

**REMARKS BY THE KZN EDUCATION HOD, MR GN NGCOBO, ON
THE OCCASION OF THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR RURAL
EDUCATION CAMPAIGN TAKING PLACE IN KWAZULU-NATAL'S
ANTON LEMBEDE MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
ACADEMY**

26 MAY 2023

Honorable MEC in absentia
DDGs present, Adv. Masuku and Mr Mazibuko
Dr. P.N. Langa, Director for Rural Education from DBE
Prof. M.S. Mabusela
Prof. B.T. Gamede
Senior Managers
Organized labour
SGB associations
Our invited guests
All officials of the department from all sections and levels

Ladies and gentlemen

It is indeed an honour and a privilege for me to be accorded this opportunity to address this very important gathering where we all get an opportunity to reflect and equally take stock on what we should all do to ensure that education outcomes continue to be better in our rural schools.

It is even more gratifying that out of many programmes and initiatives that we have dedicated to improving rural education in our province, we have now found another useful vehicle in the National Framework for Rural Education Campaign.

One of the most important aspects of this event is that it comes hot on the heels of a historic achievement scored by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) which saw the province surprising everyone with 83%, making it the third in the national rankings.

It therefore comes as no surprise that I also remain as upbeat as everyone else in this room about the prospects of us even reaching higher levels than last year in terms of performance. What will also make this a reality is the fact that we have decided to do things the right way by also ensuring that we focus on our schools in rural areas, hence the staging of the

National Framework for Rural Education campaign which is now in full swing.

Programme Director, let me hasten to share with the meeting that I have listened with keen interest to all the speakers who have had an opportunity to speak or present before me and from what I have gathered is that this framework will go a long way in ensuring a lasting legacy when it comes to making rural schools perform like their urban counterparts.

Before I pay homage to everyone who played a pivotal role in ensuring that this event becomes a success, please allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to also share with you that from this event there are very important points that should be key take-aways from this meeting that we must never lose sight of, as we implement the framework.

Key among those take-aways are the following:

- That in whatever we do, we must implement the framework in a manner that is tailor-made for our province. In doing so, we ought to ensure that we improve access, equity and quality of education in all rural schools. That will not only improve the results in our rural schools but it will also instil some level of discipline and uniformity in how we do things.
- Secondly, it is incumbent upon all of us to strive to provide quality and high-end level of education that responds directly to the needs of rural communities. This must be accompanied by an insatiable desire to develop citizens who are capable of adapting and realising their aspirations in different contexts.
- Thirdly, we must ensure that this framework is always embedded in the desire to developing capable citizens. This is a major take-away from this gathering because it talks directly to one of the key purposes of the framework which is to address the isolation, disconnectedness as well as the lack of development often associated with rural communities and schools.

- The fourth take-away from this event is the fact that we must ensure that the development of school programmes that address and make contribution to economic development in general and rural development in particular becomes something that is traceable in order for us to be able to gauge our performance as a system.
- It is also important that we develop of context-specific, relevant and sustainable strategies to deal with the monumental challenges in rural schools so that many generations to come will be able to measure our performance and commitments to the improvement of rural communities.
- The framework must have a reporting mechanism that will be able to inform us as the department and provide a clear directive on how we develop the implementation plans for all the four pillars on improving rural education.
- Whilst it is important for all and sundry in the system to fully understand all the four pillars as outlined and what they entail in terms of producing good results, it is also important to marry them with the Provincial Academic Improvement Plan which has very important fourteen objectives.
- Lastly, but very important, as we close this meeting, we must let it sink in our minds, colleagues, that we have a major responsibility to ensure that we emerge from this gathering with a clear plan in terms of how as the sector we are going to go about advocating and promoting the framework in pursuit of closing the disparities between rural schools and urban schools. So practically, this says to us today was just the beginning and more work still lies ahead.

Having said the above, colleagues, I have no doubt that we are all prepared and ready to implement the framework. I hope we will all be able to rise to the occasion and do all that which we should do to make KZN the best province.

I thank you.