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MEDIA RELEASE

19 JUNE 2024

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NATU WELCOMES THE NEWLY APPOINTED MEC'S FOR EDUCATION

The National Teachers' Union (NATU) has noted, with anticipated optimism, the appointments of Members of the Executive Councils (MEC's) for Education made by the newly inaugurated Premiers in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. NATU appreciates the speed with which the Premiers have acted to appoint their Executive Councils and ensure that the 7th administration starts working without any further delay.

1. KwaZulu-Natal

The Honourable Premier, Mr AT Ntuli, has appointed Mr Siphosihle Emmanuel Hlomuka, MPL, as the new MEC for Education. Although Hon. Hlomuka has no traceable experience of governance in the education sector, he is not new in governance, as he has previously served as MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison during the 6th administration in the province. We hope and trust that he will bring this experience to the Education sector, as he now takes over the reigns of the biggest provincial education department in the country with an excellent National School Certificate (NSC) pass rate at 86,4% as of 2023. Thus, we are optimistic that the MEC will work cooperatively with all stakeholders to advance the agenda of education in the province. We are also encouraged and comforted in the knowledge that the Honourable Premier is, himself, a former teacher and school principal who understands the complexities of the sector, particularly the hardships faced by our teachers.

2. Mpumalanga

In the Mpumalanga Province, Ms Cathy Dlamini (MPL) has been appointed the new MEC for Education. For this, we are grateful to the Honourable Premier, Mr M Ndlovu, MPL, for this appropriate appointment. Ms Dlamini has vast experience in governance, ranging from local government where she served as a Mayor, to the National Assembly where she served as Chairperson of the Select Committee on Social Services. However, we note that the Mpumalanga Province lags behind with respect to the NSC examination results, coming at number 8 out of 9 provinces in the 2023 NSC cohort, achieving at 76,95% pass rate. The appointment of a woman to steer the provincial education department ignites new hope that she will improve the current situation.

3. Limpopo

Yet again, we note with optimism that in the Limpopo Province, a female leader has been appointed MEC for Education – in the name of Ms Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya. We give thanks and express our sincere appreciations to the Honourable Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba, MPL, for this appointment. Ms Lerule-Ramakhanya has been a member of the Limpopo Provincial Legislature since May 2019, where she has served as Speaker and as MEC for Transport and Community Safety. Since Honourable Ramakhanya's first appointment as MEC for Education in 2022, she has inspired the provincial education department and worked hard to raise the Province's NSC results to 79,54% in 2023. We hope that she will continue with her excellent work and support schools to produce good results in the province, not only at the NSC level but also throughout the education system.

4. Conclusion

NATU welcomes all the provincial MEC's for Education and wish them success in their new roles. We eagerly await the appointment of the new Minister of Basic Education as well as MEC's for Education for other provinces. NATU will solicit meetings (meet and greet) with all new MEC's to understand their visions and priorities. We shall also use these occasions to present our thoughts and ideas on the vast number of challenges that continue to beset the education system. NATU will support all initiatives that will seek to improve the state of our education system and the realisation of Vision 2030 on Education and Training.

ISSUED BY NATIONAL TEACHERS' UNION OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

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