

“SCHOOLS OPENING” AND EXCITEMENT AS MEC PILLAY VISITS SISONKE DISTRICT

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The 16th of January 2013 was not just about the re-opening of schools for Sisonke District but a day to remember as MEC for Human Settlements and Public Works Mr Ravi Pillay accompanied by members of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, senior management from KZN Departments of Public Works and Education Management respectively and Municipality officials visited schools around Sisonke District. The first schools that had this great opportunity to be visited were Shayamoya Secondary and Horse Shoe Primary schools. Teachers, parents and learners were amazed and at the same time excited to have the privilege to be visited by this delegation.



It's time for learning...seated is MEC Pillay with Shayamoya Secondary School learners

This visit was part of schools monitoring programme which took three days from the 16th to the 18th of January 2013. The main aim of this visit was to address challenges and assist the schools in ensuring that teaching and learning is productive and without any hindering. MEC for Human Settlements and Public Works Mr Ravi Pillay said “we are not here to find faults; education is number one priority, yes we know you have challenges but we are here and prepared to assist in whatever way we can”. He further explained that the schools visited are selected on a particular criteria that the team/delegation perceive it is crucial to visit that particular school. Members of the school governing body at Shayamoya Secondary Schools thanked the MEC and his delegation for coming to the district and expressed their concerns and the problems they were facing at the schools. The percentage of pass rate in Mathematics and Science dropped in 2012 in this school.

On the second day the delegation visited Bulwer schools which are Mashayilanga Primary and Skoffil Secondary Schools. The challenges addressed in most of the schools visited on these three days were long distances that learners had to travel to reach schools, the high number of enrolment of learners compared to the schools' capacity, the pass rate percentage and the storm damaged schools; to mention but a few. A member of the Provincial Legislature Mr Sizwe Mchunu pleaded with the principal, teachers and School Governing Body (SGB) to work together with Government as they were not there to find faults.



Horse Shoe Primary School



**MEC Pillay with a parent at Shayamoya
Secondary School**

The visit was not about challenges only but also to congratulate those schools that excelled well in their work and encourage them to do more. Schools were encouraged to make use of the government assistance provided to them and feel free to contact government officials should they seek assistance and advice. Ixopo /Jolivet schools were visited on the third day. Equally so, all schools visited expressed their appreciation and thanked the government delegation for visiting their schools.



MEC Pillay and members of the Legislature during briefing session

This was indeed a fruitful visit as challenges addressed were dealt with, solutions and way forward was provided to the schools. Among the remedies identified were that school transport was to be provided for the schools that had challenges regarding long distances, the KZN Education Department will continue to support schools by providing various programmes in assisting educators and learners, teachers and community to work together in order to achieve better results.