



→ Provincial Winner

Excellence in Secondary School Leadership

Name: Tiro Motaung
School: Centre of Science and Technology (COSAT)
District: Metro East

No excuses; just success. Mr Motaung is principal of COSAT, situated in the sprawling township of Khayelitsha on the outskirts of Cape Town. It is a mixed income area but there are many low-income households located in the school's catchment area. Learners from all backgrounds in Khayelitsha apply to this school of choice: The DBE's Top Performing Quintile 3 School in 2021. All students take Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, IT or Computer Applied Technology, LO, Xhosa (Home Language) and English (First Additional Language). The 99% National Senior Certificate pass rate and 61,2% Bachelors' pass rate of 2023 speak to the calibre of students produced in this school.

Mr Motaung is driven and does not accept excuses from students. Spoken English is encouraged in the school to develop what may be a second or third language for students. Many learning materials – at school, at tertiary institutions and online – are

written in English and strengthening one's comprehension of the language is therefore deemed to be important. He is proud of his meticulously clean school grounds and buildings and takes a lead ensuring that it remains that way.

The use of IT is well-rooted within COSAT and Mr Motaung is a very comfortable IT user. He is a great believer in using technology to facilitate school operations and for record keeping. He takes the lead with planning and recording and expects his staff to follow his lead and to provide him with regular electronic feedback. Parents are also provided with regular feedback: no fewer than seven reports are issued per year to each Grade 8-11 student!

Of the approximately 2000 Grade 7s who apply to COSAT each year, the successful applicants are expected, in the latter part of the year, to attend COSAT with their parents on Saturday mornings to learn C&R,

Maths and English. The aim is to get the incoming students ready and up to speed for the start of Grade 8. The good results obtained by Grade 8s and 9s in Mathematics and English are evidence of the value of this programme and of the good quality teaching in the school.

Mr Motaung and his management team keep a lookout for promising graduates to act as interns. These may be past pupils of the school or other talented students. Appointed interns are paid a stipend (financed by an external organisation). Some may eventually be able to apply for a post at the school.

The school has created links with a number of businesses and organisations. One link is with University of Cape Town which sends various therapists to assist students and parents. Another connection is the partnership that has been created with the local neighbourhood watch who were invited to make the school their base. The school has provided warm jackets with identifying logos to all the members. This collaboration has been so successful that Mr Motaung cancelled the school's contract with a security company.

Staff development is important to Mr Motaung and he encourages his staff to be ambitious and to take leadership opportunities in the school. The staff is encouraged to participate in the NTAs, and eight educators were district winners this year.

New hard-court sports facilities have been built recently and the school has been fortunate to have a solar system installed which helps to mitigate load shedding and to save money.

Mr Motaung has very high standards and strongly encourages his staff and students to have them too. With him at the helm, COSAT is in good hands.