**SPEECH BY MUTARE POLYTECHNIC LIBRARIAN, PRETTY CHIBANGWA**

**AT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH CELEBRATION AND FORMATION OF MANICALAND SCHOOL LIBRARIES CONSORTIUM AT HARTZELL PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

**24 OCTOBER 2019**.

**SALUTATIONS**

Director of ceremonies…….…………………………………………………………..

Our Provincial Education Director,Mr E Shumba represented by District Education Inspector for Mutasa Ms Mlambo……………………………………….

District Schools Inspectors here present………………………………………………..

Headmasters from various Schools………………………………………………………

Ladies and Gentlemen…………………………………………………………………….

All protocol observed…………………………………………………………………….

A very good Morning and a warm welcome to you all to the 2nd celebration of the International School Library Month in Manicaland Province. The first celebration was done in 2018 at Chancellor Primary School on the 26th of October. During the previous celebration, we promised each other that it was the beginning and not the end. We thank you all for being consistent towards the development of school libraries to enhance learning and reading culture from an early stage. They say “catch them young”.

Ladies and gentlemen as we celebrate once again, the international school library month running under the theme **Lets Imagine’** we also need to form our consortium that will oversee the development of school libraries.

As Mutare Polytechnic in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Library Association, we felt that we should give back to the community, as part of corporate social responsibility to improve our communities and the province at large.

For the benefit of those who are attending these celebrations for the first time, International School Library Month is a month set aside to celebrate and draw attention to school libraries on the importance of school libraries throughout the world. October 1 marks the beginning of this commemoration. First started as International School Library Day in 1999 by Past President Blanche Woolls, it was changed to International School Library Month in 2008 to give more flexibility to schools around the world to choose a time in the month that best fits their specific situation. During this month, school libraries around the world can choose a day, week, or the entire month to celebrate the importance of libraries. So this is part of our awareness campaign as Mutare Polytechnic and Zimbabwe Library Association to engage schools in commemorating this month.

As I have eluded to earlier, that by the end of these celebrations we would like to establish a consortium that will work together with the Zimbabwe Library Association for the development of school libraries in Manicaland. The aim of the consortium is to:

* source reading material for school libraries,
* facilitate the establishment of school libraries in collaboration with the Provincial Education Directorate.
* Organise awareness programs
* To engage partners in development of libraries
* To collaborate and network for resource sharing like (eg BAI) and buy eBooks at minimal prices.

Composition of the consortium

We recommend that the whole province should be represented by members from each district. The consortium should be composed of members from … say Librarians, DSI, Headmaster, and Teachers so that they share ideas towards development of school libraries that will enhance student learning.

From the previous gathering we had last year, we distributed forms for Book Aid International, for the schools that returned, we submitted the completed forms to Book Aid. Very soon they will contact you to receive the books. However, they have also encouraged that you come together as a group than individual schools.

After these celebrations, we will compile statistics through the consortium of schools with functional school libraries and those that do not have and require assistance for establishment of their school libraries.

Let’s work together to improve

Thank Sheshe siyabonga