



WCPP 11/4/10

Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement
Western Cape Provincial Parliament
IPalamente yePhondo leNtshona Koloni

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Report of the Standing Committee on Education on the Annual Report of the Western
Cape Education Department for the 2022/23 financial year**

REPORT

The 2023/24 strategic objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speaker's priorities, which have an impact on committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Education having deliberated on the Annual Report of the Western Cape Education Department for the year ended 31 March 2023, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

Annual reports are key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against performance targets and budgets as outlined in the strategic plans and annual performance plans of departments. The Standing Committee on Education deliberated on the Annual Report of the Western Cape Education Department (hereinafter the WCED or the Department) on 20 October 2023 as part of its oversight function.

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's Annual Report Programme for the 2022/23 financial year was publicised in newspapers. Stakeholders and members of the public were invited to attend and participate in the discussions. Before proceeding to the deliberations on the Annual Report, the Minister and the Head of Department (HOD) were given the opportunity to make opening remarks.

The Department was examined on:

Part A: General Information;
Part B: Performance Information; and
Part D: Human Resources Management.

Members of the public were also allowed to pose questions and to give input during the discussions.

2. Overview

The Minister of Education, Hon. D Maynier, together with the Head of the Department, Mr. B Walters, provided an overview of the successes and challenges faced by the WCED during the 2022/23 financial year. The Minister and HOD highlighted both challenges and innovative changes in the 2022/23 Annual Report Department.

Notable accomplishments include the "Back on Track" programme, which extended time for mathematics and languages in the foundation phase, and the "Rapid School Build Programme," which aimed to build 602 new classrooms, including a new junior high school.

They emphasised the importance of collaboration and the remarkable achievement of classrooms in record time such as the Rapid Build of classrooms. They also mentioned the focus on ensuring learner placement, addressing learning losses, and enhancing foundational pedagogy. Despite some unmet targets, the WCED's budget was well spent, and the report received an unqualified audit. Systemic testing shows positive results, and the WCED aims to continue its focus on these key areas in the future.

The WCED's Annual Performance Plan for the 2022/23 reporting period is based on the strategic plan developed in 2020, aligned with the National Development Plan (NDP), the Western Cape Government's (WCG) Strategic Plan, and other priorities. The report includes progress towards the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) through government structures and is categorised into seven budget programmes.

3. Key points of discussion of the Annual Report

- 3.1. Mr. Maynier stated that the deployment of School Resource Officers (SROs) is determined by a risk assessment conducted by the School Management Teams (SMTs) of individual schools, considering various factors such as crime rates, staff ratios, and community needs.
- 3.2. During the financial year under review, the WCED co-funded 28 School Resource Officers in 14 schools, which are law enforcement officers stationed at schools to tackle crime and safety matters. This is part of the partnership and support of the Law Enforcement Advancement Project (LEAP) aims to stabilise situations in the vicinity of some schools so that teaching and learning can take place.
- 3.3. The WCED processed 653 422 applications to schools (double count) on the online admissions system during the 2022/23 financial year. This translated into 219 363 unique learner applications.
- 3.4. The WCED reported that in the PERO (2022), that 1.1 million learners were enrolled in public schools in the Western Cape in 2022 where the lowest learner-teacher ratio was in the Cape Winelands (27.95), followed by Metro Central (28.58) and Metro North (29.86) districts. It is also reported that between 2012 and 2021, growth in learner numbers exceeded the expansion of schools and teachers.
- 3.5. The Department stated that migration patterns and live births influence the younger population in the province and affects the available education resources. There has been increased focus on increasing classrooms and this has assisted in absorbing the growing learner numbers and enabling improved learning outcomes.
- 3.6. The WCED indicated that there has been a demand for training on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF): birth to four years. A total of 725 practitioners were trained on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF): Birth to Four Years by four of the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges using a blended learning approach.
- 3.7. The WCED listed performance areas, which are key performance indicators against which the department will measure its impact, this includes the improvement in learner performance in Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12; the improvement of the learner retention rate from Grades 10 to 12; ensuring that learners have access to technical, agricultural, vocational, skills subjects and schools; and ensuring that schools are safer, more secure places of learning.
- 3.8. The WCED stated that in the absence of an approved curriculum and policy statement for coding and robotics, the focus was placed on the pilot schools. The 2022 pilot was extended into 2023. Coding clubs are currently established in 500 schools.

- 3.9. The WCED informed the Committee that, following the recent passing of Ms. K. Bydell, it is currently in the process of appointing a new Chief Evaluator for the Western Cape Schools Evaluation Authority (SEA).
- 3.10. The Department informed the Committee that it has implemented initiatives that are proactive and systemic. These include the Persona Dolls which aims to address diversity, and the socially emotional learning programme, which is a socially emotional learning programme for three to six-year-olds in the Early Childhood Development (ECD) space, which is effective in setting children on a course towards having values.
- 3.11. The WCED further reported that it is implementing the Back-on-Track intervention. This aims to reverse the learning losses in the Foundation, Intermediate, and Senior phases. Critical steps were taken by adding extra two hours per week allocated to reading and one extra hour per week for mathematics for all Grade 1 to 3 learners in the province, amounting to an increase of at least 60 learning hours per learner in these subjects. The Back on Track intervention was expanded to the InterSen Phase, where content training takes place with a specific focus on grades 4, 7, and 8.

4. Public comments

Ms F Jager-Arries from Fadak Foundation, Mr T Tshanango, from Khayelitsha, Ms D Erosi of Equal Education Law Centre, Mr D Jackson, from Sir Lowrys Pass, Mr V Mkhwena, from Sir Lowry's Pass, Mr Y Pillio from Equal Education Law Centre, Ms L Moko, from Marina da Gama, Mr R Palm, from Walmer Estate, Mr O Ralohek, A member of the public, Ms P Willaims, former principal of Hope and Light Primary School, Mr D Koosana, from Marina Da Gama gave inputs on the Annual Report of the Department. The Minister and the Head of the Department duly responded to the issues raised by all members of the public.

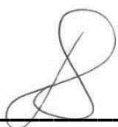
5. Recommendation

The Committee recommended that the WCED briefs the Committee on the Back-on-Track programme.

6. Conclusion

The Chairperson honoured the departing of Mr. H. Mohammad and Ms. B. Daniels, highlighting the significant influence they have had in the education sector and their contributions to the future of thousands of children in the Western Cape.

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the information provided by the Minister, the Head of Department, and the officials of the Western Cape Education Department. The Committee appreciated the oral submission made by members of the public. The Committee also wants to thank everyone who participated in the deliberations.



ADV DM BAARTMAN, MPP
CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT
DATE: 30 November 2023

