basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**VOTE OF THANKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATON DR REGINAH MHAULE AT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS RESULTS FOR THE CLASS OF 2025**

Programme Director**, Ms Tshego Moagi**

Honourable Minister of Basic Education**, Ms Siviwe Gwarube**

Honourable Premier of Gauteng Province**, Mr Panyaza Lesufi**

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present

Members of the Portfolio Committee and Members of Parliament, led by the Chairperson**, Honourable Joy Maimela**

Members of the Select Committee on Education, led by the Chairperson**, Honourable Makhi Feni**

Honourable Members of the Executive Council from our nine provinces

Leaders of our entities: Umalusi, SACE and the NECT

Union representatives

Representatives of School Governing Bodies

The Director-General, Deputy Directors-General, Heads of Department and all officials

Parents and caregivers

Ladies and gentlemen

And, most importantly, our honoured guests our learners

Good evening.

Allow me to begin by extending my sincere appreciation to the Honourable Minister of Basic Education, Ms Siviwe Gwarube, for her commitment to strengthening the basic education sector over the past two years. Her unwavering guidance, clarity of purpose and deep concern for the wellbeing of learners and educators continue to anchor the work of the Department.

Programme Director, it would be remiss of me not to place on record our profound appreciation, on behalf of the people of South Africa, to the former Minister of Basic Education, Honourable Angie Motshekga, for the sustained investment in curriculum stability and learner support over the past decade. The achievements we celebrate today are firmly rooted in the deliberate foundations she laid during her tenure in the Basic Education sector.

The implementation of pro-poor education policies across the length and breadth of our country is neither aspirational nor rhetorical; it is a lived reality, reflected in improved access, retention and learner performance, particularly among the most vulnerable communities.

Yet today is about more than individual accomplishment, it is about collective success. Education is and must always remain, a shared responsibility. **The results announced today are the product of a collective effort involving teachers, school leaders, education officials, parents, caregivers, all actors in the schooling community and mostly learners themselves.**

The release of the 2025 National Senior Certificate results holds special significance. This cohort of learners benefitted from having attended Grade R, where a strong foundation was properly laid during the early years of learning. These formative stages are critical, as we mark and celebrate thirteen (inclusive of grade R) of dedication invested in our 2025 cohort, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of our Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners, who laid the foundational groundwork

that has culminated in these outcomes we celebrate this evening.

To our teachers, we express our deepest gratitude.

Your resilience, dedication and passion continue to shape young minds and futures, often under demanding circumstances.

Your contribution is profound, and it is deeply appreciated.

This cohort also began their high school journey during a period of un-precedented disruption brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Limited contact time, uncertainty and rapid adjustments tested the resilience of our education system and demanded innovation, adaptability and sacrifice from all involved.

That these learners stand before us today, having reached this important milestone, is a powerful testament to their resilience and to the collective strength of the basic education sector.

We extend our sincere and profound gratitude to the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education, under the steadfast leadership of Honourable Maimela, together with our dedicated colleagues in the Committee. We also recognise the pivotal role of the Select Committee

on Education, Sciences and Creative Industries, chaired by Honourable Feni and our colleagues.

Ladies and gentlemen, these Committees are the vigilant guardians of South Africa's education system. Through their commitment to oversight, they hold the executive accountable in all matters pertaining to education, as enshrined in our Constitution. Their work ensures that the promise of quality education for every child remains central to our national agenda. Indeed, the journey towards a stronger, more equitable and prosperous South Africa continues and together, we remain resolute.

We therefore extend our heartfelt thanks to the Honourable Members of the Executive Council responsible for Education, both those present this evening and those who were unable to join us. Your leadership at provincial level, and the sustained support provided to schools and learners across all grades, continue to reinforce and strengthen our education system. I must place it on record that the success of our sector is a shared responsibility and without your collaboration, we would face far greater challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Department of Basic Education affirms that the holistic development of a child is

not the responsibility of one institution alone; it is a collective endeavour undertaken in close collaboration with our sister departments; the Department of Social Development, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Health, the Department of Higher Education and Training and the South African Police Service. Central to these achievements is the strength of the partnerships we have built and continue to nurture across the education ecosystem. No single institution, department or individual can, on their own, deliver the outcomes our learners deserve.

We further extend our sincere appreciation to our stakeholders, including; Teacher Unions, Councillors, School Governing Bodies, parents, caregivers and volunteers in our schools, who remain committed in ensuring that the daily operations of our schools run smoothly, often with little or no material reward. Allow me to refer to the well-known proverb that states, **“it takes a village to raise a child.”** To our community members, who serve as the extended eyes and ears of parents and educators, particularly where challenges

cannot be immediately seen or addressed in our absence, your contribution to the success of our learners cannot be overstated.

To our Director-General, Mr. Mathanzima Mweli, our Deputy Directors-General(s), Heads of Departments and all officials who serve tirelessly, we recognise the countless sleepless nights you endure to ensure excellence within constrained budgets. Your dedication in managing this complex and demanding process in achieving the best for South Africa is truly commendable and for that, we salute you.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Benjamin Franklin once observed that *“an investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”* We wish to take this solemn moment to express our sincere appreciation to our valued partners and sponsors: the MTN Foundation, our host sponsor; Old Mutual; FirstRand Empowerment Fund; Santam; Sasol; AVBOB; Telkom Foundation; Vodacom Foundation; Shoprite Foundation; Kagiso Trust; Fundi; the Independent Development Trust; the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants; the Sifiso Learning Group for placing the future of South Africa at the forefront of their commitments. “As we consistently affirm as the sector that *‘Every child is a national asset.”* Basic Education cannot act in isolation in efforts to produce learners of the highest calibre **(the class of 2025)** in

ensuring that quality education reaches even the most humble schools across our country.

The prizes and gifts presented today are a tangible demonstration of your commitment to shaping a brighter future for our learners.

To our top-achieving learners, we once again commend you for your hard work, discipline and determination. We also acknowledge the invaluable role played by your parents and families, whose support, encouragement and sacrifices have contributed significantly to your success.

As you prepare to embark on the next chapter of your lives, we wish you every success in your future endeavours. May you continue to pursue excellence, remain grounded in purpose, and use your achievements to uplift yourselves, your families and your communities.

Please travel safely.

Thank you very much.

Ngiyabonga.