



MINISTRY  
TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X424, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa. Tel. (+27 12) 444 6780, Fax (+27 12) 444 7027  
Private Bag X9154, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa. Tel. (+27 21) 469 5800, Fax: (+27 21) 465 3216

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**23 JANUARY 2025**

### **TOURISM DEPUTY MINISTER MAGGIE SOTYU EMBARKS ON BACK TO SCHOOL PROGRAMME IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE**

As part of the Government back to school campaign Deputy Minister, Maggie Sotyú visited Yakhisizwe Secondary School in Tumahole location, Parys, Free State on Thursday, 23 January 2025. The Back to School initiative highlights education as a national priority in supporting economic development, reducing poverty and inequality, whilst improving the lives of young people.

Deputy Minister of Tourism Maggie Sotyú as the Fezile Dabi District Development Model (DDM) Champion in the Free State Province, embarked on empowering learners as part of encouraging excellence and curb the scourge of poverty on learners who come from disadvantaged background. This forms part of the President's DDM initiatives that encourages integrated coordination of all spheres of government and society to enhance the capacity of the state. The Deputy Minister's visit takes place as the Free State Department of Education achieves the top position in the Grade-12 2024 pass rate for the sixth consecutive time, with the Fezile Dabi District achieving a second position as the best performing region in the country.

Deputy Minister Sotyú started the programme by engaging the Principal and School Governing Body Chairperson to appreciate their commitment and hard work in promoting learning culture and nurturing the future leaders of the country.

The Deputy Minister committed to adopt Yakhisizwe Secondary School with the aim to ensure that the school maintains its top position in the matric pass rate, but moreover that the Fezile Dabi District will move to first position as the best performing District in the country.

Deputy Minister Sotyú stated that Fezile Dabi is an important tourism area and aims to make the District the best it can be to the benefit of the local communities and the regional economy. She also vowed to ensure that Vredefort Dome project reach its completion timeously, so it can create job opportunities for youth in Fezile Dabi District and the entire Free State Province.

Following the engagement with learners and educators, the Deputy Minister of Tourism concluded her visit by presenting back-to-school packages to the learners and Principal.

**ENDS**

Ms. Tasneem Carrim

Departmental Spokesperson  
Cell: +27 (0) 82 467 9227  
Email: [TCarrim@tourism.gov.za](mailto:TCarrim@tourism.gov.za)