she said, adding that, without the generosity of the Telkom Foundation, she would not have achieved quality results.

She says she did not expect to get seven distinctions: “I was expecting five and by the looks of my language

percentages, I can say my results stress was justified.”

“I would like to thank Telkom Foundation on the behalf of all learners who were chosen for the program for the support and everything they have done for us. Continue doing the good deed. It will open more opportunities for other learner and it will also ensure academic success.”

To the matric class of 2023, Maluleka said learners “must study hard and smart, use you time wisely, listen to your teacher, take advantage of the opportunities handed to you, and just enjoy matric.”



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# Telkom assisted in bridging the digital divide: Oratile Moitjiwa

By Phuti Mosomane



Oratile Moitjiwa (18) from Amandasig secondary school is another matric learner supported by the Telkom Foundation

An 18-years old matric 2022 learner Oratile Moitjiwa revealed to Inside Education that she would not have achieved seven distinctions if it was not due to the digital information sharing platform sponsored by Telkom.

She says Telkom assisted in bridging the gap between information haves and have not.

Facing rampant loadshedding that impact on telecommunications networks, trimmed curriculum, lack of access to modern digital tools, Moitjiwa said Telkom provided access to the Grade 12 curriculums at fingertips.

Her mother Tshepiso Moitjiwa is a nurse at Dr George Mukhari Academic

Hospital in Garankuwa. Her father Thabo Moitjiwa has been unemployed for over four years, although he gets temporary contract work from time to time, her mother is the breadwinner. Her 22 years old sister is doing 4th year in Radiography at TUT in Pretoria.

“I grew up in a family that values education. Because of my mother, we develop a special interest in everything health. We are family that believes in the provision of healthcare.”

She says there are two reasons why the family is into “everything health”. The first reason she says it’s because health is about helping people and less about money and greed. Secondly, she said, a focus on health guarantees job



security: “it’s been proven that those who graduate in health related studies do not struggle to secure employment after graduating”.

She says, along the way she figured that one can also create employment in the process through establishing own pharmacy. For this, she has now enrolled for Bachelor in Pharmacy at faculty of health science at the University Of Witwatersrand (WITS).

She attended Amandasig secondary school in Pretoria. She travelled to school with a hired vehicle at R1100.00 per month in order to also accommodate extra classes.

“It was a tough year. I got assistance from teachers, and we struggled under loadshedding, cost of data added extra stress. But the Telkom WhatsApp platform bridged that gap. We were provided with readily packaged study materials,” she said.

The school does not have backup electricity, at times, learners needed to use projectors and there will be no electricity: “We did not have equipment like science labs to do experiments- so we had to rely on YouTube.”

Every month, each learner had to put aside R300 worth of data.

In her matric results, she received seven distinctions in Mathematics (87%), Physical science (89%), Life science (87%), Geography (88), English Home Language (83%), Afrikaans first additional language (84%) and Life Orientation (85%).

She said she had hoped for such results: “ I had a good feeling that I would get it. I hardly went out, always on my books. I was not shocked.”

“I am encouraged that hard work really pays off. Proudly- If I keep up with this spirit I can reach any length,” she added.



But thanks to Telkom, she said she would receive tailor made notes including extra information that teachers might have missed in the classrooms.

“The platform was very detailed and informative. Information was shared through a dedicated WhatsApp group sent with notes on upcoming tests including what to expect and tips on what to study”.

“In the dedicated group chat, tutors would post PDF files of specific chapters with notes. It was really impactful, made things easy and was more informative. The platform provided extra help on some concepts which we not find in textbooks. We would receive aggregated information,” she said

She said the matric knowledge hub created by Telkom provided packaged information that went beyond the classroom syllabus.

“Telkom gave me an edge. I greatly appreciated the assistance and hope that this year the platform will be rolled

out, at least this time around, with data provided,” she added

To the matric class of 2023, “work hard because it pays off; dedicate 95% of your time on books because the workload is heavy. Reduce the time spent with friends.

Unfortunately, Oratile Moitjiwa does not have a bursary or sponsorship. For now, she depends on her mother who took a student loan just to take care of basics whilst waiting for the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) to respond to her application for funding.

Although her university classes kick off on 21 February, she is hopeful that the Gauteng City Region, which she also applied to, will approve her application for bursary.

She appealed to potential sponsors to assist her in taking care of tuition fees, accommodation for the rest of the years and ICT tools or devices to make further education a reality.

# Consistency and having the right support, is the key to success, says top learner

By Phuti Mosomane

A 17-year-old Letlotlo Secondary school learner Matimba Manganyi received seven distinctions with a 100% pass in Physical Science, was supported by Telkom Foundation.

He achieved 99% in Mathematics and Life Orientation, 97% in Life Sciences, 95% in Geography and 81 in English language.

He is now registered to study BSc in Actuarial Science at WITS University.

Manganyi hails from Mabopane in Tshwane, he live with his mother and father with three sisters.

Although he had to walk a long distance on foot to and from school, he said Telkom Foundation assisted in making available study materials readily online.

He said he relied on past exam papers and exam guidelines to prepare for exams and teachers were available almost every day to help in answering questions and provided clarification on content.

I was very surprised because I did not expect it, it came to me as a surprise. I expected to get lower marks. I am very happy for my matric results and proud of myself.

"Telkom gave us Saturday lessons

with great teachers that taught us and helped us with relevant up to date content and provided clarity on difficult topics in the most simplistic way. The Telkom Foundation also provided copies of the preliminary examination that we wrote and helped us navigate through difficult questions so that we learn for understanding and succeed".

"I am very thankful and grateful to all the help that Telkom Foundation gave to me and I hope that Telkom continues the program to help other learners."

To the matric class of 2022, Manganyi said; "Learners have to work hard consistently and have a study timetable and follow it. They should also attend the extra afternoon lessons given to them by teachers."

He has applied for funding to further her studies at Gauteng City Region Academy.

"I received a call from a Telkom representative informing me that the telecommunication giant will be sponsoring me in my studies," he revealed.



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# Sci-Bono's intervention in Gauteng's under-performing schools yields results

By Edwin Naidu



Vincent Zulu, the Senior Manager for Learner Support at the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Newtown, Johannesburg.

A ground-breaking Secondary School Improvement Programme (SSIP) to help matric learners improve their performance is starting to reap dividends in Gauteng, according to Vincent Zulu, the Senior Manager for Learner Support at the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Newtown, Johannesburg.

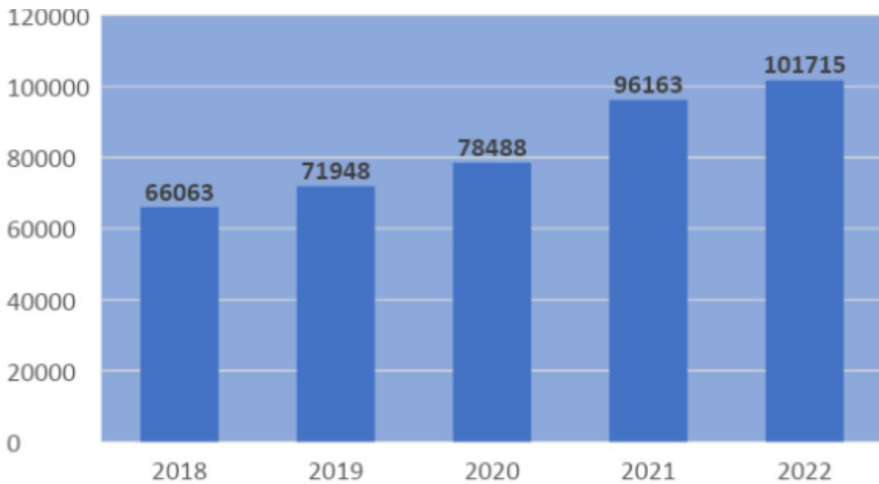
"What began as a project reaching 275 under-performing schools in 2010 is now benefitting over 440 schools throughout Gauteng impacting about 101 715 learners," said Zulu, adding that the emphasis on providing expert tuition from the best teachers was starting to pay off.

He said that since 2012, the Gauteng Province had ranked in the top two provinces annually when matric

results are announced, with a rise in performance, particularly among learners in townships whose parents could not afford to send their children for extra lessons.

Sci-Bono manages various supplementary tuition programmes on behalf of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), including SSIP through a Saturday Programme, at which a meal is provided for attendees, holiday classes during residential and walk-in camps and broadcasting. In the past five (5) years, the SSIP programme has seen a tremendous increase in the number of grade 12 learners participating. The numbers have grown substantially from 67 063 learners in 2018 to 101 715 in 2022 at 309 sites throughout Gauteng.

**Steady growth: In the past five (5) years, the SSIP programme has seen a tremendous increase in the number of Grade 12 learners participating.**



Under former Gauteng MEC for Education Barbara Creecy, now the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, the Gauteng Department of Education reviewed the 2010 matric results and launched the SSIP to change the narrative. The department looked at why learners were failing in grade 12 and held additional classes on Saturday for grade 12 learners struggling in gateway subjects.

Another important element of SSIP was a support programme for grade 10 and 11 learners, who also participated in a programme during the June holidays. The programme focused on Mathematics and Physical Science. Principals were encouraged to ensure their learners took part in these lessons, with the former MEC demanding 100%

attendance.

The SSIP requires that principals rigorously manage their schools' participation in the programme. Each principal is responsible for ensuring that every learner and each selected teacher participates and that appropriate action is taken where attendance is less than 100 percent.

And the results, according to Zulu, were evident. Although an assessment study was still underway to quantify the progress made through SSIP, improved performance was already noticeable. Since 2012 Gauteng Province has obtained a pass rate of no less than 80 percent, while the number of bachelor's passes has been at 40 percent for the past three (3) years.



In January 2022, former MEC for Education Panyaza Lesufi said SSIP targeted over 65 734 grade 12 learners in 436 priority schools from January that year. The SSIP offers extra classes on weekday mornings and afternoons, on Saturdays and through study camps in some years. Over the past years, classes were also extended to Sundays to make up for lost time due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

“More than 78,7% of SSIP learners passed [in 2021] compared to 78,5% of learners in 2019,” said Lesufi, adding that 79 SSIP schools achieved above 90% pass rate. Four SSIP schools gained 100%. “The SSIP programme once again proved its value,” Lesufi said. He noted that the sustained improvement in results over the last four years showed that the SSIP system improved teaching and learning in the prioritised schools. According to Zulu, the SSIP programme is based on a centralised and standardised approach to managing and delivering additional tuition. It seeks to establish existing best practices

in and out of the province and to ensure that these are replicated consistently across all the schools that are part of the programme. The SSIP programme uses a transversal management approach that relies on all the stakeholders for input and depends on all stakeholders to achieve success.

This programme runs parallel to the regular school programme. According to the agreed-upon GDE Work Schedule, what is taught during the week is consolidated during what is considered ‘the sixth school day’. The programme focuses on tackling examination questions and on how to achieve maximum results in key areas of the curriculum. There is also a strong focus on homework to support the curriculum being dealt with weekly in the classroom.

Emasondosondo, the name given to the outreach programme, comes from an isiZulu word, ‘amasondo’ meaning ‘wheels’. This is the name of a learner support programme that forms part of



Acting Chief Operations Officer at Sci-Bono Anele Davids

SSIP, consisting of a team of specially trained teachers in Mathematics and Physical Sciences. The team reaches out to priority secondary schools throughout the province.

Teachers who teach these subjects also benefit from the team's intervention as some of the topics dealt with by the team are those found problematic by the teachers at the various beneficiary schools. The teachers are expected to learn how to handle the sessions from the team's presentations and, after that, be able to deliver them confidently. Twelve (12) expert teachers from Sci-Bono co-teach with educators from selected schools.

Lately, SSIP is also implemented through a Multimedia Broadcasting Platform (MBP), a studio that has been built to stream lessons live in all

the 440 SSIP schools in the province. The act of broadcasting has assisted in standardising the presentation of content by having one expert tutor presenting to all the schools.

Acting Chief Operations Officer at Sci-Bono Anele Davids said through the innovative SSIP, tremendous progress had been made in supporting teachers and learners in the supplementary teaching of the 12 gateway subjects.

"We do thorough planning for the SSIP programme because of the scale of delivery required; the team works tirelessly to keep the ball in the air, but it does not go without challenges we progressively learn from. The SSIP initiative strives to ensure access to tuition for the poorest of the poor, Davids said.



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# Sky is the limit for girl learners attending Sci-Bono sessions with scientists

By Edwin Naidu



Senior Manager for the Science Centre Akash Dusrath

Throughout the year, the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Newtown, Johannesburg, has ongoing programmes to ensure women and girls are exposed to and have equal access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

On 11 February, Sci-Bono celebrated the United Nations International Day of Women and Girls in Science, with an inspiring presentation to 293 girls by respected geneticist Professor Himla Soodyall.

Her work on DNA described South Africa as the most likely geographic region of origin of the human species. Prof Soodyall, the Director of the Human Genomic Lab at the University

of the Witwatersrand, received the Order of Mapungubwe in 2005.

Phelelia Sekele, senior manager of the Career Centre at Sci-Bono, says talks like Soodyall's over the years have positively impacted children. However, this event is not a once-off, with the centre running various programmes throughout the year, focusing on inspiring and encouraging girl learners to participate in STEM-related careers and creating awareness for them.

"We run special programmes for girls because we've come to accept and realise that the uptake of careers in STEM of girls, in particular, is deficient. So this is part of the initiative to create that awareness to encourage and

advocate for girls in STEM so that all girls that come to you at least have an opportunity to have met someone who looks like them”.

The Science Career Centre is a flagship community-based, full-service career education, information, guidance and counselling facility. Its mandate is to deliver a comprehensive range of professional career development programmes to help learners make informed career and subject choice decisions.

Through its diverse annual programme of activities and events, the Centre promotes and creates awareness, primarily but not exclusively, in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to all clients to align to and complement the vision and mission of Sci-Bono. The special programmes are designed to advocate for and stimulate interest in STEM careers and contribute to the STEM talent pipeline.

Sekele says it is about bringing “a real-life person” accomplished in their particular areas, hoping they will take from there and be also inspired enough to want to pursue careers in STEM.

She says they invite accomplished young female scientists, engineers, academics, and mathematicians to come and talk to them about their world. “The challenges at work, the structural and systemic barriers that affect the entry of young women in science, whether in academia, whether it be in the world of work and some of the nuanced challenges that face women, just as women, and so they share all those experiences within that space where young girls can ask intimate questions, difficult questions that they would otherwise not ask in another platform.”

Akash Dusrath, senior science centre manager, says they aim to profile careers within STEM, using women





who have excelled in their fields as role models. "Those events are focused on creating a platform for learners and the public to engage with science professionals and scientists on whatever topic is on their minds. For example, when COVID-19 came out, we had talks on the pandemic to educate the public and allow them to make more informed decisions and understand its science."

"The next day after Prof Soodyall spoke on genetics and society, we had an event with AECI where 182 learners obtained first-hand information from chemists working in the sector, talking about business, for example, how to run a company, how, what they do within the field of chemistry.

"And so it was quite a nice experience for the learners, and they also had some fascinating questions that they put forward to the corporate

organisation that supported the event. So those two events were primarily for our celebration of the international day of women and girls in science," he adds.

The aims and objectives of all the special programmes are to create awareness, promote and advocate for science and technology careers, and influence attitudes and values towards science and technology to contribute to the uptake and pipeline of STEM careers into higher education institutions. The programmes are intended to foster the spirit and ethos of inclusive learning by creating awareness of the barriers confronting learners with special educational needs.

Dusrath adds that he runs a rocketry course focusing on careers in the aerospace industry. The learners learn about the history, chemistry, and mathematics of basic rocketry and then

build a rocket within their teams, and they get to launch it in the Vaal area." We found that at least 60% of the learners that participated in the rocketry course, which is a five-day long course during the vacation, are females, showing interest in and wanting to enter into these spaces.

Dusrath notes that examples like these show that the world of engineering is no longer seen as a male profession, but it enables females to find it attractive and feel like they can perform in it.

In addition, the centre hosts theatre performances to make science come alive, one based on the life of Marie Curie, the only woman scientist who received two Nobel Prizes, these types of programmes to try and inspire and attract female audiences.

"The objective for us is to get more and more girl learners participating in these types of STEM programs, but as Phelelia had said at the beginning, we would like to see more of them entering into the fields especially going on to study STEM-related careers and entering into the fields and making valuable contributions to the sector of STEM," adds Dusrath.

"Ultimately, we would like to see many students through Sci-Bono entering careers in STEM and going on to work in big industries. That will be our ultimate goal," concludes Sekele.

For the learners attending Sci-Bono events, the skies are the limit.



# Gallery



