



Front: Mss Di Atherton, Melony Burke, Shirley Mnisi with young Mikhenso on her lap, (back) Mr Dunn Impasa, Ms Jo-anne Wearne and Mr Keith Dyer.

# Become a partner, create possibilities

## Helene Eloff

MBOMBELA - When the month of May reaches its end, an exciting new chapter for the businessmen and schools of Mpumalanga will begin. Partners for Possibility (PFP) recently confirmed that its creative, successful solution to South Africa's education system was on its way to the province.

PFP has been joining business leaders with principals from under-resourced schools since 2010. By combining these positions' skills sets, the way that 408 schools operated has been changed for the better, to the benefit of communities countrywide.

"Although teachers are amazing people who do admirable jobs, a teacher might find him- or herself in an unfamiliar terrain when he or she is promoted to principal. The management and business-orientated duties that come with such a position, are often things that the teacher has not been trained for. PFP partnerships offer assistance in this regard," explained speaker Ms Melony Burke.

Burke has been a partner for five years and has observed the goals of the programme come to life in the school that she mentors in that capacity.

"The PFP partnership seeks to deliver a more energised and equipped school principal, a well-functioning and cohesive school governing body and teachers. Also, the community around the school should become motivated to do their part."

Ms Di Atherton, PFP's local learning-

process facilitator, explained that interested businessmen would have to commit 150 active hours per year to the partnership. This includes a five-day workshop.

"A partnership will cost you R78 000,"

added Burke. PFP's goal is to have 20 000 principal-businessman partnerships by 2020. "At the moment, only two local businessmen have signed up," Atherton said. She urged Lowvelders to grab this opportunity to make a difference in the lives of not one or 10 people, but a whole school. "By empowering the principal, you'll empower a community and you'll empower tomorrow's leaders," she urged.

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Mss Di Atherton, Bernice Manana and Cylist Sithole.

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