



**MINISTRY
PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Remarks of the Minister for the Public Service and Administration Adv. Ngoako Ramatlhodi, MP, at the Handing over of Multi-Media Computer Laboratories to Eastern Cape, St Johns College

13 March 2017

ST JOHN HIGH SCHOOL

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. Nelson Mandela

Premier of Eastern Cape Province: Premier PG Masualle

Ministers, Deputy Ministers and MECs present;

Mayor of OR Tambo District Municipality; Cllr N Meth

Mayor of KDS: Cllr D Zozo

Traditional leaders present

CEO of CPSI: Ms Thuli Radebe

MD of MTN Foundation: Ms Kusile Mthunzi-Hairwadzi

Director-General-EC: Ms Marion Mbina-Mthembu

Heads of Departments

Principals and SGBs of schools: St John's, Ngweyibandla, Dalindyebo Schools

Senior government officials;

Educators and Learners

Ladies and Gentlemen

Molweni

It is truly my honour to be part of this occasion and especially to hand over to service delivery sites, our schools, these Multi-media Computer Laboratories. This bears testament to our commitment to improving service delivery through modern and innovative solutions and models.

Programme Director, Honourable Premier:

I will like to give a short background on how this came about:

As the first democratically elected South African government, we recognised from the start the immense challenges created by the Apartheid system in the delivery of public services. Amongst many, the most concerning issue was the quality of services delivered to our disadvantaged, rural and under-served communities. As a response, among other initiatives, we established the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) more than 15 years ago as a government entity to drive and entrench the use of innovation to improve service delivery in the public sector.

Moreover, we tasked the CPSI with the mandate to unearth innovative solutions that are being implemented by committed and dedicated public servants in different service delivery institutions through the annual Public Sector Innovation Awards Programme. This programme enables us to find these innovative solutions and facilitate their replication and mainstreaming to avoid re-inventing the wheel and wasting valuable financial resources as we search for solutions that have already been developed elsewhere in the country.

Programme Director, today we bear testimony to the value chain of the work that the CPSI does.

It is through the Public Sector Innovation Awards Programme that we unearthed an innovative solution that uses ICTs to improve teaching and learning, in particular Maths and Science performance in the Mpumalanga province. Under resourced schools are connected to one well-resourced school and lessons are delivered and shared with these schools in **real-time and inter-actively**. Schools are connected by means of video conferencing and desktop sharing. The disadvantaged schools are wirelessly connected to the anchor school through live video and SMART interactive whiteboards. Each lesson is live, inter-active and shared amongst the connected schools and also saved for later revision.

The impact of this model has been that;

- Learners from under-resourced schools access high quality science and mathematics education through the use of ICTs,
- Considerable improvement in the passing rate of mathematics and science subjects in these disadvantaged schools,
- Collaboration and lesson sharing among the learners and educators
- Empowering of Maths and Science teachers in under-resourced schools,
- Promote the use of technology in townships and rural schools and
- Limiting the need by the departments of education to transport learners of under-resources schools to attend lessons at remote sites or in well-resourced schools

This project was implemented in Ermelo by Ligbron Technical School, which connected a number of township schools. This resulted in the improvement on the pass rate for Maths and science in those inter-connected schools. For example, the pass rate at Masizakhe Secondary School that was connected

to Ligbron in 2010 has increased for Science from 24% in 2010 to 75% in 2015 and from 19% in Mathematics to 88%.

We have also, in 2012, awarded the exceptions work done by St John's in ensuring outstanding Maths and Science outcomes. St John's is however an island of excellence, surrounded by schools with limited resources and poor outcomes. The question is, how do we extend the excellence at this school to the whole district? That is the reason that we are together here today and why we have brought these two innovative initiatives together.

In the 2017 State of the Nation Address, President Zuma emphasized the importance of education, particularly in Maths and Science, and I quote: *"President OR Tambo was a Maths and Science teacher. Government will thus prioritise Maths and Science more than ever before this year, in his memory"*. As the Ministry for Public Service and Administration we commit to this by assisting in providing innovative solutions such as these.

As you are all aware, many innovations are still driven by private sector, mainly in terms of availability of resources for testing, piloting and implementation. It is inevitable that as the public sector we have to find common ground and partner with the private sector in solving a myriad of service delivery challenges we face as a nation. I commend the CPSI for partnering with MTN in facilitating the replication of this innovative solution in Eastern Cape. Today we see the three schools, St Johns College, Ngwayibanjwa and Dalindyebo here in the OR Tambo District Municipality, uMthatha Education District benefiting from this unique partnership. This is proof that through collaboration we can achieve more.

Honourable Premier, let me hasten, however, to say what I am handing over today is sponsored by our partner MTN and Multi-media Computer Laboratories are part of the first phase of this project whilst the CPSI is

mobilizing more partners to replicate the full E-learning solution for these targeted schools.

The Computer Laboratories that I am handing over today are not just computer labs, as we know them. The labs feature a variety of dynamic unique functionalities to enhance creative teaching and learning. In addition, they complement other learning resources in these schools in support of the approved curricula.

Today, Premier, we are handing over the following per school (3 schools);

- Renovated Multi-media Computer Laboratories
- Computer equipment consisting of
 - 1 server,
 - 21 monitors,
 - multi-functional printer,
 - inter-active white board,
 - projector,
 - a router and data card for connectivity
- Educational software and CAPS aligned content
- Subsidised internet connectivity for 24 months

This represents an investment of over R1, 4 million.

However, **Premier**, we note with sadness and concern that in one of the schools, Dalindyebo High, the computer laboratory was vandalized by learners and equipment stolen. This is horrible and the very thing we are trying to mitigate against by providing access to modern and state of the art facilities for under-serviced communities. Premier, I do request your assistance in this matter through our appropriate institutions such a SAPS, Traditional leaders and the community around the school itself. Where appropriate,

criminal charges must be brought against such deeds, as this disadvantages our learners and communities.

Programme Director

It is our duty to constantly ensure that our learners are at school and are able to complete their schooling. To quote the late **Maya Angelou**, one of the greatest poets of our times, "**Education helps one cease being intimidated by strange situations**". You will agree with me that bad elements target many of our youth these days; the scourge of drugs, teenage pregnancies, crime and lawlessness has increased dramatically. It is through education that we can win the war against such calamities.

I heartily thank MTN for their continued support to the work of the CPSI over the years. Ms Mthunzi-Hairwadzi, MD of MTN Foundation, we value your support and co-operation. Our partnership is based on a common purpose, which is to improve the lives of our citizens. We are grateful for your support in the establishment of these Multi-media Computer Laboratories in these schools.

In addition, I would also like to thank the Premier of the Eastern Province **Premier Masualle** and provincial Department of Education, **Mr M. Makupula**. This would have not been possible without your support through your dedicated officials.

Furthermore, I also would like to thank the SGBs, Principals, Teachers and Learners of these three schools, who allowed us to come to their site to implement this project. A Special thank you to St John's College, as mentioned earlier, a previous finalist of the annual CPSI Awards, hosting us today, Thank you **Principal Magaqa** and your leadership in maintaining the excellent performance of this school is commendable. We know some of your learners were amongst the top performers in the 2016 Matric final exams. Congratulations once more!

Lastly, it will be improper of me not to thank the CPSI team for tirelessly engaging all stakeholders, soliciting partners for funding support and for assisting in the implementation of this project.

I would further like to take this opportunity to encourage our learners to study hard and complete their schooling. Furthermore, as the Minister for Public Service and Administration, I would also encourage teachers to do their job diligently, honestly and to the best of their ability. We all went through teachers and we depend on them to do the right thing.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In conclusion, as the Ministry for Public Service and Administration, we commit into constantly unearthing and facilitating replication of innovative solutions aimed at improving service delivery. We further want to commit that through our partnership with organisation such as MTN, we will be able to fully replicate the E-learning solution in these three schools.

As Aristotle, the Greek Philosopher observed...***"Education is the best provision for old age....The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet"***.

On behalf of the government of the Republic, I officially hand over the Multi-media Computer Laboratories to the Eastern Cape Province

We Belong, We Care, We Serve.

Thank you