

Zeros to heroes – schools attribute success to hard work

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PUPILS, principals and teachers at some Western Cape schools were overwhelmed yesterday when they discovered that their hard work during the 2010 school year had seen matric pass rates rocket.

Several schools which had recorded 2009 pass rates that saw them labelled as “under-performers” by the Western Cape Education Department significantly improved their results this year.

At Sinenjongo High School in Joe Slovo, near Milnerton, matriculants and teachers celebrated a pass rate that jumped from 44 percent in 2009 to 97.3 percent in 2010.

“We could not have done this without the hard work, determination, discipline and commitment of the pupils and staff,” said delighted principal Khuselwa Nopote.

She joined the school in July and said they had been aiming for a 60 percent pass rate.

“I guess we were too nervous and under pressure and as a result we stretched the Grade 12 and their teachers too much because we had morning, afternoon and weekend classes, which were compulsory for all Grade 12s,” she said.

There were 44 matrics at the school and only one, who is to apply to write supplementary exams, failed.

Nopote said she had started to believe that the matrics

would do well when the school recorded an 85 percent pass rate in the September exams. This had motivated teachers even more, she said.

She credited the telematics programme, an initiative in which lessons are broadcast to more than 100 schools, with being a large part of the school’s success.

Aviwe Nobula, whose pass makes him eligible to study towards a Bachelor’s degree, said he was speechless after receiving his results. The 19-year-old, who is from Dunoon, lost all his belongings in a shack fire after the June exams and had to start from scratch with his school work.

“I am extremely happy. I do not even know what to say. I am

just too happy to even explain how I am feeling,” said Nobula.

Another pupil, 19-year-old Winnie Bokola, who is also from Dunoon, said she knew she would pass because she had been passing throughout the year but the exams were tough.

“I am actually not surprised that I passed because I worked extra hard, (but) I am shaking and crying because I passed with a bachelor – something I did not think was going to be possible,” said Bokola.

Across the city, at Mathew Goniwe High School in Khayelitsha, the pass rate jumped from 45 percent in 2009 to 86.9 percent in 2010.

Principal Ntomboxolo Mqumbisa, who joined the school in April 2009, said she was delighted by the results.

“I am very happy and proud of our pupils – our hard work paid off in the end,” she said.

Mqumbisa also said the telematics programme had been a great help to pupils, and said that pupils had attended many extra classes at the school to help them stay ahead.

Other big improvements were recorded at Joe Slovo High in Khayelitsha, which improved its pass rate from 69.5 percent to 75.7 percent; Langeberg High School in Robertson, which went from 48.9 percent to 87.2 percent and Sinethemba High in Philippi, which went from 46.4 percent to 52.7 percent.

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