

**ADDRESS BY HER WORSHIP THE
EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF WATERBERG
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY DURING THE
2014 DISTRICT MATRIC AWARDS
CEREMONY**

10 JANUARY 2014

FOREVER RESORT, BELA BELA

10H00

Programme Directors,

***The Mayor of Bela Bela Local Municipality, Cde.
Freddy Hlungwane,***

Mayors of local municipalities,

***Representatives of the Local House of Traditional
Leaders led by Kgoshigadi Taueatsoala,***

***Speakers led by the District Speaker Cde. Dina
Monama,***

***Chief Whips led by the District Chief Whip Cde.
Simon Morumudi,***

Councillors,

***The District Senior Manager for Waterberg District
Department of Education, Pastor Julia Madela,***

***The District Senior Manager for Mogalakwena
District Department of Education, Mr. Ndo Mangala,***

***The Acting District Municipal Manager, Mme Feziwe
Raphela,***

***Management of the Resort represented by Mr. Tom
Biewenga,***

***Officials from both municipalities and sector
departments,***

Media Houses present,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen.

GOOD MORNING, GOIE MORE, THOBELA!

Programme Director,

Let me also join others in passing my fraternal greetings
and compliments of the New Year on behalf of the
people of Waterberg.

It is with great pleasure to stand before this august house to present to you the Waterberg District 2013 Matric Awards which has become an annual event since last year and the first of its kind in Limpopo.

This is an opportunity for the Waterberg District Municipality to not only give out awards but to reinforce cooperative governance at grass root level.

Our democratic government led by the African National Congress has put systems in place that contributed to an improvement in the performance of the matric results since 2009 and that has necessitated our gathering here today.

This improvement of the Grade 12 results constitutes a major milestone of the current administration in our democratic dispensation.

There has been greater stability in the Education sector in curriculum implementation at least for the past five years. This has afforded teachers, learners and officials more time to familiarise themselves with the objectives of the curriculum.

Programme Director, we are aware that education is not a local government function, but our district has always gone beyond its mandate and together with the Department of Education and other partners, we are engaged in the transformation and development of education in schools within our district – assisting

where we can, facilitating and creating a conducive environment for education and learning.

As the Waterberg District Municipality, we resolved in 2012 to intensify the Back- to -School Campaign which is a programme of visiting schools when they re-open in January and motivating learners, teachers and School Governing Bodies.

This initiative has worked for us as local government in strengthening our relationship with the Department of Education, Higher Learning Institutions, Organised Labour and Student formations.

In 2013, we partnered with UNISA and the Department of Education and donated approximately 12 000 books to Seoketseng Secondary School in Lephalale Local Municipality for the establishment and development of a school library.

This initiative is called **“*Adopt a School Library Campaign*”** and is aiming to benefit more schools especially those in rural areas.

The Executive Mayor has also celebrated her birthday on the 25th October last year with kids from the Phagameng Creche` in Modimolle where toys and stationery were donated.

Subsequent to the birthday celebration, the Office of the Executive Mayor embarked on the refurbishment of the same Creche which was completed in December.

This followed a day worth spending with kids from all crèches and pre-schools around Lephalale Municipality in March 2013 where assorted gifts were also distributed.

These initiatives constitute part of providing support to our Early Childhood Development given the limited resources at our disposal.

Ladies and gentlemen, Our 2013 Matriculants have been very fortunate to attend and write their grade 12 during an amazing and momentous year in the history of our beloved motherland.

It is a year when the whole world paid their last homage to the “Father of the Nation”, an inspirational icon and the former President of both the ruling party and the country, Tata Nelson Mandela.

We will still live by his encouraging words when he once said: ***“Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor; that a son of the mine worker can become the head of a mine; that a child of a farm worker can become the president of a nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given that separates one person from another”.***

Our Waterberg District matriculants have been very fortunate and privileged to have been nurtured in a district that harbours success, invests in a holistic approach, embraces diversity and hones (sharpen) creativity.

Programme Director, we are gathered here today, to celebrate with our 2013 Matriculants, a momentous period during their schooling career.

Not only do they bid farewell to 12 long difficult years of study, they also bid farewell to their respective schools which, most probably have been more than a place of learning.

Today, you collectively bid farewell to your teachers and mentors who taught you more than the national syllabus.

You learnt about values which are critical armaments in aiding human endeavour and these include amongst others:

- ❖ *Life,*
- ❖ *Love,*
- ❖ *Respect and*
- ❖ *Camaraderie (friendship)*

These values will carry you through your later life as an adult, as a mother or father and as a patriotic citizen of our great district, province and country.

Ladies and gentlemen, our 2013 Matric Results has done us proud as the Waterberg District, we are encouraged by the quality of the outcome, the improvement and the opportunity they present to our children, especially those from our poorest communities.

As we know education act as a catalyst to extricate(remove) them from the shackles of poverty and under-development.

Today we are here to applaud the top students, circuits and schools for the 2013 academic year.

During the Western Regional Bi-annual Conference of the South African Democratic Teachers` Union (SATDU) in July 2013, I delivered a message of support, and challenged the delegates to commit themselves by making sure that we have learners from our rural schools in the best top ten category.

I am grateful that this has been partly achieved in the 2013 results.

It is with great pleasure to announce that as Waterberg we managed move away from the ICU (as the Minister used to call us) by improving with an overall margin of approximately 21.6 percent since 2009.

The analysis of the improvement is as follows:

- 2009 - 49%
- 2010 - 49.6% - an improvement of 0.6%
- 2011 - 55.8% - an improvement of 6.2.%
- 2012 - 60.1% - an improvement of 4.3%

These results, despite the improvements, has all the years placed us on position 5 which is the last as compared to other districts in the Limpopo Province.

From 60.1% in 2012 we managed to obtain 70.6% in 2013. Which is an immense improvement of 10.5% from the previous year.

These improvement placed us on position 2 at the provincial level as compared to last year`s position 5.

This is an improvement we are proud of, which despite various challenges we experienced as a result of being predominantly rural, we manage to achieve.

We are particularly proud of our schools from the disadvantaged areas that have consistently shown the greatest improvements as well as our students from these schools, whom despite the odds against them were able to achieve.

No-where can the rages of apartheid be seen clearly than on the education spectrum, which is why we are proud of the steady improvements displayed by schools from the disadvantaged areas.

We want to applaud schools which put Waterberg on the map by obtaining a 100% pass and those are:

- a) Moshia Secondary
- b) Kgabedi High
- c) PT Matlala High
- d) Gobela Sec
- e) Hoerskool Warmbath and,
- f) Waterberg High

Programme Director, the first four of these schools are located in deep rural areas.

We congratulate their principals, teachers, SGB's and learners themselves for the total commitment they displayed.

One other important category which deserve a special applause is the most improved schools, which registered an improvement of more than 50% and all from rural areas as well and they are:

- a) Makgenene Secondary
- b) Motlhajwa
- c) Ulando
- d) Kubushe
- e) Siyakheleni
- f) Seshoatlha

Although we can boldly pride ourselves of the notable gains, in transforming education, much still need to be done to improve its quality across the entire system.

It is essential that necessary measures be taken to ensure that our people develop trust and confidence across all our schools irrespective of their geographic location and status.

The challenge is also for the private sector to make more meaningful contribution to our under-resourced schools as part of their social responsibilities.

As the district municipality, we are in the process of resuscitating our Waterberg Economic Development Agency (WEDA) which serves as a vehicle to mobilise and facilitate economic opportunities within the district.

We are hopeful that through the commitments made by our business community during their engagement in November last year, some of the spin-offs will then be channelled towards education development, especially in the form of bursaries.

This will augment on the little resources that municipalities are already providing to assist our learners, especially those from disadvantaged families focusing on municipal related courses/streams.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are confident that with the quality of teaching imparted to our matriculants through their schooling years, all of them are more likely to become leaders in society.

They will have the opportunity to offer positive influence to many people for the greater good of society and our country at large.

With the talent demonstrably evident in this hall, we are sure that some of you will create significant companies, while others will teach generations of new citizens.

I am hopeful that within your group, there are future leaders who will become world famous academics, economists, engineers and scientists.

Honoured matriculants, please regard yourselves as a rare kind for you represent the intellectual elite of the Waterberg District at large.

Today is your important day in your journey as you mark the end of this stage in your life to the next, full of hope and expectations knowing that the education system has provided you with the requisite skills and mindsets needed to embrace an unknown future.

Programme Director, given the joblessness and disappointments amongst those who matriculated in the previous years, the Waterberg District Municipality is engaging Mining Houses to make a tangible difference in the lives of the many school leavers within the district.

Our plea to these companies is to be sympathetic to this youngsters and allow them a chance to gain hands on experience because our believe is that if armed with experience, they can be both employable and self employable.

From the government `s side we are prepared to go an extra mile to help those companies that accept these learners with identification and selection for internship.

These learners cannot pop out of nowhere fully trained, we have to improve our society and economy, we have the responsibility to train and skill them.

These initiative will therefore need the business community especially the corporate world to come to the party in a big way.

Ladies and gentlemen, today we are not only celebrating the achievements of the candidates and schools, but also paying tribute to the principals, teachers, parents, Organised labour and School Governing Bodies for their contribution towards growing Waterberg as a ***“Theatre of Learning”***.

While we proud ourselves of the achievements, we can and must jointly do better to improve the quality of Education.

This can only happen when we always embark on forward planning, hard work, dedication and commitment

While we celebrate this massive achievement, we should stand by the words of the former President of the Republic, the late Nelson Mandela when he once said ***“it is after one has climbed the first mountain that one realises there are many more mountains to climb”***

Let me once more take this opportunity to salute all our learners who passed the 2013 matric especially those with flying colours. You made all of us proud, your parents, teachers and the community you represent.

We also encourage those who have not made it not to be disheartened. Even by writing the matric exams you got so much that many failed to get.

The MEC for the Department of Education in Limpopo Mme, Dikeledi Magadzi always says ***“ You are not the one who failed but the method you employ failed you”***.

So go back to the drawing board and get assistance in changing your methods of studying.

Remember failure is not fatal, failure is not permanent, it is just a temporary setback.

Special thanks must be directed to the two District Senior Managers (Pastor Julia Madela and Mr. Ndo Mangala) for working tirelessly in pulling out the district out of the ICU by transforming the education system in the two districts.

Similarly the interface between the district municipality its locals and the Department of Education played a critical role in the support and development of our education system within the district.

As we recognise the achievements of the class of 2013, we need to ensure that the class of 2014 does better and hopefully be number one in the province.

Programme Director, may I also thank all the social partners in particular the Management of Forever Resort, Bela Bela, who consistently stand by our side whenever we make a call for support.

Through the partnerships that we are in the process of forging with public/private sectors, we will make sure that no deserving young person, from whatever background, is denied the opportunity to develop his or her potential.

We are pleased that through the support we are beginning to see, previously disadvantaged learners gradually make inroads in the ranks of high performers.

In conclusion Programme Director, since the liberation in 1994, everybody has the democratic right to any power of his or her own life.

This fundamental right translate into the ability to make a cross to choose the government of your choice, to choose the political party which will continue to shape your country and better the lives of all.

Everybody 18 and above, has the democratic right to vote. To elect their government and make decisions over the way they live and how they want government to be managed for the next five years.

Many of you are first time voters and we therefore make a call for all to visit their polling stations on the weekend of 8-9 February 2014 to register and verify their status in preparing for the next National and Provincial Elections envisaged to take place later this year.

Lastly Programme Director, to matriculants who succeeded, we are hoping that you take advantage of the available financial resources in the form of bursaries provided by government and the private sectors.

Please visit the offices of Mayors in the district and its local municipalities, the Department of Education and Office of the Premier for assistance.

Waterberg is alive with possibilities, make sure you use any kind of assistance at your disposal.

May I wish everyone present, your families, relatives and all our partners in the broader education sector, a healthy, peaceful and prosperous 2014.

KE A LEBOGA, THANK YOU !!