



PASSIONATE: Headmaster George Harris and King Leruo Moletlegi at the launch of the Lebone II College of the Royal Bafokeng last week.

Pictures: THABO RANTLHA



CULTIVATING ARTS: This double-storey building houses the art room above and drama space below.



BOOKISH: Lebone II College pupils photographed in the library during the institute's launch.



CULTURAL: The amphitheatre at Lebone II College of the Royal Bafokeng. This facility will be used to host many cultural events.

King's dream comes true

College aims to uplift the Bafokeng nation and surrounding communities

Thabo Rantlha

IN the middle of the manicured Rustenburg valley lies the future of South Africa's education.

The Lebone II College of the Royal Bafokeng campus was founded by the late Kgosi Lebone II in 1997, but was only completed recently and officially opened on Friday.

The college aims to provide young people of diverse backgrounds with the inspiration, education and opportunities to make a positive impact on the Royal Bafokeng nation, South Africa and the world.

The Bafokeng are on a mission

to create flagships in all spheres of their lives, from sports, to education, health and governance.

Some of the completed projects includes the Royal Bafokeng Stadium, the Royal Bafokeng Sports Academy and now this state of the art college.

The current king, Leruo Tshakedi Molotlegi, is 36th in a long line of Bafokeng kings.

He and his brother, Lebone II, shared a passion for creating a school that would combine world class education with the unique context and culture of the Bafokeng.

The Bafokeng vision for education reform includes interventions

in literacy and numeracy, mother tongue instruction in the early grades, effective school management, and strong parental involvement.

The college will provide extensive opportunities to pupils, teachers, and school leaders in the surrounding schools.

George Harris, college headmaster, commented, "Lebone II aims to be a light in this particular community by provoking collective thought around excellence.

"We hope to provide our neighbouring schools with teacher development and training, principal development, exposure to excellence and the best practice

models of education that are available today."

While the majority of the college's 490 pupils come from the 29 villages of the Royal Bafokeng Nation, 30% originate outside Phokeng, ensuring diversity in the student body, and more than 50% of whom receive some form of bursary.

"We hope to set standards in education and compete with the best in the world. The idea is to develop excellence and we will invite teachers from other schools to come and see what excellence is," said Molotlegi.

The college offers boarding for students from Grades 7 to 12, as

well as a 13th-year programme offering an extra year of academic preparation, life skills, and community service prior to university.

It boasts some of the most innovative approaches to sustainable development in Africa, including holistic education reform, the use of sport to generate social and financial returns, and converting mineral resources into the world's leading community-based investment company.

The Bafokeng community own the rights to sections of the largest known reserves of platinum and chrome in the world. The money earned is being used to invest in the future of the Bafokeng.

