



**REPORT ON THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION'S VISIT WEEK
CONDUCTED IN THE EDEN AND
CENTRAL KAROO DISTRICT OF THE
PROVINCE**

28 SEPTEMBER – 2 OCTOBER 2020

1. PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WEEK

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's Standing Committee on Education (herein after the Committee) embarked on a visit week from 28 September to 2 October 2020.

The visit week, like all, is the key mechanism established by the Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) to achieve its constitutional oversight mandate in the province. It is intended to ensure that Members of the Provincial Parliament, through its standing committees, are continually kept abreast of developments and social issues in the province. It also affords the opportunity to undertake oversight visits and interact with communities and institutions in order to assess the needs and challenges they experience.

The purpose of the visit week was based on the COVID-19 pandemic the country is currently dealing with. Taking this into account, schools across the province have dealt with and have implemented measures to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. More important measures, such as personal protective equipment (herein after the PPE) and safety guidelines, have been created to assist and protect learners while their return to school is being phased in.

Given the statement above, the Standing Committee deemed it necessary to undertake an oversight visit week to the Eden and the Central Karoo District. The report contains key aspects pertaining to the oversight visits of the Standing Committee. The report makes recommendations and requests information in order to understand the dynamics and the situation of the area better during this period.

The report also contains the Committee's recommendations to the Minister of Education on the impact of COVID-19 and the social issues affecting the areas visited.

2. The Committee

The Standing Committee on Education's visit week included the following Members:

Allen, R (DA)
Bans, A (ANC)
Botha, LJ (DA) (Chairperson and leader of the delegation)
Bosman, G (DA)
Brinkhuis, G (Al Jama-ah)
Christians, F (ACDP)
Kama, M (ANC)
Mackenzie, R (DA)
Makamba-Botya, N (EFF)
Marias, P (FFP)
Mitchell, D (DA)
Sayed, K (ANC)

3. Overview

The main objective of the visits was to assess the schools, check the PPE and to get an overall status of these selected schools.

4. Visit to the Hoërskool Murraysburg in Murraysburg on Tuesday, 29 September 2020

Mr RH Andrews, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

4.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 4.1.1. The school is located opposite the Murraysburg Hospital in a suburban neighbourhood. The staff complement is approximately 21 and there are approximately 476 learners. After the school reopened, only 466 learners returned. Currently, four learners are.
- 4.1.2. There is a hostel at the school that accommodates about 45 learners, but currently only 24 learners are housed.
- 4.1.3. There is a conference room that can accommodate about 45 individuals. The school has sufficient water treatment facilities and parking.
- 4.1.4. Political interference in this area is mild although the crime statistics are very high, primarily because of house breaks, domestic violence, vandalism, substance abuse and theft. The school has an alarm system that tracks the response. The school is surrounded by a palisade fence that is 1,8 m high. There is no school hall.
- 4.1.5. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff.
- 4.1.6. Everyone entering the school grounds must practice social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart).
- 4.1.7. By using an infrared thermometer, the body temperature of all staff members and learners who enter the school must be taken.
- 4.1.8. Personal protective equipment (PPE) containing masks, hand sanitisers and bleach has been obtained by the school. Signs and posters stating “No mask, No entry” were shown at the school entrance. The school is not aware of the amount of PPE it would need to obtain. Two face masks were issued to each learner as PPE from the school.
- 4.1.9. For certain learners or employees who have a high temperature or who do not feel well, the school has converted a classroom into an isolation location. This is in the event they test positive for COVID-19.
- 4.1.10. Ms Schafer, Minister of Education, last visited the school two years ago, according to Mr Andrews, the principal.
- 4.1.11. The school has five volunteers from the EPWP supported by the District Municipality to assist with feeding learners during the lockdown. Three meals a day are provided to learners. The budget allocated for gas to be used for cooking meals has not increased and it has remained the same for the past four years.
- 4.1.12. The school does not have a sports field and utilises a community sports field, which in turn has now being used by the Municipality.
- 4.1.13. In order to allow for privacy when showering, the girls’ and boys’ showers need to be upgraded as there is currently no privacy. It is important to repair the windows of the hostels as some are broken and cannot be closed.
- 4.1.14. The school’s Wi-Fi connection is still unreliable.
- 4.1.15. There is no water or hand sanitiser in the bathrooms.

4.2. Concerns raised at the Hoërskool Murraysburg

- 4.2.1. The literacy level of learners entering primary school is of a Grade 4 learner capacity.
- 4.2.2. The school’s quintile status is quintile 3, which needs to be changed to a no-fee school to serve the poor community of Murraysburg.
- 4.2.3. Many windows had been broken at the school and the windows have been replaced. In July and August 2019, the contractor (Edge to Edge) told the WCED that they would not replace

the third round of windows as the contractors had already utilised its own budget for the second round of broken windows.

- 4.2.4. The Murraysburg population census shows that there are 500 individuals in the area, but that is not a true reflection of the number of individuals in the area. This inaccuracy affects the school and the number of learners that the school and the hostel can be accommodated.

5. Visit to the Murraysburg Primary School in Murraysburg on Tuesday, 29 September 2020

Mr GW Williams, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

5.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 5.1.1. This school is situated in a residential area. The school has adequate ablution facilities.
- 5.1.2. The staff compliment is approximately 36 and there are 1 294 learners.
- 5.1.3. The school has a staff room that can host approximately 30 and a school hall that can host 100 people. There are CCTV cameras that are monitored by the school's secretary. The alarm system is currently faulty with the result that there is no security at the school. The school is surrounded by perimeter fencing that is 1,8 m high. All the windows are fitted with burglar bars and the external doors are fitted with steel gates.
- 5.1.4. The school has a hostel that accommodates 158 learners and is 100 m down the road from the school. Not all the learners have returned after the lockdown period. Farmers of the area are apprehensive about sending farmworker learners regularly to school because they fear they may contract the virus. Approximately 9 to 10 learners per grade are absent daily.
- 5.1.5. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff and learners.
- 5.1.6. Everyone entering the school grounds must practice social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart).
- 5.1.7. By using an infrared thermometer, the body temperature of all staff members and learners who enter the school must be taken.
- 5.1.8. Personal protective equipment (PPE) containing masks, hand sanitisers and bleach has been obtained by the school. Signs and posters stating "No mask, No entry" were shown at the school entrance.
- 5.1.9. For certain learners or employees who have a high temperature or who do not feel well the school has converted a classroom into an isolation location. This is in the event they test positive for COVID-19.
- 5.1.10. The school is neat and has a number of maintaining issues, including a visible leaking water tap at the ablution area. It has been reported to the WCED, but it has received no feedback.
- 5.1.11. The school has a feeding scheme to feed the learners of the school.
- 5.1.12. The school practices the platoon system with the intermediate phase learners with one session from 08:00 to 11:30 and another from 11:30 to 14:40. The foundation phase learners work on a rotation system.
- 5.1.13. The teaching of learners in Xhosa at the school only takes place from Grade R to Grade 3.
- 5.1.14. The school's Wi-Fi connections are still unreliable.
- 5.1.15.
- 5.1.16. There has been only one pregnancy at the school in the last three years.

5.2. Concerns raised at the Murraysburg Primary School

- 5.2.1. The Committee raised concern about how it was possible for a teacher to teach both English and Afrikaans at the same time to learners. Could this not be split into two subjects?

- 5.2.2. The school raised concern about the learners who are not on par as they are only attending school three days a week and there have been lengthy breaks due to COVID-19.

5.3. Recommendations for the Hoërskool Murraysburg and the Murraysburg Primary School

The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

- 5.3.1. The WCED investigate whether the Municipality of Murraysburg is able to lower the utility bill of the school, such as with an indigent grant.
- 5.3.2. The WCED investigate whether the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport can assist the Hoërskool Murraysburg with its sport field and to have Mass Participation, Opportunity, and Access, Development and Growth (herein after the MOD centre) at the school. Also to investigate what resources could be made available through the MOD centres.
- 5.3.3. The WCED investigate the possibility to assisting with a bus which could be utilised by both the high and primary schools of Murraysburg. Also investigating the transport from farms to schools, as the schools indicated the reluctance of farmers to bring learners to school during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5.3.4. Reevaluate the quintile status of the school given the fact the school is a quintile 3 in a quintile 1 community.
- 5.3.5. Consider the state of the hostel showers and provide privacy for the showers, as well as investigating the possibility of upgrading the infrastructure of the school. The school to provide the correspondence on this matter to WCED and what the response was for this upgrades.
- 5.3.6. The WCED investigate the water leakage at the school and whether this maintenance could be done.
- 5.3.7. The Department of the Premier and the WCED provide a report on the status of e-learning at the both the high and primary schools of Murraysburg. Maintenance was done a week prior to the Standing Committee on Education's visit and to date nothing had been done.
- 5.3.8. The WCED explore the possibility of having a school of skills in the area, as the high school has an increase in the number of dropouts.
- 5.3.9. The principals of both schools make contact with the business community of areas to assist where there are needs.
- 5.3.10. The WCED investigate whether Xhosa can be taught in all subjects from Grade 4 to Grade 7 at the primary school since Xhosa is being taught at the high school.
- 5.3.11. The Standing Committee engage or arrange workshops with the Economic Cluster about how to generate the upgrading the town within the context of skills development.
- 5.3.12. The WCED provide a specific plan of support for schools that are far from economic activities, which should include the supply chain management of goods and service and the provision of a list of suppliers and how this will be put into action in those communities. When this plan has been received, that the Committee will be able to interrogate the plan.
- 5.3.13. The WCED and the DBE renegotiate the norms and standards, taking into account that the schools are located far from economic activities and require larger budgets based on the distance schools need to drive in order to obtain general equipment.
- 5.3.14. During the visit the Committee found that the Hoërskool Murraysburg was a quintile 3 school while the primary school was a quintile 1 school. The question was asked why this was the case. What is the reason for the difference? Has a request for this quintile status of the high school been received and what was the feedback?

5.4. Information requested for the Hoërskool Murraysburg and the Murraysburg Primary School

The Committee REQUESTED that the WCED:

- 5.4.1. Provide a report on the Edge to Edge contractor who was assigned to the Hoërskool Murraysburg and the work that was done by the contractor.
 - 5.4.2. Provide a report on what type and the number of interns who were received for the district of the Karoo.
 - 5.4.3. Obtain the Financial and Fiscal Commission's report that indicates the poverty of this community in the Western Cape.
- 6. Visit to the Mandlenkosi Secondary School in Beaufort West on Wednesday, 30 September 2020**

Mr MC Manqunqa, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

6.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 6.1.1. This school is fully enclosed and there are only two entrances to the school. The school is fitted with an alarm system but it is dysfunctional due to vandalism. The school has adequate ablution facilities.
- 6.1.2. The staff compliment is approximate 14 and there are 485 learners. It has a conference room that can host approximately 20 people.
- 6.1.3. This school is situated in a very volatile area where the crime rate is very high due to substance abuse, domestic violence, housebreaking, theft, vandalism and high political interference.
- 6.1.4. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff and learners.
- 6.1.5. Everyone entering the school grounds must practice social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart).
- 6.1.6. Using an infrared thermometer, the body temperature of all staff members and learners who enter the school must be taken.
- 6.1.7. Personal protective equipment (PPE) containing masks, hand sanitisers and bleach has been obtained by the school. Signs and posters stating "No mask, No entry" were shown at the school entrance.
- 6.1.8. For certain learners or employees who have a high temperature or who do not feel well the school has converted a classroom into an isolation location. This is in the event they test positive for COVID-19.
- 6.1.9. The school utilises the church as the school has insufficient classrooms to accommodate all the learners.
- 6.1.10. The school had a high rate of COVID-19 infections. About 355 tests were done on learners (registered on NHLS dashboard) from 14 to 17 September 2020 and of those tests 273 were negative, 50 were positive and 32 were inconclusive. 26 Staff members (including teachers, the secretary, general workers and teacher assistants) were tested and of those tests 15 were negative, 1 was not tested, 7 were positive and 3 were inconclusive. The provincial Department of Health has started with contact tracing. The school has since been decontaminated and all the teachers and learners who tested negative returned to school. The Grade 12 trial examination has been postponed for three days due to this. Furthermore, the feeding scheme could not take place on 30 September 2020 due to the kitchen staff who tested positive.
- 6.1.11. The school is very well maintained.
- 6.1.12. While conducting the walkabout of the school premises the boys' ablution area reeked of marijuana.

- 6.1.13. The number of learners who take Mathematics and Physical Science is not very high at the school.
- 6.1.14. The school has local assistance to feed learners who attend Saturday classes for extra assistance.
- 6.1.15. The school has limited Wi-Fi available but awaits the installation of fibre for the area.
- 6.1.16. The school's pass rate in the past three years was: 88% in 2017; 91,2% in 2018 and 79,3% in 2019.
- 6.1.17. To date, the school has had 120 learners who have not returned to school.

7. Visit to the Hoërskool Sentraal in Beaufort West on Wednesday, 30 September 2020

Mr R Gerhardt, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

7.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout of the school

- 7.1.1. The school is situated in a residential area about 1 km out of the town. The school only has four entrances and is surrounded by a 1,8 m-high steel fence. There are adequate ablution facilities. It has a hall that can accommodate approximately 300 people. It has a rugby field and three tennis courts at the back of the school.
- 7.1.2. The crime statistics in this area are very low and it is mostly housebreakings and theft that occur.
- 7.1.3. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all the security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff and learners.
- 7.1.4. Everyone entering the school grounds must practice social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart).
- 7.1.5. By using an infrared thermometer, the body temperatures of all staff members and learners who enter the school must be taken.
- 7.1.6. Personal protective equipment (PPE) containing masks, hand sanitisers and bleach has been obtained by the school. Signs and posters stating "No mask, No entry" were shown at the school entrance.
- 7.1.7. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature or who do not feel well in order to isolate those individuals in the event that they test positive for Covid-19.
- 7.1.8. The school does accommodate learners from the poorer community. On average only 70% of the learners pay school fees. The school gets about R79 000 from the WCED and the school therefore has to raise funds.
- 7.1.9. There has nine staff members who are being paid by the WCED and the rest of the 27 staff members are paid from the school's budget. Therefore during the COVID-29 lockdown, the staff was asked to take a 30% decrease in their salary for those months while we were under lockdown.

8. Visit to the Primêre Skool AH Barnard in Beaufort West on Wednesday, 30 September 2020

Mr A van Staden, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

8.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 8.1.1. This school is situated in a residential area next to the Bastiaans Secondary School. This school has four entrances but only two entrances are in use. It is surrounded with a 1,8 m-

high wire fence. The school is fitted with an alarm system that is monitored by Beaufort alarms and CCTV cameras that are monitored by the principal.

- 8.1.2. The school has a staff complement of approximately 35 and has 1 100 learners. Two security guards render a security service at night and during the day community workers assist with access control and they also assist with PPE at the entrance gates.
- 8.1.3. The school has a conference room that can host approximately 20 people and a hall that can accommodate approximately 200 people.
- 8.1.4. The crime statistics are very high in this area, such as domestic violence, substance abuse, house breaks, theft and gang violence. Political interferences are moderate.
- 8.1.5. The school has adequate ablution facilities parking.
- 8.1.6. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff and learners.
- 8.1.7. Everyone entering the school grounds must practice social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart).
- 8.1.8. By using an infrared thermometer the body temperatures of all staff members and learners who enter the school must be taken.
- 8.1.9. Personal protective equipment (PPE) containing masks, hand sanitisers and bleach has been obtained by the school. Signs and posters stating “No mask, No entry” were shown at the school entrance.
- 8.1.10. For certain learners or employees who have a high temperature or who do not feel well the school has converted a classroom into an isolation location in the event that they test positive for COVID-19.

8.2. Concerns raised by the School

- 8.2.1. The school raised the concern that it required tougher security fencing for the school. This would not allow individuals to cut the fence to gain access to the school’s property.
- 8.2.1. The school indicated that the high municipal bills have been increasing monthly. The payment of these bills has been difficult for the school and has led to the school’s account being in arrears.

8.3. Recommendations for the Mandlenkosi Secondary School, the Hoërskool Sentraal and the Primêre Skool AH Barnard

The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

- 8.3.1. The WCED investigate the possibility of replacing the wire fencing with a stronger fence around the AH Barnard Primary School as the school is not secure from criminals.
- 8.3.2. The Beaufort West Municipality investigate the high municipality bills of the AH Barnard Primary School and the surrounding schools as the tariffs for those areas are particularly high.
- 8.3.3. The WCED monitor the needs of Muslim learners at schools in Beaufort West, for example related to prayer and Ramadan.
- 8.3.4. Comparing the conditions at the Hoërskool Sentraal, which is a former Model C school, with that at the Mandlenkosi Secondary School and at the Primêre Skool AH Barnard, which have been serving the learners of mainly unemployed parents and guardians, the inequality in education is tied to the deeper socio-economic inequalities that were very visible. There is an urgent need to ensure that the infrastructure is safe, that there are sufficient classrooms and sport facilities, and that the focus on Mathematics and Science is closely addressed at the Mandlenkosi Secondary School and the Hoërskool Sentraal.

8.4. Information requested for the Mandlenkosi Secondary School, the Hoërskool Sentraal and the Primêre Skool AH Barnard

The Committee REQUESTED that the WCED:

- 8.4.1. Furnish the Committee with the report on school principals and deputy principals reflecting their gender. The report should include all the visited schools of Beaufort West where the top management is male and the WCED must also advise the Committee on processes in place to bridge the gender gap by bringing gender balance in the top positions.
- 8.4.2. Encourage schools that are struggling with water shortages to embark on obtaining water tanks and borehole systems as a contingency plan due to the water crisis in the region.

9. Visit to the Primêre Skool George Fredericks in Merweville on Thursday, 1 October 2020

Mr NA Claassen, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

9.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 9.1.1. The George Fredericks Primary School is situated in a residential area opposite the VGK Church.
- 9.1.2. The school has four entrances, but only two entrances are in use. The school is surrounded with a 1,6 m-high wire fence. The staff compliment is approximate 11 and there are 225 learners at the school.
- 9.1.3. This precinct has a conference room that can host approximately 20 people and a hall that can accommodate approximately 300 people. The crime statistics in this area is very low and there is no political interferences. There are adequate ablutions facilities.
- 9.1.4. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff.
- 9.1.5. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart) must be applied by everyone entering the school grounds.
- 9.1.6. The body temperature of all staff members and learners who require entry to the school must be taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infrared thermometer before the staff members and learners can get access to the school.
- 9.1.7. The school has received personal protective equipment (PPE) that includes masks, hand sanitisers and bleach. The school's entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 9.1.8. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature or who do not feel well in order to isolate those individuals in the event that they test positive for Covid-19.
- 9.1.9. The school is a multi-grade school from Grade R to Grade 12. There are also combined grades due to lack of teachers at the school.
- 9.1.10. Most parents of learners are seasonal workers and are not educated.
- 9.1.11. The school has no MOD centre at the school or any other available sport activities. The school struggles with funding to take learners to sporting activities outside of Merweville.
- 9.1.12. The Wi-Fi of the school does not work and this makes it difficult for the principal and staff to communicate with other schools in the region.
- 9.1.13. The school has a shortage of teachers as most teachers do not want to teach in Merweville.

10. Visit to the Primêre Skool Merweville in Merweville on Thursday, 1 October 2020

Ms G Mans, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

10.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 10.1.1. This school is situated in the small town of Merweville on the hill. This precinct has only two entrances and ten classrooms, but only five classrooms are been utilised due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff compliment is approximately 6 and there are 73 learners. The school has a conference room that can host approximately 15 people.
- 10.1.2. The school is fitted with an alarm system that is being monitored by the school's secretary. This precinct is surrounded by a 1,2 m-high wire fence. There are two tennis courts. The school has complied fully with the OHS regulations. The crime statistics are very low in this area with no political interference. This school has adequate ablution facilities and vehicles parking outside the school grounds.
- 10.1.3. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff.
- 10.1.4. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart) must be applied by everyone entering the school grounds.
- 10.1.5. The body temperature of all staff members and learners who require entry to the school must be taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infrared thermometer before the staff members and learners can get access the school.
- 10.1.6. The school has received personal protective equipment (PPE) that includes masks, hand sanitisers and bleach. The school's entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 10.1.7. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature or who do not feel well in order to isolate those individuals in the event that they test positive for Covid-19.
- 10.1.8. A number of learners come from violent homes in Cape Town.
- 10.1.9. The school is a fee-paying school and learners pay R100 per month. Because the community is poor, the school has made arrangements with parents to pay only R50 if they can afford it. The school received many donations from various donors.
- 10.1.10 There is no MOD centre at the school, but the school has various sporting activities and extramural activities.

10.2. Recommendations for the Primêre Skool George Fredericks and the Primêre Skool Merweville

The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

- 10.2.1. The WCED investigate the possibility of having a MOD centre at the George Fredericks Primary School.
- 10.2.2. The Department of Premier investigate the poor to no Wi-Fi connection at the George Fredericks Primary School.
- 10.2.3. WCED investigate the possibility of a school bus or learner transport that could assist with the school's transport needs.
- 10.2.4. The schools of Merweville, which once faced closure and exist in an area with extreme social problems where many learners come from really tough family backgrounds, are doing extremely well by working with the local community and installing great hope. The WCED, however, needs to ensure that the shortage of teachers is addressed and that the focus is placed on learners taking Mathematics and Science.

11. Visit to the Hillcrest Secondary School ("Sekondêre Skool Hillcrest") in Mossel Bay on Thursday, 30 January 2020

Mr IG Kroneberg, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

11.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 11.1.1. The Hillcrest Secondary School is situated in the Garden Route and forms part of circuit 2 in the Eden and Central Karoo District.
- 11.1.2. Currently the school has 1 311 learners with three home languages: Afrikaans, English and Xhosa. The school has 36 learners who have migrated from six nationalities. The school has 35 teachers and two SGB staff members. The school has received 500 application for exemption from school fees.
- 11.1.3. The Hillcrest High School has achieved the following matric passes: in 2017: 68,6%; in 2018: 73,5% and in 2019: 84,3%. They received the 14th highest bachelor's pass out of 47 schools. They also received the Premier's Award for more than 10% improvement in the pass rate from 2017 to 2019.
- 11.1.4. The teacher-learner ratio is 1:37 but currently the Grade 8 classrooms' ratios are 1:45, 1:49 and 1:50. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart) must be applied by everyone entering the school grounds.
- 11.1.6. The body temperature of all staff members and learners who require entry to the school must be taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infrared thermometer before the staff members and learners can get access to the school.
- 11.1.7. The school has received personal protective equipment (PPE) that includes masks, hand sanitisers and bleach. The school's entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 11.1.8. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature or who do not feel well in order to isolate those individuals in the event that they test positive for Covid-19.
- 11.1.9. Infrastructure: The school has massive land available at the back and it tried to sell the land to the Dr Julius Consortium, but the WCED turned down the request. Due to the back of the school leading to an open area, learners jump over the fence and hide in the bushes. Learners are often robbed on their way to and from school. This land creates a huge safety risk at school.
- 11.1.10. Maintenance: All old asbestos roof sheets were replaced by WCED in 2017. This year the whole school's exterior walls were painted as well as the interior walls of the hall. The school still plans to paint the interior walls of each classroom. The WCED has installed new fencing along the whole perimeter. Ablution facilities are still needed for the boys.
- 11.1.11. The school has a waiting list of about 80 learners. The problem the school experiences is that many Mossel Bay parents do not register their children on time. Parents want to enrol their children at the beginning of each school year.
- 11.1.12. The Hillcrest High School is a fee-paying school, although it serves learners from very poor communities. The school does not form part of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). The school applied for the NSNP Programme but was denied because of its quintile 4 status.

12.2. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDED that the WCED:

- 12.2.1. Investigate again whether an additional high school could be built in the Elsa area as this will reduce the learner numbers.

- 12.2.2. Determine what, if any, progress has been made with the building of the new high school in the Asla area, which will address the overcrowding and high rate of unplaced learners in Mossel Bay, despite the WCED making this commitment and the municipality making land available.

12.3. Information requested

The Committee REQUESTED that the WCED provide:

- 12.3.1. A report on when the WCED plans to upgrade the Consumer Studies room at the school.
- 12.3.2. Feedback about when the mobile toilets for the boys will be completed.
- 12.3.3. With the high level of gang-related activity at the school, the Committee was pleased that the improvements to the safety infrastructure, including new CCTV cameras and a new fence, have been made. It is however concerning that a proper access gate is not yet in place, that the WCED's Safe School Programme is yet to allocate R30 000 from last year to sustain some of the safety measures and that no feeding scheme is in place.

13. Visit to the Primêre Skool Melkhoutfontein in Stilbaai on Friday, 2 October 2020

Ms RK Flores, Principal of the school, received the Committee.

13.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 13.1.1. Melkhoutfontein is approximate 1 km away from the school. The school is surrounded with wire steel fencing and in front of the school is a 1,8 m-high palisade fence. There are only four entrances to the school grounds. The school is fitted with an alarm system that is monitored by Suidpunt Security. The school is divided into two sections, those are the VKOD and the Anglican Church organisation.
- 13.1.2. The staff compliment is approximate 28 and there are 523 learners. There are 20 classrooms and a conference room that can host approximately 20 people. The school has complied fully with the OHS regulations.
- 13.1.3. The crime statistics in this area are very low and there are no political interferences in the area.
- 13.1.4. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff.
- 13.1.5. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1,5 m apart) must be applied by everyone entering the school grounds.
- 13.1.6. The body temperature of all staff members and learners who require entry to the school must be taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infrared thermometer before the staff members and learners can get access to the school.
- 13.1.7. The school has received personal protective equipment (PPE) that includes masks, hand sanitisers and bleach. The school's entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 13.1.8. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature or who do not feel well in order to isolate those individuals in the event that they test positive for Covid-19.
- 13.1.9. The school has not received new furniture from the WCED.
- 13.1.10. The school is situated on a slop which has which has uneven terrain.
- 13.1.11. The path which most learners utilise to get to and from school are at times dangerous, as gangs target learners.
- 13.1.12. The school is built on the churches grounds and often it takes a while for any maintenance to be done.

- 13.1.13. The during the winter season the entrance get very muddy and which closes off the entrance to the school.
- 13.1.14. The school has received assistance with from local community of the area.
- 13.1.15. There is no sports field for sporting activities to take place.
- 13.1.16. The school is built on a slop and therefore all classrooms at the entrance have a small terrace of 1 m from the ground, which does not have a fencing, learners could sustain injury if they fall.

13.2. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDED that the WCED:

- 13.2.1. Investigate the possibility of purchasing a new school as the current school is on the church's ground, which leaves the maintenance of the school to the church and the church is not always able to do that.
- 13.2.2. Investigate whether there is ground available for sporting activities.
- 13.2.3. With a brand-new security system in place, a functional food garden, thorough implementation of COVID-19 protocols and overall excellent leadership by the teachers despite tough conditions, the school urgently requires much-needed learner transport, an access road and revamped infrastructure, especially regarding the steps, as the uneven terrain and walls compromise the safety of the learners.
- 13.2.4. Investigate the possibility of new furnishings for the classrooms and the possibility of a school hall.

14. Conclusion

The Committee successfully concluded its oversight visit and took cognisance of the urgency of the challenges experienced at the various schools that were visited. It was evident that the schools needed the Committee's support in their endeavours to succeed against the challenges noted in this report.

15. Acknowledgements

The Committee thanks the principals and the teachers of the different schools that were visited for their willingness to share valuable information with the Standing Committee on Education. A special thank you was extended by the Committee to the support staff for the successful visit week and for the professional service that they provided to the delegation of Members of the Standing Committee. The support staff included Mr Ben Daza, Ms Wasiema Hassen-Moosa, Mr Waseem Matthews and Mr Anwille Barends.



MS M BOTHA, MPP

CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

DATE: _11 March 2021_