

The Future of South Africa lies in Education

Friday, 09 June 2017

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Every year in June, our nation celebrates Youth month, and to latch on to this year's celebrations, the Eden District Municipality (Eden DM), through its Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), handed certificates to twenty-three (23) young people who successfully completed their Early Childhood Development (ECD) Training.

As part of the 2014/15 - 2015/16 EPWP Business Plan, the Eden DM Council approved a "pilot" ECD Project. The long term aim of the project is:

• to train at least one (1) ECD Practitioner per registered site of twelve (12) children over a period of five (5) years;

• to decrease the high levels of poverty and unemployment within the district and lastly;

• to improve the care and learning environment of pre-school children.

The group of ECD graduates who completed their qualification with Eden DM Executive Mayor, Cllr Memory Booysen, the Mayoral Committee Members and representatives for some of the hosting schools.

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Twenty-seven (27) unemployed youth, mostly females between the ages of 16-35 years who reside within the Eden district, were registered at the South Cape Training College for an 18 months NQF Level 4 accredited ECD qualification. Practical classroom experiences during these 18 months were gained at registered Crèches and Primary Schools with Grade R classes in the district's rural areas. Furthermore, students received a daily stipend of R90 per eight hours, together with a separate monthly stipend of R1 514.00 from South Cape Training College, anticipated to cover their transport and study material, providing that they attend all classes and finish their assignments.

The Acting EPWP Manager, Mr Richard Dyantyi directed the programme during the ECD certificate handover ceremony.

On Friday, 2 June 2017, twenty-three (23) ECD Practitioners were acknowledged for their hard work and were awarded in the presence of the Eden DM Executive Mayor, Mayoral Committee Members, Management and representatives from hosting schools. During the official opening, the acting EPWP Manager, Mr Richard Dyantyi, explained to guests that the objective of EPWP is not to "give people fish", but rather to give them a fishing rod in order to go out and catch their own fish. Ms R Flores, principal of Melkhoutfontein Primary School in Still Bay delivered a presentation and word of appreciation on the significant impact the project has made to their school.

The Eden DM Executive Mayor,

Cllr Memory Booyesen, started his address by explaining to those present the meaning of wearing the mayoral chain. He elaborated as follows: "Apart from protocol, we also wear this when we show the highest respect, and today, I am showing my highest respect to you as educators; to you as my fellow leadership, because education is key," said Mayor Booyesen. He continued by stating that one (1) person per household who is unemployed, is already bad enough. He explained that in each and every household in South Africa, the target should be that somebody must be working.

After the proceedings, the Eden DM Executive Mayor, signed the Integrated Incentive Grant Agreement, with the Portfolio Chairperson of Community Services, Cllr Khayaletu Lose (left) and Mr Clive Africa, Executive Manager of Community Services (right).

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Furthermore, Mayor Booyesen emphasised and literally "begged" graduates, to never say to children that they are stupid. "Al maak die kinders julle ook hoe kwaad, moet hulle nooit name noem, wat hulle later sal glo nie." Rather say something to a child that will make them feel empowered. Always remember, one of the kids that you will mentor as you go along, will be the future President, the next Mayor, the future Bill Gates and will be the future leader - the future does exist," he said.

In conclusion, Mayor Booyesen also pledged the commitment of Eden DM, explaining that with the limited finances the Municipality may have in its "kitty" that "we will always make provision for what we celebrate here today. To pump in money into education, no matter how little it may be, because at the end the district will reap the benefits of it."

The Portfolio Chairperson for Community Services, Cllr Khayaletu Lose, ended the prestigious occasion by thanking all the role-players, in particular the

graduates, for making the district proud.