

## **MEDIA STATEMENT - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **NEHAWU STATEMENT ON THE 2017 MATRIC RESULTS**

Friday January 5, 2018

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] welcomes the 2017 National Senior Certificate [Matric] results as announced by the Department of Basic Education yesterday.

We congratulate all learners, their families, school governing bodies and all other relevant stakeholders for their collective effort to ensure improvement in the matric results. We also congratulate our ally and sister union, the South African Democratic Teachers Unions [SADTU] for their sterling work under very harsh conditions.

We note the steady improvement of the results by 2.6% from 72.5% for the class of 2016 to 75.1% for the class of 2017. We are however, concerned that 1 185 198 learners were enrolled for Grade 1 in 2006 but learners who sat for the matric exams were 651 707 meaning that 533 491 learners did not participate in the 2017 matric exams. This lowers the pass rate to a mere 41%. A thorough investigation is necessary to ascertain the reasons for this low number.

While we note the slight improvement by both KwaZulu-Natal [69.5% for 2016 and 73.6% for 2017] and Eastern Cape [63.3% for 2016 and 65.8% for 2017] we also note that Limpopo has regressed by 0.8% from 68.2% to 67.4% for 2017. Rural Provinces continue to perform very horribly and this downward trend is continuing unabated. This further highlights the glaring disparities both in resources and infrastructure between rural and urban schools. Children from rural schools continue to be subjected to mud schools, long distance travel to school mostly on foot, and understaffing of teachers, etc.

The results paint a very dark picture for rural provinces as they continue to struggle to improve their matric results. This is a cause for concern because these provinces have a large number of working class learners from poor background who see education as an important tool in the alleviation of the many socioeconomic ills that their communities faces on a daily basis. As NEHAWU, we call on the government to put measures in place as a matter of urgency to deal with the problems faced by these provinces.

NEHAWU continues to call for a more radical and decisive approach in ensuring that the country implements a single-effective coordinated education system that does not disadvantage children from poor families and favours only those with deep pockets. The national union calls on the Department of Basic Education to implement a national independent examination council which would, in part, lead to a single matric examination that would do away with the National Senior Certificate [NSC] written by pupils in the public education system and the Independent Examination Board [IEB].

The national union working with SADTU and Progressive Youth Alliance [PYA] will urgently convene an education alliance meeting to thoroughly analyse these outcomes and map up a way forward for the future in preparations for the class of 2017 especially after the announcement of free higher education by the President in December 2017.

Issued by NEHAWU Secretariat

Zola Saphetha (General Secretary) at 082 558 5968; December Mavuso (Deputy General Secretary) at 082 558 5969; Khaya Xaba (NEHAWU Media Liaison Officer) at 082 455 2500 or email: [khaya@nehawu.org.za](mailto:khaya@nehawu.org.za) Visit NEHAWU website: [www.nehawu.org.za](http://www.nehawu.org.za)



## **KHAYA XABA**

**Media Liaison Officer**

**Tel: +27 11 833 2902 Ext: 60636**

**Mobile: +27 82 455 2500**

**Email: [khaya@nehawu.org.za](mailto:khaya@nehawu.org.za)**

### **NEHAWU HEAD OFFICE**

**National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union**

56 Marshall Street | Marshall Town | Johannesburg

PO Box 10812 | Johannesburg | 2000

Tel: +27 11 833 2902 | Fax: +27 11 833 0757 (Secretariat)

Website: [www.nehawu.org.za](http://www.nehawu.org.za)

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