

The Weekly

MEC VISITS UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS TO BOOST MORALE

January 18, 2013



On the ground ... Education MEC, Tate Makgole visited underperforming schools in Thaba Nchu during the re-opening of schools two weeks ago

The Free State Department of Education MEC, Tate Makgole, visited several underperforming schools across the province since the re-opening of schools two weeks ago.

Makgole and senior department officials visited the underperforming schools to check their readiness, boost the morale of learners and teachers and assess what kind of support these schools need to perform better.

Makgole has vowed to visit all the 76 under-performing schools in the province. The schools will be monitored throughout the year and intervention programmes will be rolled out to ensure they improve their results.

The MEC paid a surprise visit to Sediti High School outside Thaba-Nchu at Kildare village. The school is one of the under-performing schools in the province.

The school has been operating for 40 years and accommodates learners from about 22 surrounding villages. The school's grade 12 pass rate in 2012 was 37.17 percent.

Learners at the school were given a chance to tell the MEC their problems. Grade 12 learner, Joseph Mokoena (18), promised the MEC that the class of 2013 will work very hard to make the school and the province proud.

Boipelo Selaledi from Mokoena village asked the MEC to assist learners with scholar transport. She said her unemployed parents cannot afford to give transport money. Selaledi said there were not enough textbooks and calculators for the learners at the school. She added that the school did not have enough subjects as well as a science laboratory.

The Weekly

The principal of the school, Redmond Ruababa admitted that his school has not performed well for the past few years. The last time the school's matriculants did well was in 2005 when they scored an 81 percent pass rate.

In 2012, 77 learners at the school failed the matric examination, while 55 qualified for a supplementary exam. He attributed the failure to low school attendance, under-qualified teachers and transport challenges which affect schooling hours.

The principal said, for the 2013 academic year, 62 learners have enrolled for grade 12. He appealed to the MEC to assist the school with more classrooms.

Makgoe also visited Popano Senior Secondary School in Botshabelo. The principal, Ntebaleng Mosebo, was recruited from Setjhaba Se Maketse High School in 2009 by the department to turn around the fortunes of the under-performing school.

"We did all we could to support the learners, but the problem was that the majority of the 2012 matriculants were learners who were always repeating their grades. I spent a whole month in Thaba Nchu during the matric camp trying to motivate learners, but they were just not eager to learn," said Mosebo.

Makgoe said the visit formed part of the back-to-school campaign where the department ensures that learning and teaching starts on the first day to produce quality results at the end of the year.

He said, there are several schools in the province that did not do well in 2012 and he is committed to addressing the problems they faced, especially the rural schools in poverty stricken communities.

He said the department would consider building boarding facilities to help boost the performance of Sediti High School.

[www.theweekly.co.za]