

Announcement of the 2019 Matric examination results Speech by Panyaza Lesufi,  
Gauteng Education MEC  
08 January 2020

Premier David Makhura;  
Minister Angie Motshekga  
Fellow MECs;

Executive Mayors, MMCs and Councillors;

The chairperson of the Education Portfolio Committee and fellow MPLs; The HOD, Edward Mosuwe Officials of the Gauteng Department of Education; Leadership of our teacher unions and organised labour; school governing body associations; faith-based organisations; civic associations; and youth; learner and student bodies Principals; Educators; Parents; our top achievers who have joined us here today

Honoured guests, comrades and friends

Educating our Children for the Fourth Industrial Revolution

As we celebrate the Class of 2019 with much pride and excitement, I want to open by paying tribute to a personal and national hero, as it is only fitting and a privilege to recognise that our successes is due to the astonishing achievements of past heroes like Harry Gwala. This year is the Centenary year for Harry Gwala, who would have turned 100 years old on July 30, 2019.

There are a handful or few individuals who leave an indelible mark in the history of humanity, and Harry Gwala was such a towering figure. His name occupies a special place of pride among South Africans for his unbroken service to the Struggle against apartheid and the birth of a new SA we all enjoy today. In 1992, the ANC bestowed him with its highest honour, Isithwalandwe/Seaparankwe, for his unflinching loyalty and dedication to the fight against a system declared "a crime against humanity".

His contributions have shaped our freedom through excellence in education and who throughout their lives have always made education a priority.

Gwala, the Lion of the Midlands, ranks among those outstanding figures whose leadership values and courage remains unmatched. Born in New Hanover, he enrolled at Adams College for a teaching qualification after completing school. As a school teacher he taught among others Moses Mabhida who became general secretary of the SA Communist Party.

His fearless leadership, penchant for telling the truth to a point of risking becoming unpopular, his passion for changing conditions of the poor masses and his theoretical uprightness is a legacy that is a gift to us as a generation of young leaders within the ANC and its alliance.

Harry Gwala was a great "political teacher" who taught generation after generation of struggle. Many of today's leaders drank from the deep well of Harry Gwala's political wisdom. But such was the nature of his teaching, that the products of his education, would themselves develop into political giants in their own right; using the tools he gave them to develop independent thought and analysis.

May his legacy continue to inspire and guide us as young people.

Honourable Premier and guests, despite a difficult environment arising from a rapidly growing system and tough economic conditions, the Gauteng Department of Education registered significant achievements in the delivery of quality basic education through its programmes and interventions in the 2019 academic year. Despite severe budget pressures, we have delivered on our core mandate.

I can proudly say that even the poorest child has access to good schools, and education which is of good quality. We have one of the largest matric examination enrolments of all provinces, and we produce some of the highest overall pass rates and bachelor pass rates in the country. As a province, our contribution to the pool of young people who are positioned to transition to post-schooling employment and access further and higher education is unquestionable.

2019 also marked the beginning of the 6th administration of the Gauteng Provincial Government led by Premier David Makhura. I have been privileged to serve as the Member of the Executive Council responsible for Education in the Province. The ruling party continues to make education its key priority to unlocking the economy and reducing poverty and inequality. The great gains of the democratic era underscore an improving education system determined to assure quality in basic education.

As we celebrate the Class of 2019 with much pride and excitement, it is only fitting and a privilege to recognise that our successes are due to our collective commitment to Grow Gauteng Together. In this regard, I reiterate our commitment to pursue a quality, equitable and inclusive basic education system for all young people of our province.

The Class of 2019 entered the education system in 2008, fourteen years into our democracy and as free citizens in South Africa and with a commitment from government to create better life and opportunities for all. It is with this commitment to public service we have made that we always endeavour to improve the quality of education in our province through the transformation agenda that we have set ourselves.

In Gauteng, the 6th Administration represents a period of consolidation, expansion and acceleration of our delivery, aligned to the TMR. In this administration, our programmes are more focused to ensure every Gauteng learner is adequately equipped with the skills required for the changing economy. We are starting with the youngest, ECD learners, and our commitment is to support our young people throughout their schooling life and ensure a smooth transition to post schooling opportunities.

We set out five strategic goals to guide our work in the 6th administration. The Department's goals will focus on quality education and developing the creativity of Gauteng's young and working people, by building their skills and capacities. Skill development amongst our youth is critical to the eradication of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Quality education and skills development will form the core of all aspects of the Department's plans through the following goals:

- Strategic Goal 1: Early Childhood Development, which will focus on Grade R universalization, and begin the preparations for the introduction of Grade RR.
- Strategic Goal 2: Promote quality education across all classrooms and schools, with a focus on building foundations in the early Grades, 'defending the crown' at Grade 12, promoting a modern skills-based curriculum and the multi-certification of our learners.
- Strategic Goal 3: Create safe schools, that will embody Social Cohesion, patriotism and non-violence.
- Strategic Goal 4: Change the Education landscape to accelerate relevant and quality learning, through twinning and resource optimization, new school infrastructure.
- Strategic Goal 5: To address the needs of Gauteng Youth through development programmes and increasing youth employability.

Premier and honoured guests, whilst our strategies and priorities capture a bold vision of a future Gauteng Education system, this can only be realized through investment of the right resources for the right purpose.

Our approach in Gauteng is multi-faceted and is directed to address the quality of learning through quality improvement strategies to improve the classroom performance of teachers and the active learning of children in classrooms across all schools in the province, and at the same time we are introducing interventions that compensates for poor family literacy level and the impact of poverty in a large percentage of our communities in Gauteng.

There is a recent and rapidly growing appetite for figuring out and accomplishing what increasing referred to as "whole system reform", that is, how to improve all schools in a district, a region, a state, province of country. For a long time, there has been the realisation that better education is the key to societal and national productivity and personal and social well-being. Only recently are we beginning to see that interest turn into specific questions about how you actually go about whole system reform. What pathways, from what starting points, are going to get results in reasonably short time frames? How do we actually 'raise the bar and close the gap' for all learners?

Gauteng is considered a moderate to good performing education "system" in the South African context. Gauteng is a system where the interventions are focused on supporting learners in achieving literacy and numeracy basics. This includes providing for scaffolding for low-skill teachers, fulfilling all basic learner needs and bringing all schools up to a minimum threshold.

To ensure effective teaching and learning, the focus of our strategies in Gauteng are geared towards the learners and the classroom as a unit of change. For effective teaching

and learning to take place, we have to ensure that classrooms are fully functional. We must continue to demand accountability for results, particularly in chronically failing schools. The purpose is not to punish the management, teachers and learners but to provide the right combination of incentives, support and resources that will accelerate the changes needed to improve the quality of education in those schools.

The systemic approach, we adopted, is premised on the considered assumption that urgent relief to the system from the debilitating learner performance cited above will come from tackling macro, systemic aspects first, before attention is paid to the micro aspects. This makes sense particularly in the context where the majority of schools in the broader education system are dysfunctional. The model, we have adopted, proposes that in a situation where the majority of institutions are underperforming, a systemic approach is required to fix the failing systems. It makes sense, too, in terms of resource allocation by tackling key aspects that will have wide and longer-term effects across the system, and in terms of change management where the focus is on ensuring system functionality before focusing on how to secure excellence in the subsystems. While this approach does not suggest a 'revolution', it proposes, instead, planned widespread reform that includes defining and rolling out the necessary support and monitoring systems.

Our five-year plan is designed to move our province towards being a moderate to good performing system. Gauteng must be a performing system as a system focusing on consolidating the system foundations. This includes the production of high-quality performance data, ensuring teacher and school accountability.

To this end, in line with our new plans for the 6th Administration, we are focusing on, amongst others:

#### Strengthening Foundations across all GET Grades

This priority will focus on improving learner test scores in Literacy/Language and Numeracy/ Mathematics in Grade 3, 6 and 9. The Department has prioritised the development of the General Education and Training (GET) strategy (Grade 1-9) to ensure the seamless implementation and synergy of programmes and interventions across the system.

#### Defending the "crown" – continuing the improvement of quality learning in the FET Band

The Department aims to improve the matric pass rate for Gauteng in line with the national mandate of 90% of candidates passing the NSC by 2019 and improving the quality of the pass rate by focusing on increasing the proportion of bachelor passes to 44% of learners writing the NSC examinations.

#### Expand and enhance Schools of Specialisation to Strengthen Our Skills Base

The SOS seeks to nurture the development of top talented learners across a subset of disciplines and to breed South Africa's future generation of leaders. The SOS will ensure access to top academic performers that show aptitude in a chosen field.

#### Skills for a Changing World including Technical High Schools

The Department will introduce several new technology subjects and specialisations in identified Technical Secondary Schools. The new subjects include Technical Mathematics, Technical Sciences, Maritime Sciences, Aviation Studies and Mining Sciences.

#### Multi-certification

The strategy is for the implementation of the certificated skills-based programmes, focussing on learners in the identified grades though not limited to those grades. The learners opting to participate in these prioritised programmes will do so as part of their extracurricular activities. These programmes will contribute to the social and personal wellbeing of these learners and should positively impact in their academic performance.

#### Fourth Industrial Revolution, ICT and E-learning

Societal shifts involving technology are beginning to have a profound impact on teaching, infrastructure, resources, stakeholder relations, and our learners. The opportunities include greater access to rich, multimedia content; and the increasing use of online courses that offer classes not otherwise available.

#### Results of the National Senior Certificate

The National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations is one of the external nationally validated tools by which we measure our progress in the attainment of learning outcomes of our schooling system. The Gauteng Department of Education is one of the largest matric examination sub-system of the national system. Equally, we pride ourselves that Gauteng produces some of the highest overall pass rates and bachelor pass rates in the country. As a province, our contribution to the pool of young people who are positioned to transition to post-schooling and access further and higher education is without question.

To further support our youth in their post-schooling life, we have taken a policy position that in Gauteng, learners must have access to a specialised, modern, relevant, dynamic and responsive curriculum, an alternative to the traditional academic curriculum. This specialised education is in response to the merging demands of the 4th Industrial Revolution and digital economies, one of the key responses to the changing world is the concept of Schools of Specialisation.

Gauteng's sustained performance confirms the fact that the Gauteng Education system is a stable system. It should not be forgotten, that the GDE is the only province in the

country that offers examinations in all official languages. In addition, the Gauteng is so diverse and complex, that it is the only province in the country where learners offer all the 11 official languages of our country. In addition, the system offers at least 7 non-official languages, making our basic education system a global player for development. It further demonstrates that this is a system that is benefitting from careful planning, direct attention and targeted interventions, despite it being under pressure. This performance must be celebrated in the unique and complex nature of the Gauteng education system.

It is against this context that the performance of Gauteng in the National Senior certificate examinations, that one begins to appreciate the improvements across Gauteng education system. While, the National Senior Certificate Examinations is just one measure of the quality of education after twelve years of schooling, it does allow us the opportunity to release learners to enter post- schooling opportunities as young adults in line with the provincial delivery goal outlined earlier.

The class of 2019 was the sixth Grade 12 cohort to write final examinations under the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). Concerted efforts were made at all levels – provincial; district and school – to provide the grade 12 learners and teachers with the necessary support towards the successful implementation of the 2019 NSC examinations. The learner performance of the cohort of 2019 has sustained our performance.

It is in this context, that I am pleased to release the National Senior Certificate Examination Report for the Gauteng Class of 2019.

The Class of 2018 achieved a pass rate 87,23%. This is a 0,65% decline over the 2018 achievement of 87,88%.

Gauteng is still the leading performing province by virtue of the size of the provincial system. This is despite the increased enrolment compared to 2018.

Congratulations to the Class of 2018! Your hard work has been justly rewarded.

While the performance is marginally down on the 2018 performance, I remain convinced that we are on the right track and that we can do much better provincially.

Honourable Premier,  
Colleagues and Friends

While the 2019 cohort has benefited from the maturity of the NSC system over the past 12 years, the CAPS aligned system introduced in 2014 is slowly beginning to strengthen after only five years. The results of the National Senior Certificate of the Class of 2019 demonstrate that we are a maturing, stable and improving provincial education system. This improvement in performance must be celebrated in the context of the large, unique and complex provincial education system that Gauteng has become over the last 25 years.

We are the second largest provincial education system with 97 717 matriculants that wrote the National Senior Certificate examinations compared to 94 879 matriculants in 2018. Second, only to Kwazulu-Natal, Gauteng represents 19,4% of the total enrolment in the National Senior Certificate examinations compared to 18,5% last year.

Gauteng has once again, this year, achieved the significant milestones in respect of national performance and we do have many reasons to celebrate with our learners and educators. It is also important to recognise that the improvements remain sustainable even while we respond to a growing learner population in Gauteng.

Given the comments by Umalusi and the very tough papers in some of the subjects, 87,23% remains a good achievement. The pass rate in the senior certificate exam provides us with information about the performance of our schools and our learners. It is important to note that the 85 243 learners that passed in Gauteng compared to 83 415 learners in 2018. This represents 20,8% of the total number of learner who passed nationally. This is slightly up from 2018.

What is more important, perhaps, than our 87,23% pass rate for 2019, are the detailed indicators showing the increasing quality of the teaching and learning in our schools in the province. It is the details of the 2019 results which show that the upward trajectory of the last seven years continues.

A number of key indicators – quality of passes, progressed learners, spatial distribution, gender, achievement in maths and science, achievement in language, and the number of university endorsements - serve as important points of reference for the quality of the matric pass rate in Gauteng.

#### Quality of passes

In respect of bachelors, we have achieved another first, at 44,46% not only have we exceeded the 2019 Target of 40% and surpassing the 43,65% in 2018; but we also have achieved the highest percentage bachelor (matric exemptions) passes since 1994.

Gauteng contributed the highest number of candidates qualifying for Bachelor studies in 2019 at 43 494 who wrote qualified for admission to Bachelor studies. This is up from 41 410 bachelors passes in 2018. Gauteng achieved the highest bachelor rate of all provinces. Nationally, we contributed 23,4% of all bachelors achieved.

Over 30,28% of learners, or 29 587 learners who wrote, passed with a diploma pass. I am encouraged by the fact that more learners who passed the National Senior Certificate exams in 2019, of 74,73% learners (73 028 of 97 717 learners), passed with a Bachelor or Diploma pass qualifying them to go into higher education. This up from 73,97% in 2018.

There has also been a slight decrease in the percentage of learners who passed at the Higher Certificate level, mainly progressed learners.

I want to congratulate the following schools for achieving the highest bachelor pass rate who have achieved above 95% Bachelor rates.

- Afrikaanse Hoer Meisieskool
- Hoerskool Garsfontein
- Hoerskool Menlopark
- Parktown Girls High School

I also want to acknowledge the following township schools that achieved a 100% pass rate and a Bachelor rate above 60%.

- Diepsloot Secondary School No 2 - 70,45% , in Diepsloot • Rusoord Secondary School – 70%, in the eastern rural areas of Vereeniging in Emfuleni • Moditela Secondary School – 63,64%, in Hammanskraal • Prudens Secondary School - 61,54%, in Soweto

Premier and guests

### School Performance

We have increased the number of schools, including township schools that have achieved 90% and above pass rate. This year 287 schools achieved above 95% compared 250 in 2018. In 2019, 113 schools achieved 100% compared to 108 in 2018. I am proud of the 6 township schools that achieved 100% despite the challenges facing to township schools.

I want to congratulate the principals of the 59 township schools that achieved above 95%. I am happy that the principals of these schools have come to join us here today. This is up from the 41 schools that achieved above 95% last year.

It must, also, be noted that just over 93,7% of Gauteng schools perform above the nationally defined benchmark for school under-performance of 65%. As I said last year, we have to attend to the matter of schools that consistently perform below par. The issue of small schools must also be resolved, as must the urgent matter of the 52 public and independent schools that achieved less than 65%. I am also happy to announce that for the first time there are no public schools performing below 40% and only 2 independent school performing below 40%. In the next few days, the department will meet with the school management teams of all public schools that performed below 65% and to hold them account for their poor performance. I am also happy to highlight that the number of underperforming public schools below 50% has decreased from 101 in 2013 to 9 in 2017 to 3 in 2018 to 1 in 2019.

I want to congratulate Illinge Secondary School in Vosloorus in Ekurhuleni South District who with tremendous effort turned around the performance of the school from 52,87% to 89,47%, a staggering improvement of just over 36%. I also want to recognise the performance of Bokamaso High School, in Hammanskraal, with a pass rate of 92,31% with an increase of over 33%.



## Impact of Pro-Poor Policies

We have also made significant strides in closing the gap between schools serving poor communities, specifically township schools, and those with a strong middle-class component, as shown by the narrowing gap in the performance by township and non-township schools. In 2009, township schools achieved an average pass rate of 60.1%, with non-township schools achieving 84,2%, making for a gap of 24,1 percentage points. In 2019, the gap has been reduced to 2,78% compared to 4,6% compared in 2018 and 12,3% in 2017.

While both school types achieved better results, with township schools achieving a pass rate of 89,82% compared to 83,75% in 2018 and non-township schools 92,61% compared to 91,3% compared in 2018 and 91,43% in 2017.

We glad to see that these 6,07% improvement in the performance of township schools allowed us to sustain our performance and cushion us from a large decline in results. It is important to remember that most township schools are no-fee schools.

It is worth noting that all Grade 12 learners in township schools have had an opportunity to benefit from teaching and learning through investments that we made in technology on the classroom. This was in addition to the supplementary learning programmes over weekends and school holidays. We shall continue to consolidate our input in this area in order to maximize the utilization of these resources for improved learning outcomes. This will contribute to narrowing the inequality gaps that that still persist.

## Progressed learners

There were 6566 progressed learners that wrote the National Senior Certificate. It should also be noted that this is the group of learners who were progressed without having met Grade 11 promotion requirements to go through. As a province, we committed resources and expertise to ensure that progressed learners are given a fair chance of completing school with a minimum loss of time. We have provided progressed learners with comprehensive supplementary programmes in schools and in study camps over weekends and holidays.

Most critics have considered Gauteng's support for progressing learners as a risk to the provincial performance. But it must be said that we are not chasing percentages, we are committed to ensure that all learners progress through the system in the minimum time allowed and so I am happy to announce that 69,28% of the progressed learners that wrote have passed. These are learners who would have had to repeat Grade 11 in 2017; you must agree that this is an amazing feat. What is even more amazing is that more than 13% of these learners who passed achieved a bachelor pass and almost 33% achieved a diploma pass. The learners who have not passed will have further opportunities to completing their certificate.

## SSIP Performance

For many, this success has been achieved under the efforts of our Secondary School Improvement Programme, called SSIP for short. These were designated priority schools because for historic and other reasons, they have in the past not achieved the outcomes learners, parents, and the GDE expect. The SSIP programme provides extra classes by expert teachers on Saturdays and during school holidays, as well as the final matric revision camps in October.

This year, our SSIP programme targeted over 55 989 grade 12 learners in over 443 priority schools from the word go in January 2018. More than 83,64% of SSIP learners passed the exam in 2019. 138 SSIP schools achieved above 90% pass rate. Six SSIP schools achieved 100%

So, it is particularly pleasing to be able to tell you today that the SSIP programme has not only once again proven its value. But that it has done so with improved results that show that more township children than ever are benefitting from the efforts all involved in SSIP have put into the programme. The sustained improvement in results over the last four years show the SSIP system is improving teaching and learning inside the prioritised schools themselves.

## Spatial Distribution

In Gauteng, 15 out of 15 districts performed above 81%. I am also pleased that the top 3 districts in Gauteng featured as the National top 3 districts. This is most impressive. All 15 of our districts are in the Top 20 and six of districts featured in the top 10.

We are also happy that the Tshwane South district achieved an 93,3% pass rate as the top performing district. A year on year improvement of 1,6%.

Six districts improved on their performance since 2018 – I want to recognise two notable achievements • In Gauteng North pass rate rose from 75,43% pass rate in 2017 to a pass rate of 87,15% in 2018 the year on year increase is 11,72% and in 2019 Gauteng North achieved 90,78% with an increase of 3,63%. This is the most improved District with an increase of 15,35% over two consecutive years.

- In Ekurhuleni South the pass rate rose from 86,5%% pass rate in 2018 to 87,42% pass rate in 2018, the year on year increase of just under 1%. It should be noted that this district is also our largest district.

In line with the municipal boundaries, I am happy to announce that learners across the five regions of Gauteng have achieved above 82% pass rate:

- Tshwane achieved 90,06% compared to 88,69% in 2018
- West Rand District Municipality achieved 88,12% compared to 89,04% in 2018
- Ekurhuleni achieved 88,07% compared 87,05% in 2018
- Johannesburg achieved 85,67% compared to 87,21% in 2018
- Sedibeng achieved 84,88% compared to 89,38% in 2018

We have not finalised our analysis of districts, but we are convinced that we will gather information that will assist in formulating appropriate policies and appropriate interventions.

### Subject Performance

The system has sustained good performance in subjects like Accounting, Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Life Science, otherwise known as gateway subjects.

The province achieved a total of 37 422 distinctions, compared to 36 113 in 2018, across all subjects. We have contributed xx% of all national distinctions

### Maths and science

The maths passes, at 67,81%, this year remains commendable. While there decrease from 2018, this performance is still above the national target of 60% pass rate for Mathematics. The successful achievers in mathematics deserve our congratulations because the 2019 exam was a very tough paper.

In Physical Science the pass rate is 84,02%, a slight increase from 2018. Our performance in the life sciences was 79,1%. The continued performance above the national target of 60%, for science subjects, still maintains that this as a positive indication of progress in quality.

There is general agreement that our success rates in mathematics and science are still below the levels necessary to respond satisfactorily to our skills needs. We have dealt with our planned responses in this area in other platforms. We will be doing more to increase the success rates in these critical subjects. It is also pleasing to note that the number of learners that wrote pure Mathematics and Physical Science in 2019 was up on the 2018 number.

### African Languages

The issue of language looms large in South African schooling, given that the majority of children study in a second language. This year there have been significant increases in the numbers passing languages on the higher grade.

English as a First Additional Language is the subject with the largest number of registrations, 70 712 learners. The performance of the candidates in this exam is extremely high, 99,66% up from 95,76% in 2018, and levels of achievement have not declined over the years.

However, I am pleased to see the growing number of passes in indigenous Home Languages. The province has a 100% pass in IsiNdebele and 100% in Tshivenda and the lowest is 99,66% pass in isiZulu.

## Gender

Almost 10 973 more girls wrote the matric exam than boys. 87,67% of boys passed compared to 86,88% of girls. 45,47% of girl learners achieved a bachelor pass compared to 41,18% of boy learners. Boy learners pass rates are higher than those of girl learners when it comes to maths and science performance. We will review intensify our interventions in 2020 to address these disparities.

Actions to address the key trends in our performance as we move to 2020

System performance and learner performance across all grades and all schools is non-negotiable. Since the start of this new term I have consistently said that quality performance must be a key feature of what and how we deliver education. I have also said that there will be consequences where performance is no satisfactory.

Firstly, as I said earlier, the department will meet the public schools that performed below 65% to put into place interventions to improve the performance of these schools. This will include a review of management and teaching personnel. A rapid school evaluation will be undertaken and an academic improvement plan be designed and implemented.

Secondly, I have requested the Head of Department, to deal with the under-performing schools below 90%. The policy direction of merging and twinning of schools is primarily driven to address this problem of poor governance and management that contributes negatively to learner performance and success. It is for this reason that that we will accelerate interventions in underperforming schools to ensure the future success of all learners.

Thirdly, we will undertake in the next few days, detailed school by school analysis to identify the subjects where schools are continuously performing poorly and to remove those teachers that cannot meet the challenges and to support those that are having challenges in some topics in the curriculum.

Fourthly, the Secondary School Interventions Programme (SSIP) will be reviewed to greater impact and districts will begin work in poorly performing schools immediately and will expand its focus to include mathematics at grade 9 and 10 Level.

Finally, we will support all matriculants that have failed. We will provide a Second Chance Programme in 2020 to assist learners who need to complete the National Senior Certificate. We will assist them in the subjects they have failed to ensure that they completed the requirements for passing. The Second Chance Programme in 2020, which will focus on the following three phases:

- Supplementary Exam: Candidates sitting for exams in June 2020 will receive support in the form of printed resources and multimedia broadcasting solutions.
- Progressed Learners: Learners who modularized in the 2018 NSC exams, who will be sitting for exams in June, will receive support in the form of tutoring during April-June, as well as printed resources and multimedia broadcasting solutions in the rest of the districts.

## Concluding remarks

I am grateful firstly to Premier Makhura and Minister Motshekga for joining us today as we congratulate everyone who has played a role in achieving these excellent results for Gauteng, for our learners, and for all within the GDE.

I would like to thank the Head of Department, Edward Mosuwe and the department.

Gauteng would not be celebrating these results today were it not for the massive team effort of all at head office, and in the education department across the province. Thanks to the examination team under the stewardship of Alison Bengtson and Bheki Ngubane. Once again, we have had a clean, successful examination process in Gauteng.

We could not have done it, and we cannot do it without our educators and principals. Thousands of you have again in the past year shown your dedication to your profession and to our children, attending courses, participating in our in-service development offerings, upgrading your management skills, and – most importantly – putting our learners at the centre of your efforts every day.

Thanks to all of you in district offices.

Let me also mention the many parents from across the province without whose contribution we would struggle to achieve the successes we celebrate together with you. Your efforts, your contribution to the outcomes we are able to celebrate today prove that our children and our country are best served by constructive engagement from all sides.

Our teachers and your organisations have in 2019 again helped through your constructive approach to make a very important difference to the lives of many, many young people. Thank you.

Which leads me to my thanks to all of the leaders of our teachers' organisations and workers' unions operating within the education sector.

I would like at the same time to thank members of the provincial legislature for their continued support.

I also want to thank the companies who annually support the matric awards and contribute to the awards presented to learners and schools.

I want therefore to send to all of our learners my heartfelt congratulations. You are the builders of our future; we are very proud of you!

Thank you