

Technical school opens in Ncambele

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PARENTS and learners were filled with excitement when Mditshwa Senior Secondary School changed to a technical high school, becoming the first facility of its kind for Ncambele communities and the surrounding areas.

This came about after lengthy consultations between community leaders, members of Ncambele and the Department of Education in the Eastern Cape about the possible change of the school to a technical school after the school was shut down in 2016.

The school finally resumed operations as a technical high school on January 9.

The school's interim structure board has already elected the school's acting principal, Noxolo Ngumbela.

Ngumbela said she was overwhelmed by the support and kindness received from the community of Ncambele, adding that she was also aware of her responsibilities.

The technical school currently has two teachers plus one administration clerk and principal.

Ngumbela said since the technical school was new in the area, they started with just Grade 8 and 9 this year and by 2020 they will grow to Grades 10 to 12.

On Thursday, January 10, when *Express* visited the school, there were more than 28 learners enrolled for Grade 8 and 12 registered for Grade 9.

"We are expecting more than 100 learners this year for both Grade 8 and 9, as some other learners are still waiting for transfer letters from their schools," said Ngumbela.

Classes had already resumed for both grades and on Thursday, *Express* met children busy writing theory studies tests, preparing to start practical exercises in the coming weeks.

Parents have shown huge interest in the changes at the school, which will produce engineers and children who are going to be self employed in the near future.

"The school is not only based on theory but there are also practical classes. We are mostly focusing on technical subjects that will produce engineers, among others," said

Ngumbela.

"In time we are going to use computers for engineering graphics and design, but for now we are focusing on technical subjects such as technology, creative art and maths.

"Schools around Ncambele have shown interest, and we are expecting large numbers of learners," she added.

"I am looking forward to building the school to a better standard producing engineers and town planners.

"We are looking forward to having our own hostel so that the surrounding community can benefit, because it is the only technical school in Ncambele. Learners currently at many surroundings schools will bring a positive impact to Mditshwa Technical High School."

She said they wanted the school to excel in producing matric results as they are going to have Grade 12 learners soon.

"The teachers are here, ready to deliver the best services, but the progress and development of the school depends on the parents and the community as a whole," she said.

Ngumbela is a former deputy principal at Bele-Zengcuka Technical High School in Tsolo.

Bele-Zengcuka was one of the first technical schools in Mhlontlo Municipality.

"Bele-Zengcuka produced the best learners who passed with level 7s in 2017.

"The school was adopted by the Department of Public Works.

"Coming to Mditshwa Technical School, I am looking to excel and do better than Bele-Zengcuka did in the previous years," said Ngumbela.

One of the school's former learners, Maguma Thandiswa (36), said she was very excited for the first day, with the school changing to a technical high school.

"I passed Grade 12 but I am sitting here without a job, so the decision of changing the school to a technical school will open opportunities for our children.

"In these days, in order to get a job, you need to have skills and these children are very fortunate because they are going to open their own businesses if the government fails to create job opportunities," said Thandiswa.



With acting principal, Noxolo Ngumbela, are some of the learners.