



Member of Executive Council
for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation
FREE STATE PROVINCE

THE SPEECH OF THE FREE STATE MEC FOR SPORT, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION, MR DAN KGOHULE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE SCHOOL SPORT LEAGUE KICK-OFF, 15 FEBRUARY 2012, KROONSTAD.

**Programme Director
Colleagues
Honoured Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
Comrades**

On the 28th April 2010 we officially launched the School Sport Controlling Body. Since then we have never looked back. Since that launch we have made a number of enormous strides in implementing school sport in the Free State. Some of the programmes we implemented since then include the following:

- 1) Firstly, the My 2010 Schools Adventure;
- 2) Secondly, the 32 Schools Mini Soccer World Cup;

These two programmes served as part of a build-up programme towards the 2010 FIFA World Cup that we hosted two years back as a country. We intensified the feeling of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in the schools.

- 3) Thirdly, the annual Siphon Mutsi Games which involve the Under 13 years old boys and girls at primary school level as well as the Under 15 years old boys and girls at high school level; and
- 4) Fourthly, the Motlalepule Ntsala Games which are staged to pay

homage to the life of a young, talented and aspirant soccer player, Motlalepule Ntsala, who was a Grade 11 learner at the Boitumelo Secondary School in Meqheleng, Ficksburg. Motlalepule passed on the 19th February 2010 during the 32 Schools Mini World Cup soccer match.

Programme director these school sport programmes are a practical expression of our commitment to take school sport to greater heights in the Province. From the launch of a School Sport Controlling body to the implementation of the above four (4) programmes that I have just mentioned, we have also moved to strengthen the unit that manages this programme in the Department through the appointment of a Director and Deputy Director for School Sport. We have also strengthened our partnership with the Department of Education which is our formidable partner in the implementation of School Sport.

Against this background, it gives me a great pleasure that we are gathered today to officially launch the Free State School Sport League. Our gathering here today further demonstrates our commitment and vision to advance school sport in our Province. The structured school sport league will enable us to implement our school sport programme in a comprehensive and organized manner.

This launch is especially significant in that it solidifies the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed, in November 2011, by the Ministers of the National Department of Basic Education and the Department of Sport and Recreation. This MOU asserts that “Ensuring optimal conditions for a child’s participation in sport and recreation is one of the best investments the government can make. There is ample evidence worldwide of the benefits of healthy physical activities for the child, the

community and the country. Investing in children increases a nation's capacity to compete and grow in a global economy. Early exposure of children to diverse healthy physical activities is therefore of critical importance for any country."

Programme director, Sport and Recreation and Education are important vehicles for building a transformed, non-racial, non-sexist society, united in diversity. Both are also essential in the promotion of national reconciliation, social cohesion and national identity. One of the fundamental clauses of the Freedom Charter states "the doors of education and culture shall be open to all", the Charter further states "the aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace...the colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be lifted".

It is important that we collectively identify the problem areas in our schools that impact negatively on the development of sport, and that we put in place strategies to resuscitate sport in schools. Therefore we in government will do everything in our power to create the conditions in which our learners can excel in sport. This means providing sports fields, training equipment and facilities and sports equipment.

Sport is an indispensable means of improving the social fabric of our society, and can make a very real contribution to ensuring our children lead meaningful lives. We have a duty to revive sport in our schools, and ensure mass participation from our learners. Competitiveness from a young age is healthy, as long as it is nurtured in a positive spirit.

Incorporating sports and reviving mass participation in our schools, will give renewed opportunities to our learners to remain in school and complete their education. We must use school sport as a nursery for talent

identification and development, which will lead to our learners moving onto higher honours and make us all proud.

The Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation in the Free State has over the past couple of years committed itself towards the promoting sport activities and encouraging our citizens to partake in sport through various interventions.

We are now on a path of re-introducing sport leagues in all public schools ensuring that all learners are provided with an opportunity to participate in school sport thus creating conditions for talent identification and development by federations. The leagues will be implemented at various levels starting from level 1 (intra school leagues), level 2 (inter schools leagues), level 3 (district festival), level 4 (inter-district/Provincial festival) and level 5 (national festival). The leagues will focus on the following sport codes: Football, Volleyball, Cricket, Athletics, Rugby, Chess, Basketball, Tennis, Gymnastics, Netball and Aquatics.

Programme director, as part of this launch we will award equipment and attire to 10 primary and secondary schools in the province (2 per district) to the value of R50 000 per school.

May I take this responsibility to thank all our stakeholders, particularly the Department of Education, for being with us on this path towards the development of our learners through sport. This might not be an easy path but with all of us joining hands we will make it.

I thank you.