

Deputy President Paul Mashatile calls on corporates to financially support matrics who want to study further

Deputy President Paul Mashatile has called on citizens, the private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to join forces with government to offer financial help to youngsters who wish to further their studies.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

The Deputy President was speaking on Tuesday at the Vincent Tshabalala Education Trust Annual Bursary Awards in San Kopano, Alexandra, Johannesburg.

He also congratulated the Matric Class of 2023 for achieving a national pass rate of 82.9%, which is the highest in the history of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) exams.

“The dedication to your studies is truly commendable and is the reason we have gathered here to acknowledge your accomplishments. In general, the matric pass rate of 2023 is a good story for our country to tell, as it shows how the education system has transformed over the past 30 years.

“Once upon a time, it was difficult for a black child to achieve a Bachelor’s pass and have the opportunity to apply at any institution of higher learning.”

However, according to the Deputy President, due to the measures put in place by government over the years, more black children from underprivileged communities are studying at higher learning institutions.

“Government is implementing measures to enhance access to education, especially in communities that are most vulnerable and structurally marginalised,” Mashatile told the attendees.

Government, he said, is also making headway with the implementation of the three-stream curriculum model, which marks a significant change in emphasis towards more vocational and technical education.

He also spoke about the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), which provides financial support to eligible students from low-income households to cover tuition fees, accommodation and study materials.

“While these government initiatives are instrumental for transformation, we still urge communities, the corporate sector, and NGOs to collaborate with government in offering financial aid and other kinds of developmental support to deserving students.

“As a community, we must never deter from achieving our goal of nurturing our youth so that they can be leaders and the change-makers of tomorrow,” he said.

The Deputy President paid homage to his late friend and comrade, Vincent Tshabalala, a founder of the Alexandra Youth Congress (AYCO) and member of the ANC’s military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. Tshabalala died in a battle with the apartheid police in Alexandra in 1985.

Today, hundreds of learners from the five Alexandra high schools have been awarded bursaries and some of those who have completed their studies are now chartered accountants, engineers, IT specialists, lawyers, lecturers and auditors.

“The trust appreciates the role that communities play in developing the youth. I believe that community-based development organisations can make a difference in more meaningful ways than the government or the private sector,” said Mashatile.

He encouraged the community to embrace the opportunities for local organisations to collaborate and form partnerships that will contribute to the overall wellbeing of the youth.

These community-led initiatives, he said, include efforts to strengthen and advance early childhood development, adult education and skills training.

Mashatile pleaded with the community to collaborate on the development and improvement of schools, libraries, and other educational facilities to establish a favourable atmosphere for learning.

“If we all work together to improve our community, we will be able to address the high rates of crime, gender-based violence, substance abuse, and other social ills that are eating away at the youth.

“As active community members, we have a responsibility to safeguard and lead our youth toward a path of greater success.”

The Deputy President also congratulated the learners who received awards for their outstanding performance. “We also pledge our support and guidance to these young people. We want you to know that we will be here for you throughout your academic journey.

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