



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Opening Remarks by the Deputy Minister of Basic Education Dr Reginah Mhaule on the Occasion of the Announcement of the NSC Examination Results for the Matric Class of 2024

13 January 2025

Programme Director,

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Good evening!

Let me start by thanking Mr Charles Molapisi, the CEO of MTN South Africa welcoming us here.

I wish to welcome all the Ministers, Deputy Ministers, MECs, Directors-General, CEOs of various companies and organisations, Teacher Union Leaders, the leadership of SGB Associations, Professional Bodies, civil society and all other role players in the sector.

Earlier this morning we met the Top Achievers and their parents, let me welcome them again.

Today, We are gathered to announce the 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination results.

We are announcing these results in the context of what the NDP 2030, enjoins us to do, that “by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learner 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”.

It is without doubt that the 2020 academic year will be remembered as the year that not only presented major health challenges, but a year when the entire world was engulfed by the novel COVID-19 pandemic. The Matric Class of 2024, who are the reason for our gathering here today, were in Grade 8 when the crisis took place.

The government, with its education departments and its strategic partners, worked tirelessly to strike a balance between saving lives and the 2020 academic year.

I was there with Minister Motshekga when we were accused of committing “genocide”, and we were called unprintable names for insisting that schools must open at the height of COVID-19. We were told that other countries were cancelling schooling for 2020 and that we should follow suit. We stood firm and resolved to find ways of opening schools safely without risking lives. We are here today to celebrate the 2020 Grade 8 class who are

exiting the basic education system because we fought to protect their future. I thought I should remind the nation of this journey and more specifically where we come from with this special group of learners.

Owing to South Africa's divided past, and the continued negative impact of socio-economic realities on learning outcomes, the improvement programmes we introduce, implement and monitor are an attempt to mitigate the negative impact and learning deficits on learner progress.

Our programmes continue to support learners who are at risk of underperformance and possible drop-out, and learners who are moderate to high achievers. This differentiated approach aims to address both content deficiencies that may prevent learners from achieving good educational outcomes; as well as providing support to moderate and high achievers to improve their performance – thereby improving the quality of learning outcomes.

Programme Director, in the last week leading to the release of the 2024 NSC examination results, we were exposed to a rather unfortunate and baseless debate on the pass requirements for the National Senior Certificate. The Department and respected scholars have sought to clarify this matter, and we will continue to do so until the public understands it.

At the outset, I must discourage spreading misleading information regarding the NSC pass requirements.

In a nutshell, all that needs to be said is that 30% is not a pass mark in this country. If any candidate gets an aggregate of 30% in all subjects written, that candidate will surely fail. There are no ways about it.

There are myths, fallacies and misinformation that get paddled year after year, almost by the same people on this matter. As the Department we welcome constructive criticism and will continue to engage anyone who wants to make a meaningful contribution.

The NSC pass requirements are as follows –

- **Admission to Bachelor Studies** – a candidate must obtain at least 40% for the candidate's Home Language (this is compulsory); must obtain at least 50% for the candidate's four (4) other subjects, excluding Life Orientations; must obtain at least 30% for the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) of the Higher Education Institution; must obtain at least 30% for one (1) other subjects; and must pass at least six (6) of the seven (7) subjects.
- **Admission to Diploma Studies** – must obtain at least 40% for the candidate's Home Language (this is compulsory); must obtain at least 40% for three (3) of other subjects, excluding Life Orientation; must obtain at least 30% for the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) of the Higher Education Institution; must obtain at least 30% for one (1) other subjects; and must pass at least six (6) of the seven (7) subjects.
- **Pass with Higher Certificate** – a candidate must obtain at least 40% for the candidate's Home Language (this is

compulsory); must obtain at least 30% for the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) of the Higher Education Institution; must obtain at least 40% for two (2) other subjects; must obtain at least 30% for three (3) other subjects; and must pass at least six (6) of the seven (7) subjects.

I want to thank our strategic partners – teacher unions; governing body associations; our business partners; the NECT; and our statutory bodies – Umalusi and SACE. A word of gratitude also to researchers, whose work we cannot do without; our sister departments; South Africans, who together with us, have made the stability and the improvement of our Sector their responsibility. A big THANK YOU to MTN for sponsoring this event. We also convey our appreciation to all our sponsors whose branding appears on the screen. We thank you for your continued support. It is not for the Department but for the learners whose lives you impact not only today but for many years into the future.

Lastly, schools will open tomorrow for the 2025 calendar year. I hope we are all ready for that and that we have made all the preparations to ensure another successful academic year. Good luck to all the learners, teachers, support staff at schools and to the parents and families of our learners.

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