



INTERNET ARTICLE

Deputy Minister Mahlobo commends public private partnerships to tackle water and sanitation challenges in Mpumalanga province

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Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, David Mahlobo has congratulated 54 high school learners who were awarded bursaries by the Department of Water and Sanitation's (DWS) Learning Academy, as well as 15 primary school learners who received cash prizes worth R225 000 on behalf of their schools at the Department's Water and Sanitation Educational Programme National Adjudication.

Nearly 500 learners from every corner of South Africa participated in a week-long WSEP Adjudication that took place from 06 – 09 October 2025 and was closed with the Award ceremony held on Friday, 10 October 2025, in Benoni, Gauteng.

The exceptional pupils were celebrated with 54 full study bursaries from DWS's Learning Academy, and were also presented with laptops, tablets, and prize money. These generous awards come from the Department's partners, including the Energy & Water Sector Education Training Authority (EWSETA), Water Research Commission (WRC).

These awards are paving the way for a brighter future in the water and sanitation sector.

In his address at the Awards Ceremony, Deputy Minister Mahlobo emphasised the importance of education and knowledge, noting that the bursaries and prizes awarded present opportunities for a brighter future to the learners.

"Education is a powerful tool that we are helping you to achieve. Education will give you a chance and open multiple doors, because where you come from does not determine your future. Use this opportunity to reach heights that many only dream of. This is a chance to get on stages and make a difference in the world," the Deputy Minister said.

Deputy Minister Mahlobo also reminded educators and parents that every nation that wants to value its future must take care of and invest in young minds. "Let's nurture the youth, support their innovative ideas because by doing so we'll be building, brick by brick, the future of South Africa." Deputy Minister concluded.

The Water and Sanitation Education Programme aims at educating learners and communities about water use efficiency, management of toilet facilities, and protection of water resources.



By igniting curiosity and nurturing future water sector leaders, the initiative turns classrooms into vibrant centres of water wisdom, inspiring students to treasure every drop and become advocates for smart water use.

With hands-on projects, the programme empowers learners and educators to become real-world problem-solvers, tackling water and sanitation challenges in their schools and communities. The WSEP is implemented through the following projects: Baswa Le Meetse, Aqua Enduro, Public Speaking, Curriculum Support, Intervention Projects, Career Promotion, and Celebration of Special Days.

Baswa Le Meetse featured five creative subcategories: drama, music, poetry, praise poetry, and posters. Winners shared an impressive R225 000 in prize money, with first place earning R20 000, second place R15 000, and third place R10 000.

In the drama category, Rolihlahla Intermediate School (Northern Cape) stole the spotlight with the first prize, followed by Benjamin Primary (Mpumalanga) in second place and Cefane Art Academy (Eastern Cape) taking third. The music competition saw Fezokuhle Primary (KwaZulu Natal) rise to the top, with Thohoyandou Primary (Gauteng) earning silver and Injongo Primary (Western Cape) claiming bronze.

Riding the wave of artistic success, Aqua Enduro, an initiative to address the skill shortage in the scientific and engineering disciplines within the water sector at grass roots level, awarded 27 bursaries. KZN, Northern Cape, and North West each secured six, with KZN ultimately leading the pack.

Olwethu Ndlovu, Asanda Mazibuko, Enzokuhle Mthembu, and Lwandle Nhlengethwa are among the learners who received bursaries from the Learning Academy.

Aqua Enduro had a special category, where Lethabo Maoba from NW was named Top Achiever, Tshireletso Rangwaga from FS was recognized as Most Outstanding Learner based on participation, and Dudu Duma from KZN won Outstanding Educator for 2025.

In the Public Speaking category, Kwanulu Natal and Gauteng outperformed the other provinces, each securing five of the 27 bursaries. Gauteng's five students—Ethan Basson, Steyn Beukes, Rihanna Segal, Lene Bosch and Vuyolwethu Lolwane—will soon be entering the water and sanitation sector. Eastern Cape followed with four bursaries, and Gauteng ultimately claimed first among the top provinces.

Sinethemba Madolo