

# Keynote Speech delivered at 2019 PEU Conf...

## PEU (Professional Educators Union) Conference Topic:

Advocating quality education through the fourth industrial revolution skills

Keynote speech given by Dr KM Mphahlele, DDG for Curriculum Management and Delivery at the Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE), on behalf of the Head of the LDoE

**Date:** 2019 November 01

**Venue:** Tiveka Lodge

**Time:** 09h00 - 13h50

- Programme director
- Managers of the Department of Education
- President of PEU
- Executive Leadership and membership of PEU
- Representatives of other organized formations
- Publishers
- Invited guests
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning!

Allow me to commence my address with an apology.

You invited the SG (Superintendent General) to speak on the following topic:

## Advocating quality education through the fourth industrial revolution skills

Unfortunately she is unable to address you due to circumstances beyond her control. Instead she requested me to speak on her behalf and convey her well wishes to you.

Allow me, programme director, to make few remarks about today's topic. Let me say at the outset that your topic is topical for a number of reasons.

First it highlights one of the values of the Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE); namely **quality education**. Delivery of quality education is a phrase mentioned in the vision statement of the LDoE. You, as deliverers of education, have no choice but to deliver quality education in order for the Department to achieve its vision. But, we cannot have quality education without **quality teaching**.

But what do we mean by quality education and, by implication, quality teaching? For some it might mean producing more bachelor passes. For some it might mean producing more distinction passes. Those who believe education is what remains after one has forgotten what one was taught, quality education and

teaching might have a different meaning. Others might even even go further and cite learning to learn skills as what quality education and, by extension, quality teaching must focus on.

All of the above are correct and are encapsulated in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). One has to study the indicators of the education system to determine what quality education delivery mean in South Africa in general and the Limpopo province in particular.

Recent studies on quality of teacher capabilities in the province are disturbing. On the one hand subject content and methodology were found to be grossly low among teachers who participated in self-diagnostic tests. Varied number of reasons can be advanced for this finding. On the other hand, teachers who participated in training programs perform below 40% after support.

The Department has, after advice from key stakeholders who attended the 2019 Curriculum Lekgotla, drafted teacher development policy and model with potential to massify quality teacher education across the province. Teacher unions, including PEU, are being consulted on these policy interventions and are expected to provide final inputs and recommendations before the end of this academic year.

As a way of building capacities and capabilities to roll out these teacher development policy interventions, the Department began a process of strengthening professional support services by what we describe as Curriculum Support Practitioners (who comprise subject advisors, Curriculum Coordinators and Curriculum advisors) (CSP).

The vehicle the Department will be utilising to building capabilities of all CSPs is, among others, an Induction Programme (IP). The IP is designed to ensure that the practitioners are on the same proverbial wavelength in order for them to work as a system. Its design seeks to exploit the fourth industrial revolution by having both face-to-face and online components. The mode of delivering this programme is, therefore, planned to be blended and, by implication, requires facilitators to be both technofluent and chalk-fluent.

Programme Director allow me to share with the attendees initial steps we have taken to begin a collaborative journey with teacher unions in the province. We had a fruitful two-day working session with teacher unions in July 2019 at which we agreed on the draft collaboration framework and rules that must guide its operations. We intend calling the second meeting soon to adopt the collaboration framework with the view to presenting it at the 2020 Curriculum Lekgotla which is planned to be convened prior to the Basic Education Lekgotla which is

scheduled for 15-17 January 2019.

Program Director allow me to also make comments about another notion contained in your topic for this conference; namely the **4th industrial revolution**.

Participants will recall that the January 2019 Curriculum Lekgotla reflected on the 4th industrial revolution and recommended e-Education strategy to be rolled out by the LDoE in order to respond adequately to challenges and opportunities brought about by the 4th industrial revolution. This strategy speaks to another concept in the vision statement of the Limpopo Department of Education; namely, **innovative education delivery**.

The Department has begun to prepare the ground for efficient and effective rollout of the e-Education strategy which forms the sixth pillar of the 2024/5 Curriculum Roadmap. We have called for names of ICT champions (one per school) but their submission have been extremely slow. We appeal to PEU to facilitate speedy submissions of those who are keen to be ICT champions in schools.

The other area the Department has been active in building capabilities for the 4th industrial revolution is collaborating with higher education institutions and SETAs to train teachers on ICT Integration. In good proverbial hands, ICT Integration has potential

to address subject teaching challenges such as long distances, minimal human resource capacities and limitations brought about by physical constraints.

Other areas that need attention in order to build 4th industrial revolution capabilities are coding and programming. As a way of responding to this area, the Department has identified 110 schools to pilot coding and programming. PEU is advised to consider not only supporting but also participating in these efforts in order to ensure coding and programming capabilities are established in our schools.

The MEC, Mma Polly Boshielo, prioritised the 4th industrial revolution in her first budget vote speech. Among others, she promised to give to all senior and circuit managers tablets. She has delivered on this promise. Those who have access to social media will have witnessed photos of their managers receiving tablets. The next deliverable for this financial year is the WIFI.

Remember that the revolution mentioned in your topic is indeed a revolution.

It disrupts.

It disturbs.

It makes us anxious

It makes us uncomfortable.

It questions us.

It challenges us.

Imagine the number of jobs that will not exist by the time we vote for the seventh administration. Which jobs do you think will be obsolete then? Will teaching be one of them?

A number of jobs that we take for granted now will be gone by then. These include pilots, taxi drivers and more routine jobs that can be done by robots (if literature is anything to go by).

I happened to be in Brazil with the MEC in September of this year. We witnessed first hand how robots are used to train medical practitioners. These robots are made to have "attributes" of a human person. They "feel" the pain when operated. They even "die" when given overdose of toxic prescriptions. These developments compel us to adopt a new mindset; a new consciousness.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for having invited the Department to your conference. More importantly I commend you for having chosen a topical topic which has direct implications for your future teaching careers. Indeed you do not wish to be left behind. We look forward to your inputs at the next collaboration meeting we intend convening before the end of the year and the Curriculum Lekgotla we planned for January 2019.

We say to you, lead us into the future and guide  
current and future generations into the  
industrial revolution and beyond

Best wishes with

I thank

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