

MESSAGE OF SUPPORT BY LIMPOPO PREMIER DR PHOPHI
RAMATHUBA DURING THE VIRTUAL PROVINCIAL PRAYER DAY FOR
THE 2025 GRADE 12 LEARNERS

SUNDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2025

Programme Director,

Speaker of the Limpopo Provincial Legislature, Dr Makoma Makhurupetja,

Deputy Speaker, Ms Tebogo Mamorobela,

Members of the Provincial Legislature,

Provincial Secretary of the ANC, Vhamusanda Reuben Madadzhe,

MEC for Education, Ms Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya,

Members of the Executive Council,

Executive Mayors and Mayors,

Director-General of the Limpopo Provincial Government, Mr Nape
Nchabeleng,

Head of the Limpopo Department of Education, Mr Maropene Seshibe,

Acting SAPS Provincial Commissioner, Major General Scheepers,

Faith-Based Leaders led by Bishop Naledzani Sikhwari,

Vice-Chancellors of the University of Venda and University of Limpopo,
Professor Nthambeleni and Professor Mokgalong,

District Directors, Circuit Managers and School Principals,

Representatives of School Governing Bodies and Union Leaders,

Parents, learners and the people of Limpopo,

Good evening.

It is an honour and a privilege to address this sacred gathering; a gathering of hearts bound by a common purpose to lift our Grade 12 learners in prayer as they prepare for the National Senior Certificate examinations. We meet not just as a province, but as a united family, a community inspired by faith and purpose, believing in the boundless potential of our young people.

Education is not just the pathway out of poverty, but it is the force that unlocks human potential and transforms generations. It is the seed that grows into hope, the bridge that takes us from challenges to opportunities, the torch that lights the future.

Programme Director, Education turns children of mineworkers into engineers, farmworkers' daughters into doctors, taxi drivers' sons into lawyers, and rural village girls into global leaders. It transforms mud floors into marble halls and forgotten villages into centres of innovation.

Our former state president Nelson Mandela once said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." That weapon is now in the hands of our Grade 12 learners and tonight, through prayer and collective support, we sharpen it.

We gather this evening to pray, but also to commit ourselves to action. We are not here to surrender our future to chance; we are here to shape it. Success does not come by accident, it is driven by discipline, sacrifice, preparation and support. That is why we chose to begin this examination season on our knees, humbling ourselves before God, for we know that "unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain."

Ladies and gentlemen, we do not walk into this moment from a place of weakness. We stand on a growing foundation of progress. In the 2024 matric results, Limpopo achieved an improved pass rate of 85.1%, placing us sixth nationally. This is a major step forward, proof that focus, strategy and dedication yield results. But we are not satisfied.

We know we can do better, and we will do better. This year, 2025 our province has registered a total of 127 000 learners, both full-time and part-time, who will be sitting for exams across 1 648 examination centres, our target is very clear: Limpopo must break into the Top 5 performing provinces in South Africa and we remain committed to supporting every learner to succeed.

Throughout the year, we have strengthened the pillars that drive learning outcomes. We have delivered new classrooms and renovated old ones. Our school nutrition programme continues to give strength to children who attend school under difficult conditions.

We have invested in e-learning tools, weekend camps and revision programmes. We have celebrated excellence among teachers, fifteen of our educators shone at the National Teaching Awards, proving that Limpopo has some of the finest teaching minds in this country.

But we also confront reality with honesty. The journey ahead is not easy. Rural inequality, social pressures, exam stress, substance abuse and community disruptions threaten learner performance. That is why tonight, we are also here to renew our commitment to build an environment where academic success is not an exception but a culture.

We must protect study time. We must silence loud music. We must ensure taverns and events do not distract our learners. We must keep our schools safe.

To our spiritual leaders, Bishop Sikhwari and all faith-based leaders, we ask that you continue to pray for our children. To parents, we ask you to walk this journey with them. To law enforcement, we request strict action against any distractions that may undermine exam preparation. To teachers, we thank you. To communities, we urge unity and support.

But tonight, I wish to speak directly to the stars of this moment, the Class of 2025. My children, your dreams are valid. Your strength is extraordinary. You carry within you the hope of every village, every street, every township across Limpopo.

When you sit for your first paper on Tuesday, 21 October 2025, remember this: you are not alone. Behind you is your family, your community, your province, and your government. Believe in yourself. Study with purpose. Stay disciplined. Refuse to surrender to fear. And remember hard work beats talent, when talent doesn't work hard.

Let us unite behind a movement of success,

#LimpopoNSCTop5.

Let this not just be a hashtag, but a provincial declaration. Together, we shall rise. Together, we shall conquer. Together, we shall win.

May God bless the Class of 2025. May God grant you wisdom, courage and resilience. May His favour rest upon you. May victory be your portion.

I thank you. God bless you all.