

# MEC lashed over 'empty' promise

## PARENTS WANT NEW SCHOOL

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Education Reporter

**THE education MEC in Mpumalanga has failed to resolve problems at a school in Volksrust.**

The parents of pupils at Volksrust Primary School accused MEC Reginah Mhalele of being "dishonest" and failing to fulfil her promise to address the challenges they face.

Last month Sowetan reported about the plight of the school, which is in the same yard as a mosque.

Because there are not enough classrooms, the Grade 2 pupils' classroom is also the school's kitchen, storeroom and tuck shop.

Lessons are disrupted when Muslim worshippers come for prayers every day. Funeral services also disrupt lessons. On Fridays, pupils are forced to leave school at noon to make way for worshippers.

After parents gate-crashed a meeting where Mhalele was meeting principals in Ermelo recently, she promised she would meet them.

Department spokesman Jasper Zwane said Mhalele would visit the school at the end of August or the first week in September. However, parents this week said they had not heard from her office.

"We have not heard anything from them. Instead now we are receiving threats to reveal who spoke to the media," said parent Thulani Mtshali. "The MEC is dishonest ... when she said she would meet us. I think she thinks she is more important than us."

Mtshali said renovations were taking place at the mosque, disrupting lessons further. "It is so noisy children cannot even concentrate."

The department has provided mobile classrooms in an open field, without water or electricity.

"The school is not a priority to them [the department] as the MEC does not keep the promise to meet with us," said another parent.

Zwane said Mhalele would visit the school next Monday.

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**DONATION:** Tim Modise flanked by, from left, Valentine Ntlatleng, Hennie Pienaar, Peggy Marota, Judy Poo and D Motaung making a donation to Tim Modise Primary School

PHOTO: MOHAU MOFOKENG

YOUNG netball players at a school in GaRankuwa, northwest of Pretoria, now have netball courts.

Sowetan, the Tim Modise Foundation and the Telkom Foundation and ICT Worx donated R315 000 in total to Tim Modise Primary School, which the school used to build a new kitchen and netball courts.

Moema Kegomoditswe, a Grade 7 pupil, gave thanks on behalf of her fellow pupils yesterday.

## Netball courts, kitchen for Tim Modise Primary

"We were playing on ground and the girls who play netball would sometimes get hurt by rocks. Now the girls are happy," Moema said.

Modise, of talk radio station Power FM, was a pupil at the school, previously named Agisanang. Principal Valentine Ntlatleng said his predecessor had the school renamed to

honour Modise for his support.

Modise said: "What I miss about school is playing here. That is what I remember. [This is] the most important time in a child's development ... because whatever you believe in and become is inculcated and entrenched at this age." - Nompumelelo Runji