



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION

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MEDIA STATEMENT

To: All Media

Att: News Editors

For immediate release

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Death of Sebetsa-O-Tholemoputso High School Principal and Learner

The Gauteng Education MEC, Mr. Panyaza Lesufi, is saddened by the death of a 54-year-old principal, Mr. Fana Khoele, of Sebetsa-O-Tholemoputso High School in Soweto. It is alleged that Mr Khoele collapsed on Monday, morning, **2 March 2020**, and passed on at his home.

On another sad note, a Grade 8 learner from the same school also passed on. Zweli Dube was on his way from school when he was struck by lightning on Friday, **28 February 2020**, in the afternoon and passed away just a kilometre from the school.

“We wish to convey our sincerest condolences to the affected families and the school community on the loss of their loved ones,” said MEC Lesufi.

MEC Lesufi will visit the school and the family of both the principal and the learner on Tuesday (**3 March 2020**) morning at **11:00 AM**.

Tragic Scholar Transport Shooting in Sight of Learners

On Monday morning, **2 March 2020**, one of the drivers who transports learners from the Msholozhi informal settlement in Benoni was shot at by an unknown man at Etwatwa Secondary School in full view of learners.

The driver had successfully delivered learners at other schools and was completing his last stop at Etwatwa Secondary School in Wattville. While seated in the bus, an unknown man approached and shot three times at the bus, with only one shot hitting the driver above his right eye. The driver was then rushed to a hospital, where he is currently receiving necessary medical attention.

The Department believes this incident to be a result of simmering tensions between itself and the Benoni Taxi Association as taxi owners are not pleased with our provision of scholar transport in that area.

We have called upon the police to assist in securing our learners' buses and patrolling to be done at drop-off points. We will also explore the facilitation of a community meeting this evening to pave a way forward.

MEC Lesufi, is saddened by this tragic incident and appeals for peace in the implementation of this transportation initiative.

"We introduced the scholar transport in February 2020 as one of the Department's initiatives to aid learners coming from disadvantaged backgrounds in the area, and as such necessary meetings were held with stakeholders to explain the implementation process accordingly," said MEC Lesufi.

"This is to appeal to all stakeholders to allow the scholar transport to run smoothly. It is important to emphasise that acts of violence will not yield any positive results, hence, it will only lead to unnecessary injuries, trauma and fatalities, which is unfortunate."

We have dispatched our psychosocial team to debrief learners at Etwatwa Secondary School, necessary counseling will continue tomorrow, 03 March 2020.

Death of Grade 8 Springs Boys High School Learner

The Gauteng Education MEC, Mr Panyaza Lesufi, is disheartened by the death of yet another learner. Mthokozisi Mashiane, a 13-year-old Grade 8 learner from Springs Boys High School, committed suicide at home on Thursday, **27 February 2020**.

It is unknown why the boy, who stayed with his grandfather, decided to take his own life. Our Psycho-Social unit is currently supporting the school and family with the necessary counselling.

"We take this time to send our heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and school community during this time of grief. No words are enough to express our sorrow at the loss of a child. We hope that the family will find comfort in the knowledge that we too share their loss," said MEC Lesufi.

Grade 9 Suncrest High School Learner Involved in Car Incident

A Grade 9 boy learner from Suncrest High school in Vanderbijlpark was knocked down by a car the past Thursday, **27 February 2020**, and was airlifted to Union Hospital in Alberton.

The Department is closely monitoring the boy's condition while police officials are currently investigating this incident.

For more information, contact the Gauteng Department of Education's Spokesperson, Steve Mabona on 072 574 3860.

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Education

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