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DEPARTMENT OF
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FINALISTS WITH A VISION: HANYANI THOMO SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS MAKE THEIR MARK!

By Mmathaba Sape



Hanyani Thomo Secondary School brightest minds, Vukahle Maluleke, Nseketelo Ngoveni, Xiluva Ngobeni, and Matimu Shivuri have emerged as finalists in the prestigious Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) Schools Challenge. Their journey to the top 10 is marked by dedication, hard work and a passion for learning. The finals were held at the Reserve bank in Pretoria on 04 and 05 August 2025 and winners will be announced on Tuesday, 19 August 2025. The challenge which encourages matric learners to think and be the 'SARB governor' for the day, started in Gauteng in 2012 and has since grown to encompass all the nine provinces. More than 400 schools took part in the MPC challenge hosted by the SARB in partnership with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). The learners describe their experience of joining the competition as "really great" and acknowledge that they have learned a lot. The competition has not only deepened their understanding of economics but also equipped them with valuable skills in project management, research and

teamwork. The path to the finals was demanding, requiring extensive research, dedication and knowledge. Despite the challenges, the learners persevered, motivated by their desire to succeed and make their school proud. They worked tirelessly, often meeting after school for hours to research and compile their work. Through their participation in the competition, the learners have gained a range of valuable skills, including computer skills, graph analysis, time management, and communication. They have also learned the importance of teamwork and collaboration, with each member contributing their unique strengths and perspectives. The learners' motivation for joining the competition was driven by their desire to work at the South African Reserve Bank and to be the first school in Limpopo to win the competition. They were inspired by the success of other schools from different provinces and saw this as an opportunity to showcase their own talents. For these learners, being in the top 10 of the MPC Schools Challenge is

a lifetime opportunity. They stand to gain bursaries that will help them pursue their studies, a prospect that fills them with excitement and hope. As Vukahle Maluleke noted, "This is a lifetime opportunity as we stand to get bursaries that will help us in our studies as our parents can't afford money for universities." The learners' achievement has already had a positive impact on their school community, with their fellow learners motivated by their success. They have shared their experiences and insights with others, inspiring a new generation of learners to pursue their passions and ambitions. As the learners await the the results with a bated breath, they are optimistic that they will emerge. They knew that the competition will be tough, but they are confident in their abilities. The MPC Schools Challenge is a testament to the power of education and competition to inspire and motivate learners. As these four talented learners prepare to take on the finals, they are not only representing their school but also showcasing the potential and talent of learners from Limpopo.

“DO IT NOW, OR REGRET LATER”: THE REMARKABLE STORY OF NARE MOHLAKE.

By Mmathaba Sape



From the rural village of Ga-Matlala Madietane on the outskirts of Polokwane emerges an extraordinary young woman whose story speaks of resilience, ambition, and fearless pursuit of greatness. At just the age of 18, Nare Mohlake, a learner at Ngakana Secondary School, Capricorn North Education District has already carved her name in the realms of school sport and arts, defying the odds and shining bright from a place where opportunities are scarce.

Nare grew up in a community where opportunities were non-existent, and the idea of success often felt distant. Nevertheless, for her, limitations became fuel, and her motto, “Do it now, or regret it later” became the compass that guided her dreams through adversity. Growing up, she saw many young people around her give up on their goals due to lack of resources and support. Instead of surrendering to her environment, she used it as motivation.

Her school sport started as a way to stay fit and have fun but quickly evolved into a deeper journey of self-discovery and growth. She was inspired by the belief that “the mind becomes stronger and more intelligent when it’s trained to do something new and a little bit challenging.” This belief pushed her to step out of her comfort zone and embrace multiple sporting disciplines, from softball and volleyball to athletics. In 2024, Nare’s dedication bore fruit in a spectacular fashion. She was awarded Third Best Pitcher at the National School Sports Championships for softball and earned a coveted spot on Team South Africa. In athletics, she claimed second place in both long jump and triple jump, while also advancing to provincial level in volleyball after excelling at cluster and district stages.

Nare is not only a sports star; she is also a gifted visual artist. At the 2024 National School Sport Championship (NSSC) Art Competition, she clinched the top spot, stunning judges with a T-shirt design that embodied the event’s theme: “No DNA, just RSA.” She created the artwork using the concept of a rainbow, despite not having access to all the colours. The final touches were added just seconds before the deadline, a moment of pressure and adrenaline that she now recalls with pride.

“When they announced my name, it felt like déjà vu, but it was all

happening for the first time,” she says. “I was overwhelmed with emotion and pride. I thought of everyone who believed in me, my family, my friends, and my coaches. It was an unforgettable moment.”

Behind the accolades is a story of immense sacrifice and time management. With no formal coach, Nare relied on the time-blocking method to juggle schoolwork, pitching practice and art, all while carving out time for rest and recreation. Despite the pressure, she stayed disciplined, attending extra lessons and preparing diligently for competitions.

One of her greatest mental battles was overcoming the fear of injury. Watching others get hurt often triggered doubts the “what if” mindset, but she chose to face her fears head-on, even diving into bases with confidence. “I decided to dismantle the mentality and trust in my preparation. It didn’t even cost me a bone of an arm.” said Nare.

Her ambition does not end with high school. Her sporting dream is to become a professional softball player and a full-time member of Softball South Africa. At the same time, she is equally passionate about academics with plans to study for a Bachelor of Engineering in Mechatronics.

To manage both sports and studies, she plans to continue prioritizing her time, creating detailed schedules that allow room for both high performance and mental well-being. Regular communication with teachers and coaches is also key to ensuring a support system is always in place. For aspiring athletes and artists, Nare has this message, “Set clear goals, work hard, and stay committed. Do not forget about your schoolwork, success needs balance. Listen to your coaches, learn from your mistakes, take care of your body, and surround yourself with people who believe in you. Most importantly, enjoy the journey and give it your all.”

Nare Mohlake represents the very best of South Africa’s youth, determined, dynamic, and driven by purpose. Her journey is one of many hurdles, but even more victories. From the rural fields of Ga-Matlala Madietane to the national stage, she reminds everyone that no dream is too big and no obstacle too great when matched with passion, grit, and heart.



FROM CLASSROOM TO NATIONAL STAGE, SANDRA LESHABANE MAKES HISTORY.

By Katlego Mashula



Polokwane- A new era of learner leadership has dawned, and a new line has been drawn. The Institutional Governance Directorate hosted a handover ceremony at Millennium Combined School in Capricorn South Education District in Seshego to celebrate the appointment of Limpopo’s very own, Sandra Leshabane. She was elected the National Representative Council of Learners (RCL) President to presenting the interests of learners. This significant occasion follows her election at the National RCL Summit, held from 25–27 June 2025 at Anew Hotel in Benoni, Gauteng.

The summit which focused on empowering learner leaders and inspiring the next generation across schools nationwide, has now paved the way for Leshabane to take up her leadership role at a national level. The handover ceremony represents more than individual recognition as it is a beacon of hope for learner leaders across the country. It underscores the Department of Basic Education’s commitment to nurturing young leadership and creating opportunities for learners to influence educational discourse and community development.

Leaders, educators, and stakeholders gathered to honour Leshabane while reaffirming their collective mission to transform schools into hubs of excellence and innovation. “We have gathered here to celebrate the achievement of our president, Sandra, of whom we are very proud. She has remained true and has performed exceptionally in all spheres. This gathering also allows us to direct our Limpopo Green Education Project into the provinces where it will be running. Our key focus is to provide environmental support, and we will continue to meet with SGBs to ensure the project is successfully implemented. We are unlocking potential in excellence,” said Matilda Malefo from the RCL Provincial Project: Limpopo Green Education.

The National RCL President Sandra Leshabane addressed Millennium Combined School and guests who were present and encouraged learners to continue striving for excellence. Reflecting on her journey from being elected as a school representative in Grade 11 to becoming the first-ever National RCL President, she emphasized the importance of collective effort. “Millennium will not be determined

by its past, it will be determined by its present and future. You saw the excellence in me that I did not see and because of that, I will forever be honoured and grateful. Now, it is our collective responsibility to ensure Millennium Combined School shines with excellence again,” said Leshabane.

Her powerful words were received with a resounding applause by fellow learners.

The Principal of Millennium Combined School, Ngoako Phefadu, expressed gratitude for the school community’s unwavering support and celebrated Leshabane’s achievement. “We thank the department and all other stakeholders for their support throughout the journey. They started the journey that brought good results. Having elected Sandra as your class rep and to becoming your school president, look where we are now. Sandra, we are so proud to have a leader like you. Now, unfortunately, we no longer own you; you are owned by the nation. Educators, let’s continue to guide our learners,” said Phefadu.

Tinyiko Nkuzana, District Director of Capricorn South, commended Millennium Combined School for its role in shaping leaders of the future. “Millennium has put our district and province on the map. You are known not for the bad, but for producing a National RCL President. One day, we believe you will lead this country. To get there, you must hold on to five things: discipline, determination, dedication, development, and defined goals. Transform Millennium into a place of excellence where every visitor can see the difference. Competing with eight provinces and emerging as a leader is just the beginning,” Nkuzana concluded.

Sandra Leshabane’s achievement is a testament to the power of learner leadership and the impact of collective support from educators, parents and SGB members. As the new National RCL President, she carries the hopes of her school, district and province, inspiring countless young people to lead with purpose and integrity. Her journey serves as a powerful reminder that when learners are empowered and guided, they can break barriers and set new standards of excellence for generations to come.

A TRIPLE VICTORY FOR EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY UPLIFTMENT IN THABAZIMBI

By Conny Mabunda



It was a momentous and joyful day in the Thabazimbi Local Municipality, Waterberg Education District as three schools were officially handed over, marking a significant leap in improving educational facilities in the area. This major development was made possible through a collaborative effort by Northam Platinum Zondereinde Mine and Limpopo Department of education. MEC Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya led the handover ceremony alongside Deputy Minister for Minerals and Petroleum Resources Phumzile Mgcina, underscoring the importance of investing in education as a tool for long-term community empowerment and growth.

The overall investment across the three schools amounted to over R27 million. Chrome Mine Primary School received a total investment of over R7Million, while Deo Gloria Primary School was allocated over R14 million and half and Northam Primary School with just over R5Million. The handover included one school with major infrastructure improvements and two schools receiving newly constructed Grade R facilities, an achievement that brought visible excitement and pride to the community.

A Grade R facility was constructed at both Chrome Mine primary school and Northam Primary School while additional infrastructure developments were carried out at Deo Gloria Primary School. The construction was carried out by JoyShawn Group, a 100% black female-owned company, emphasizing the commitment to transformation, inclusion and

economic empowerment.

Thabazimbi Local Mayor, Councillor Tumisang Pelani was visibly proud

during the handover ceremony, describing the occasion as historic for the region. Reflecting on the area's rich mining legacy, he recalled that



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iron ore was discovered in Thabazimbi in 1938, and that the area currently hosts 13 active mines. He emphasized the power of partnerships and the need for mining companies to contribute meaningfully to surrounding communities. "There are over 65,000 people in Thabazimbi, if 47,000 of them could benefit from such developments, it

would go a long way in countering poverty in the area. Any place with mines should reflect real development. Let progress be visible and go from good to great," he concluded.

The project CEO from JoyShawn expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to lead the initiative,

especially as a woman pushing boundaries in a male-dominated space. "It was a learning step for us" she said.

Northam Platinum Zondereinde CEO Paul Dunne added, "This is not the first time we are building schools or investing in community infrastructure. We have experience and a clear drive to deliver high-quality infrastructure. The completed schools reflect our long-term commitment to education and community development."

The Minister was grateful to Northam Platinum Zondereinde Representatives, the MEC, the Executive Mayor and community members who contributed to ensuring that the projects become a success. "Schools are not enough, we still want to see more being handed over and more support from the mines" concluded Mgcina.

The MEC was truly grateful for the collaborative efforts that made the day possible and took time to motivate the learners." The schools are more than just buildings, they're symbols of hope and investment in the future of my learners," said Lerule-Ramakhanya.

This handover stands as a shining example of what can be achieved through strategic partnerships and a shared vision of progress, bringing dignity, access and opportunity to learners in the heart of Limpopo.



PEDALS OF HOPE: MEC AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS BRING BICYCLES TO LEARNERS IN NEED

By Katlego Mashula



An affirmation of supporting education beyond classrooms. The Limpopo Department of Education in collaboration with SANLAM and ASSUPOL handed over bicycles to learners in Musina high and Sinhumule Secondary Schools in the communities of Musina and Ha-Sinhumule, Vhembe West Education District. A total of 100 bicycles were handed over to learners as part of an initiative aimed at addressing one of the province's most persistent challenges of learners walking long distances to school. This initiative is expected to improve school attendance and learner punctuality. Virginia Nkosi of SANLAM Retail Mass highlighted the importance of the bicycle as a significant tool to improve access, not only in classes but to the vast world of knowledge and opportunity that awaits. "This bicycle handover is an integral part of Sanlam's broader commitment to supporting education and community development. We believe in empowering young people, which extends beyond just transportation to include vital areas like financial education and digital literacy, helping them take control of their futures thus empowering generations." She said. The learners welcomed the initiative

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with excitement, testing and practicing riding their new bicycles. "These bicycles will change learners' narrative; they will now arrive in school and home in time. As parents we appreciate the gesture and believe that our learners will now thrive with excellence. May this partnership help inspire our learners to study knowing that there is a helping hand." Said SGB chairperson, George Maphala. "We believe it takes a village to raise a child, we are here because we have experienced the current hardships of learners walking more than 4.9 km to get to school. This is our way of offering help." Said Olga Chirwa, ASSUPOL Provincial Manager. Pi

MEC Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya appreciated the partnership and the unwavering support from SANLAM and ASSUPOL and further urged parents and learners to use the bicycles for educational purposes while taking care of them.

"Learners need positive energy, these programmes aid in bringing positive environment for learners to unearth their potentials. To my learners Use these bicycles as a tool that will help to take you to greater heights." Concluded MEC Lerule-Ramakhanya.

Be Alert of of fake news! The school calendar has not changed and remains the same as previously announced. Please be aware that any posts claiming a new school calendar are false.

2025 Calendar for Public schools

January 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Public and School Holidays 2025	
01 January	New Year's Day
21 March	Human Rights Day
18 April	Good Friday
21 April	Family Day
27 April	Freedom Day
28 April	Freedom Day' observed
29 April	Special school holiday
30 April	Special school holiday
01 May	Workers' Day
02 May	Special school holiday
16 June	Youth Day
09 August	National Women's Day
24 September	Heritage Day
16 December	Day of Reconciliation
25 December	Christmas Day
26 December	Day of Goodwill

April 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Weekends

School days

Special school holidays

Days for administration

Public holidays

School holidays

SUMMARY OF 2025 CALENDAR FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Duration	No. of weeks	No. of days	No. of public holidays	Actual no. of school days
(13) 15 January - 28 March	11	53 (55)	1	52 (54)
08 April – 27 June	12	59	5+3	51
22 July – 03 October	11	54	1	53
13 October – (10) 12 December	09	43 (45)	0	43 (45)
Total	43	209 (213)	7+3	199 (203)