

DR TIRHANI MABUNDA'S SPEAKING NOTES AT NYUKANI EDUCATION CENTRE (NEC) GIYANI'S INDUCTION DAY ON WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2018 INTRODUCING NEC'S EXECUTIVE HEAD, MR ANTHONY DE BOER

Program Directors;

Directors and Alternate Directors of NEC, Mr Eric Sambo (in absentia), Dr Richard Chauke, Ms Phathiswa Sefatsa, Mr Vusi Sindane (in absentia) and Mrs Vutomi Mabunda-Jones (in absentia)

Executive Head Designate of NEC, Mr Anthony de Boer;

Interim Principal of NEC, Ms Nancy Mhlongo;

Chairperson of NEC's Board of Governors, Mr Abraham Mathonsi;

NEC's Headboy, Matimu Sono

NEC's Headgirl, Machipi Maite;

Circuit Manager, Ms Kondi Machumele;

Hosi Homu and the Homu Traditional Council;

All Parents of NEC Learners;

All Educators, Administration Staff and Support Staff of NEC;

All NEC Learners;

All Dignitaries and Invited Guests present here today;

Ndza mi losa.

Program Directors, thank you for the time you have given me to speak at this event, introducing NEC's Executive Head, Mr Anthony de Boer. Mine is a very simple task today. I am not here to give a speech, but Program Directors, allow me to make a few comments before I execute my task.

L&G, it is not a coincidence that NEC was established in a rural setting here at Homu 14B. This is a deliberate initiative to provide hope and change society by offering holistic and futuristic quality education capable of producing creative, innovative and critical scientists, engineers, technologists and entrepreneurs. NEC is not just a school and is not just about academic results either. It is a change agent determined to make a meaningful intervention in society. The establishment of NEC is a yearning by the founders of the school to fulfil a higher purpose of reaching out to marginal communities. A higher purpose of giving ordinary people opportunities to break the vicious cycle of poverty and underprivilege. L&G, this higher purpose transcends our short lives on earth. Program Director, my own personal experience of suffering prejudice and poor educational opportunities at a rural school during my formative years informs our intervention. L&G, if the school was just a commercial venture, we could have built it in metropolitan areas like Johannesburg where we could have the opportunity to charge higher fees. Instead, we chose to locate the school here at Homu 14B where the fees are effectively subsidized by the shareholders as affordability dictates that we charge low fees.

I remember asking the initial team of educators recruited to start teaching at the school in January 2016 what they thought the purpose of NEC was, at a planning session in Magoebaskloof. They all answered that NEC's purpose is to achieve good results. I was quick to correct them, saying that much as good results are important, our purpose is far bigger than just grade 12 results. Our purpose is to change society as pronounced in our Manifesto. I will be the first one to agree that changing society is indeed a grand pursuit. One which is probably idealistic and infinite.

Yes, it is unlikely that we will ever achieve this higher purpose in our lifetime. My generation will pass on without finishing this task. Other generations will take over from us and hand over to other generations ad infinitum, as they say. However, daunting as it is, we are determined to set out on this journey of changing society. Mr de Boer and I debated the matter of how one should measure impact for a school like ours. Is it through good matric results, or through our learners' command of the English language? In the end, we agreed that ideally, we should track our grade 12 learners up to 15 and 20 years after they graduated from our school. Anthony and I agreed that their personal impact in society will be the truest measure of the impact of our work at NEC. Fortunately, Mr de Boer has some measure of success in this regard. It was my son Vulani who came up with the idea of head-hunting Mr de Boer to join NEC. Vulani passed through Mr de Boer's hands leading to his graduation at Khanyisa Education Centre in 2001. Some 17 years thereafter, Vulani is now a group director at Tirhani Group Holdings and is a holder of a Masters Degree. A number of his 2001 cohort also happen to be making good strides in life.

1. INTRODUCTION OF ANTHONY DE BOER

L&G, it gives me a lot of pleasure and excitement that the person I am about to introduce to you shares the higher purpose I am talking about earlier, that of changing society.

1.1. EDUCATIONA QUALIFICATIONS

- National Senior Certificate – Krugersdorp High School (1978)
- Higher Diploma of Education, Secondary – Wits / JCE (1983)
- Bachelor of Arts – Geography & Education – UNISA (1992)
- Honours Bachelor of Arts – Geography – UNISA (1994)

1.2. PROFESSIONAL CAREER

- **1984 – 1986:** Held TED post while doing National Service –Oudtshoorn – Infantry School, Officer’s Training
- **1987 – 1988:** TED teaching post, Capricorn High School, Polokwane
 - ✓ Head of Geography, 1988
 - ✓ Senior House Master – Mitchell Girl’s Hostel, 1988
 - ✓ U15 Rugby Coach, 1988
 - ✓ Chief Athletics Organiser & Coach, 1987 – 1988
- **1989 – 1991:** Educator, Khanyisa Secondary School, Giyani
 - ✓ Class teacher, Grade 8, 1989
 - ✓ Subject teacher, Grade 8/9, Geography, Mathematics & Afrikaans
- **1992:** Director of Studies, Khanyisa Secondary School, Giyani
 - ✓ Subject teacher, Grade 10-12 Geography, Grade 8/9 Mathematics
 - ✓ Coordinator of curriculum development
 - ✓ Planning, organisation & implementation of examinations
 - ✓ Timetabling
 - ✓ Coordination of academic reporting
 - ✓ Monitoring of the academic programme
 - ✓ Coordinating placement tests
- **1993 – 1996:** Deputy Head, Khanyisa Secondary School, Giyani. The following responsibilities were added to those of Director of Studies:
 - ✓ Monitoring learner discipline
 - ✓ Organising the afternoon activity / sport programme
 - ✓ Chairing the Bursary Fund Committee
 - ✓ Independent Examination Board (IEB) Liaison
 - ✓ Deputizing for the Head during his absence
- **1997 – 1998:** Principal, Khanyisa Secondary School, Giyani
 - ✓ Overall in charge of the Secondary School, reporting to the Executive Director and the Khanyisa Council (Board of Governors).

- **1999 – 2004:** Senior Director of Khanyisa Education Centre, Giyani
 - ✓ Head of the Secondary School
 - ✓ Coordinate the activities of Khanyisa Education Centre
 - ✓ Financial management and budgeting
 - ✓ Fundraising
 - ✓ Marketing
 - ✓ Oversee capital development projects
 - ✓ Human resource management
 - ✓ Develop and oversee quality management systems, etc.
- **2005 - 2007:** Deputy Head, Stanford Lake College, Haenertsburg
 - ✓ Head of Boarding, the majority of Stanford pupils are in boarding.
 - ✓ Responsible for school administration including: daily routine, timetable, school calendar, The Snapshot (a weekly newsletter), managing the school administration programme EduAdmin and chairing disciplinary hearings.
 - ✓ Successfully guided the College through a Whole School Evaluation as coordinator of the evaluation process in 2006.
 - ✓ Responsible for coordinating the UMALUSI Self Evaluation process and submitting the Evaluation File in 2007.
 - ✓ Member of the following committees: College Executive Committee, Chair of the Board Compliance Committee, Chair of the Senior House Parents' Committee, Chair of the Whole School Evaluation Committee, Health and Safety Committee.
 - ✓ Responsible for developing and implementing a mentoring programme at the College.
 - ✓ Subject teacher, Grade 10, 11 & 12 Geography and Grade 9 Maths.
 - ✓ 1st Team Cricket Coach
 - ✓ 1st Team Hockey Coach
 - ✓ Athletics Coach specializing in Hurdles, Triple Jump & Long Jump

- **2008 to date:** Executive Headmaster of Southern Cross Schools, Hoedspruit
 - ✓ Head of pre-school, preparatory school and college at Southern Cross.
 - ✓ Responsible for all aspects of operating an independent school.
 - ✓ Successfully managed and fundraised for the Reach-a-Cross Community Partnership school outreach programme.
- **Other positions held:**
 - ✓ IEB, Grade 9 Maths Examiner & Marker 1992
 - ✓ IEB, Grade 9 Geography Marker 1993 – 1997
 - ✓ Limpopo Province, Grade 12 Geography Chief Examiner '97 – '99
 - ✓ Limpopo Province, Grade 12 Geography Chief Marker '97 – '99

1.3. PROFESSIONAL SUCCESSES

- **2008 – 2017:** Some of the ways Mr De Boer positively influenced the development of Southern Cross Schools (SCS) include:
 - ✓ Took the school from a primary school only to a comprehensive school from day care level right the way through to Grade 12;
 - ✓ Grew the enrolment of the school from 180 learners in 2008 to 330 in 2017 in a small town with a very limited feeder area;
 - ✓ Put systems in place to ensure a 100% pass rate in the IEB NSC examinations at Grade 12 level since the first Grade 12 class in 2011 – six successive years;
 - ✓ Managed six million Rand loan account to facilitate capital development at the school;
 - ✓ Initiated various methodologies at SCS including Brain-based learning, Habits of Mind, a Growth Mindset approach & Sustainability Education;
 - ✓ Developed a satellite SCS in the Sabi Sand Game Reserve;
 - ✓ Developed SCS to the point of being a serious competitor in a number of areas including academics, sports, cultural activities and environmental awareness.

- **2005 – 2007:** Some of the ways Mr De Boer positively influenced the development of Stanford Lake College (SLC) include:
 - ✓ Successfully implementing a computerized reporting and admin system at SLC;
 - ✓ Successfully initiating and producing a weekly newsletter to parents and the wider SLC community;
 - ✓ Organizing and undertaking the first overseas sports tour from the SLC;
 - ✓ Coaching both the 1st Cricket and Hockey teams to successive provincial league finals and winning the provincial cricket final in 2006.
- **1989 – 2004:** Mr De Boer considers himself being a part of the team responsible for the development of Khanyisa Education Centre (KEC) a professional success for the following reasons:
 - ✓ KEC grew from a small independent primary school with 70 learners in 1989 to a large complex including pre-primary, primary, secondary and adult education, catering for almost 900 learners/year.
 - ✓ KEC was included in the Sunday Times' survey as one of the Top 100 Schools in South Africa, for four years in succession.
 - ✓ KEC was the recipient of the Education Africa, Premier's Award for Education in 1999.
- **1998 – 2003:** Successfully fundraised around R638 000.00 for KEC's Early Childhood Development Training Centre.
- **1999:** Successfully negotiated a R3 million grant from Anglo American for the building of staff and learner accommodation at Khanyisa.
- **2004:** Secured a R380 000.00 grant from the National Lotteries Distribution Fund for the upgrading of sports facilities at Khanyisa.
- **1998 – 2004:** Successfully led a team of 70 employees to develop one of the most successful independent educational institutions in Limpopo.
- **1997 – 2004:** Successfully initiated and co-ordinated the development of cricket in the Giyani area.

1.4. PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- **2006 to 2007:** Chairman of the Limpopo Province Boys' Secondary Schools Hockey Association.
- **2007 to 2007:** Vice Chairman of the Limpopo Secondary Schools Cricket Association.
- **2004 to 2010:** Board member and Secretary of the Khanyisa Council.
- **1999 to date:** Member of the Southern African Heads of Independent Schools Association (SAHISA)
- **1999 to date:** Member of the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) and Chairperson of the North Eastern Region of ISASA in 2004/2005.
- **1999 to date:** Member of the Limpopo Independent Schools Association (LISA) and Chairperson of LISA from 2002 to 2005.
- Member of the Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA) since 1994.
- Former Committee Member of the Limpopo Province Examination Board.
- Founder and member of AWUKULE (Let It Grow), Environment Education Forum for teachers in the Giyani Area.
- Founder and member of the Giyani Cricket Development Forum (GCDF)

1.5. COURSES/CONFERENCES ATTENDED

- **1993 - 1994:** Management and Leadership course – Henley Business School
- **1997:** ISC OBE Conference – World Trade Centre
- **1997:** Science and Technology Conference – JCE
- **1999:** ISC Seminar for New Heads – Johannesburg
- **1999:** ISASA Conference – Central Region
- **2000:** ISASA Skills Development Fund Workshop
- **1999 – 2002:** Annual National SAHISA Conferences
- **2000:** Cooperative Learning Workshop offered by Dr John Gibbon

- **2002:** ETDP SETA Quality Management Systems Course – Gauteng
- **2002:** Cooperative Learning & OBE Workshop offered by Gavin Keller
- **2002:** South African Council for Educators Ethics Workshop
- **2004:** ISASA Governance Workshop
- **2005:** Teacher Appraisal Workshop – Mark Potterton
- **2008:** Brain-based Learning Workshop presented by Gavin Keller
- **2009:** Teaching & Reaching Boys Workshop presented by Dr Jesús Amaya
- **2011:** Habits of Mind Workshop researched and presented by Ant de Boer
- **2013:** Brain-based learning revisited workshop by Gavin Keller
- **2016:** Growth Mindset workshop presented by Gavin Keller
- **2017:** ISASA Sustainability Education Conference – Bishops College, Cape Town

1.6. PUBLICATIONS

- With Mark Potterton and Kerry Pile (1998) Learners in the Landscape Francolin Publishers, Cape Town

1.7. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- **1992 – 1996:** Secretary of the Khanyisa Parent Teacher Association
- **1993 – 1996:** Secretary of AWUKULE, Environmental Education Association
- **1998 – 2000:** Secretary of the Giyani Cricket Development Forum
- **2000:** Vice Chairperson of the Giyani Area, South African Principals' Association
- **2002 – 2003:** Chairperson of Limpopo Independent Schools Association
- **2003 – 2004:** Chairperson of the NE Region of ISASA
- **2006 – 2007:** Member of the Haenertsburg Development Forum (HadeF)
- **2008 – 2011:** Member of the Kruger to Canyon Biosphere Reserve Committee
- **2007 – 2009:** Member of the Sustainable Living Festival Organising Committee

1.8. INTERESTS/HOBBIES

- Birding – member of BirdLife South Africa and participant in certain projects of the Avian Demography Unit (ADU)
- Photography – a hobby that comes in useful from time to time
- Cricket development – From 1998 to 2004 working with the UCB and Limpopo Youth Cricket to establish a culture of cricket in the Greater Giyani area
- Company Director of The Eco Adventure Lodge (Pty) Ltd. A family concern based in Houtbosdorp on the farm Kurisa Moya (originally Sterkloop) operating as an Eco-lodge.
- Trustee of the Ben de Boer Trust
- Trustee of the Peter W Huckell Trust

Program Directors, L&G, you will agree with me that the Executive Head I am introducing to the NEC community today here is a versatile person. Not only does he have the qualifications and experience for the job we have recruited him to come and do here at NEC, but he also has lots of passion for it. If you ask me, I went all out to bring Anthony here because of his passion. I know that some people were beginning to doubt NEC's founding statements. I received formal complaints from some concerned parents earlier this year who raised the following issues, among others:

- That we are not offering the additional subjects promised in our founding statements and prospectus. I directed the Interim Principal to respond to them. For instance, the Department of Education prohibits us to permit our learners to take more than the prescribed 7 subjects unless they demonstrate that they have the capacity to handle more workload. L&G, this is something that will become a reality once we start presenting the learners who we are grooming in-house from grade 1.

- Other complaints are that we are offering limited subject choices, that we have not yet introduced visual arts and that we have not yet introduced e-learning.

L&G, be rest assured that we remain committed to our promises. Maybe we were a bit overzealous. But let me assure you, we will never relent on our determination to change society. Anthony's arrival here is proof of our seriousness to pursue our dreams and those of our learners. Vatsonga vari "**Mintirho ya Vulavula**", literally translated to mean "**Deeds Speak**". We have all the confidence that Mr de Boer has what it takes to take NEC to its desired level. However, as South Africa's first democratic President Nelson Mandela would say, Mr de Boer will not succeed in his job unless all of us support him. Yes, he must provide the leadership, but we all have to chip in and do our bit, learners, educators, administration staff, support staff, parents, all of us. As for me and my fellow shareholders and directors of NEC, we have committed ourselves to do our utmost best to support Mr de Boer and his team in their endeavour to make NEC the success it is bound to become.

Before I invite Mr de Boer to address you, let me briefly tell you what his job entails. We didn't coin the title Executive Head. It is a title coined by ISASA. It refers to a principal who heads a comprehensive school like NEC, which consists of learners from creche, foundation phase, intermediate phase to grade 12. The reason such a principal's position is elevated to Executive Head is that he is basically the Chief Executive Officer of the school. A CEO assumes executive authority and accountability for everything which happens at an institution, NEC Giyani in this case. This is the case with Mr de Boer. He is the CEO of NEC Giyani.

For now, Mr De Boer will report to the NEC BOD through the office of the Executive Chairperson. Should it happen that NEC establishes more schools in the future, the structure allows for the position of a Director of Schools who will be responsible for all the schools.

Program Director, before I invite Mr de Boer to address you, let me thank my Interim Principal Nancy Mhlongo for the sterling work she has done since we thrust her into the deep end of the pool in October 2017. Ms Mhlongo, on behalf of NEC's BOD, we would like to express out heartfelt gratitude for the manner in which you acquainted yourself to your work. And as confirmation of our confidence in your ability, yours is the only position we the NEC Board have imposed on Mr de Boer. He is under instructions to continue working with you as his Deputy Principal. As for the rest of the structure below the two of you, you guys will advise us going forward as to how you want to organize yourselves. Obviously, our work will continue to be done in a consultative manner.

Program Directors, L&G. Once more, thank you very much for the opportunity I was given to introduce NEC's Executive Head, Mr Anthony de Boer, who I now present to you. Mr de Boer, you are welcome, the stage is yours.