



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### Sitintile Secondary crowned Mpumalanga SAYWP champions

25 March 2025

Sitintile Secondary School from Kanyamazane, in the City of Mbombela Local Municipality, has been crowned the Mpumalanga provincial champion in the South African Youth Water Prize (SAYWP) competition. The school will now represent the province at the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) National Adjudications later this year. The provincial competition was held in Middelburg, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, on 20 March 2025.

Grade 11 learners Ngcebo Nzima and Fikile Nxumalo secured first place in the invention category with their innovative project. Second place went to Suikerland Secondary School from Malalane in Nkomazi Local Municipality, while Skhila Secondary School from Lydenburg in Thaba Chweu Local Municipality claimed third place.

Mr. Jan Mabena from DWS highlighted the significance of the SAYWP, stating, "The competition is a key initiative under the Water and Sanitation Education Programme (WSEP). Launched in 2003, it is open to two learners from grades 9 to 11 per school, per category."

The objectives are to promote the protection of South Africa's natural resources, encourage and empower youth participation in community-based water resource management, enhance interest in science and technology, and motivate students to pursue careers in the water sector. Participants must also demonstrate innovation and a passion for water conservation and environmental sustainability.

The SAYWP consists of two categories: awareness and invention. In the awareness category, learners conduct research on an identified water-related problem and recommend solutions while creating awareness. The invention category requires learners to research a problem and take action by developing a technical model or invention that addresses the issue.

The Water and Sanitation Education Programme plays a crucial role in raising awareness about water conservation, hygiene, and the impact of invasive alien plants. Additionally, it encourages learners to consider careers in the water sector, fostering long-term engagement in water and sanitation management. This initiative promotes water literacy and imparts a culture of responsible water use within public schools.

The winning learners and their educator expressed immense joy over their achievement. They also gained valuable life lessons throughout their preparation for the competition.

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## water & sanitation

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"This journey has been a profound learning experience, teaching me the power of perseverance and creative problem-solving in addressing water scarcity in our community. Through countless hours of dedication and teamwork, my partner and I developed an innovative solution that not only tackles immediate challenges but also lays the foundation for a sustainable future," said Fikile Nxumalo.

Her teammate, Ngcebo Nzima, reflected on their success, stating, "Winning at the provincial level has been a defining moment for me. Our project required patience, precision, and dedication, and at times, the process felt overwhelming. Balancing schoolwork, personal commitments, and competition deadlines tested our perseverance. As we prepare for the nationals, my hope is not just to win but to inspire," said Nzima.

Speaking on behalf of the Mpumalanga Department of Education, Mr. Tebogo Thage commended the efforts of the Department of Water and Sanitation and the educators for fostering a responsible and engaged youth. He urged learners to take action for water security through their daily efforts.

"I encourage all learners to use their voices to advocate for better water infrastructure, promote sustainable practices, and educate their communities on the importance of water conservation. As we celebrate the talent, innovation, and dedication of our learners today, we must remember that the work does not end here. Water conservation and sanitation require continuous effort. We must act now, as the future of our water security depends on the choices we make today," he concluded

**Themba Khoza**

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