

**ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT, MRS. H.J MASHAMBA, AT
THE EVENT OF THE SCHOOL UNIFORM
HANDOVER, BAHANANWA TRIBAL
AUTHORITY, BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITY,
CAPRICORN DISTRICT.**

10th February 2016

Programme Director;

**The Executive Mayor of Capricorn District
Municipality, Cllr. Gilbert Kganyago;**

**The Mayor of Blouberg Local Municipality,
Cllr. Sammy Selamolela;**

Kgoshi Maleboho;

Councillors here present;

**Representatives from sister departments,
SASSA and the IEC;**

**Our guests of honour – the recipients of the
school uniform;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
All protocol observed.**

Martin Luther King Jnr Once said, and I quote:

**“Education without social action is a one-
sided value because it has no true power
potential.”**

Close quotes

It is therefore befitting that here, at the beginning of another academic year with its daunting challenges to some learners, we once again concentrate on the social support of our people, to ensure quality education.

Programme Director

These daunting challenges alluded to, refers to, among others, an ever changing and unstable global economic climate, which creates a ripple effect on the periphery of a largely rural province, such as Limpopo. This is a yearly and indeed daily struggle for some families. We therefore acknowledge that it is simply not possible for a great number of learners to concentrate on improving their education and ensure a better life for their families and communities, if they do not have the resources at hand.

The Department of Social Development every year endeavours to improve this situation by ensuring that vulnerable learners can attend school with dignity and pride in their brand new school

uniform. We are confident that this will give them the boost they need to finish their school careers and advance to higher education.

Education remains one of the key priorities of government, but this is not a stand-alone issue. The support of quality education includes the eradication of hunger and poverty, primary health care and rural development, to ensure that children all over the Province are given equal opportunity to perform their best at school. We have noted time and again that children cannot concentrate in class, on an empty stomach or while fighting an illness. While government has many projects and programmes in place in support of this endeavour, we encourage communities to continue taking charge of the situation.

If indeed it takes a village to raise a child, we need the creative assistance of communities in terms of developing food gardens or identifying struggling and especially child-headed families in the community. We need to join hands in this fight against this triple challenge of poverty, hunger and unemployment. The struggle starts at grassroots level, where our children are exposed to this dire situation of hunger, malnutrition and lack of stimulation. We therefore also encourage parents to take advantage of the Early Childhood Development programme, where our children can thrive and learn from a very young age. This will only contribute towards the dreams and aspirations we have for them to grow, excel and one day give back to their communities as skilled professionals.

In closure, Programme Director

We will be rolling out this programme of supporting vulnerable learners, to all the other districts of the Province and municipalities within the districts, to ensure that we assist all those in need. We hope that today's gesture will encourage other role players such as the business fraternity, to also adopt learners and school programmes in this manner. Let our children learn and grow in an enabling environment. Let us all join hands in ensuring that they have access to all possible opportunities, by giving them the basic tools to do so.

We are further confident that the learners receiving this uniform today will wear it with pride and attend classes without failure. Indeed, let them send the message to their fellow learners,

that education is the most important tool for improving lives.

Let us all encourage them to take their education very serious and refrain from all unhealthy activities that will take their eyes off the goal!

I thank you!

Ke a leboga!