



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

WCPP 11/4/10

Annual Activity Report of the Standing Committee on Education for the 2023/24 financial year as follows:

The Strategic Objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speakers' Priorities which impact on committees are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and

Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

Members

The Committee comprised of the following Members:

Baartman, DM (Chairperson) (DA)

Fry, C (DA)

Plato, D (DA) (Resigned on 13 February 2024)

Poole, C (DA) (from 07 March 2024)

Christians, FC (ACDP)

Sayed, MK (ANC)

Alternate members:

Brinkhuis, G (Al Jama-ah)

Bosman, G (DA)

Kama, M (ANC) (Resigned on 20 February 2024)

Harris, P (ANC) (from 13 March 2024)

Philander, WF (DA)

1. Introduction

The mandate of the Committee is to:

- 1.1 Maintain oversight over the Western Cape Education Department (hereafter the WCPP), the way in which the WCED performs its responsibilities, including the implementation of legislation and holding the Executive Authority accountable.
- 1.2 Consider and report on legislation, the Annual Reports and matters referred to it by the Speaker.

In fulfilment of its mandate the Committee:

- 1.3 Facilitated public participation and involvement in the legislative and other processes of the Committee.
- 1.4 Conducted its business in a fair, open, and transparent manner.
- 1.5 Promoted co-operative governance.

1.6. Reported regularly to the House.

2. Reporting Department

2.1. Western Cape Education Department

3. Overview of Committee's activities

Number of Committee Meetings	11
Number of Public Hearings	9
Number of Oversight Visits	5
Number of Visit Weeks	0
Number of Provincial Bills considered	0
Number of International Visits	0

4. Oversight activities

This annual activity report covers the period from April 1, 2023, to 31 March, 2024, detailing the efforts and initiatives of the Standing Committee on Education in the Western Cape. The Committee's work focused on oversight, legislative review, educational infrastructure development, and enhancement of educational standards across various levels. Through targeted oversight visits, legislative engagement, and public hearings, the Committee aimed to address crucial issues affecting education in the province.

During April 2023, the Committee undertook oversight visits, to Phoenix High School and Heldeveld High School as part of an initiative to monitor the efficiency of enrolment pop-up sites established by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). The Committee also conducted an oversight visit to Springdale Primary School and Summerdale High School; the purpose of the visit was to evaluate the progress of Rapid Build projects aimed at addressing urgent infrastructure needs. Towards the end of April 2023, the Committee visited two Early Childhood Development Centres, namely the Hoepel Hoekie and the Holland Early Learning Centre, to review facilities and programme implementations aimed at early childhood education enhancement.

In May 2023, the Committee visited the Kuils River Technical Secondary School and the Northpine Technical High School. The purpose of these visits was to assess educational and infrastructural deficits impacting schools that achieved below 60% in the 2022 National Senior Certificate pass rate. In May 2023, the Committee also visited Stellenzicht Secondary School, the purpose of the visit was to review the intervention strategies for schools underperforming in national examinations.

In September 2023, the Committee scheduled briefings focused on enhancing the qualifications of Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners, addressing the needs of learners with severe disabilities, improving school safety, navigating municipal rezoning challenges for educational facilities.

In October 2023, the Committee deliberated on the WCED's Annual report for the 2022/23 financial year, assessing achievements against set educational goals and financial management during the fiscal year. Specific attention was paid to the execution of budgets, particularly in areas related to infrastructure development and special education needs. Recommendations were drafted for future improvements in policy implementation, budget utilization, and educational outcomes.

In November 2023, as part of strategic collaborations, the Committee had an inter-Parliamentary engagement and met with the Gauteng Legislature's Portfolio Committee on Education. The two committees exchanged best practices and strategies for effective committee oversight processes within parliamentary systems. The two committees also discussed key issues such as school safety, ECD programme expansion, the integration of 4IR technologies in education, and strategies for enhancing student performance in critical subject areas.

In November 2023, the Committee deliberated on Vote 5: Education in the schedule to the Western Cape Adjustments Appropriation, 2023.

In February 2024, the key engagements included multiple briefings on the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill [B2B-2022] (S76) (NCOP), evaluations of the upcoming academic year's readiness, and extensive public hearings across the Western Cape. These activities aimed to refine legislative frameworks, ensure fiscal responsibility, and enhance the overall educational environment in preparation for future challenges.

In February 2024, the WCED briefed the Committee on various critical issues, namely the admissions update for the 2024 academic year, highlighting efficiency and areas needing attention. The current status of school readiness for the 2024 academic year, ensuring all institutions meet the required standards and the 2023 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Results, including detailed discussions on the pass rates and areas of improvement.

The Committee conducted eight public hearings on the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill [B2B-2022] (NCOP). The hearings were held in Beaufort West, Plettenberg Bay, George, Mossel Bay, Paarl, Saldanha Bay, and Cape Town. The public hearings were well attended by the Members of the public and key educational stake holders.

In March 2024, the Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools (FEDSAS) provided an expert analysis of the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill [B2B-2022] (NCOP). Their briefing focused on the practical implications of the Bill, highlighting potential areas of concern and benefit for the educational sectors.

The Committee deliberated on Vote 5: Education in the schedule to the Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B1- 2024].

Establishing a precedent, the Committee requested the Finance and Fiscal Commission (FFC) to brief them on the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill [B2B-2022] (NCOP) recommended costing as well as its costing in accordance with Sections 220–222 of the Constitution. The FFC reviewed the costing in accordance with constitutional provisions, ensuring transparency and fiscal efficacy in implementing the proposed legislative changes.

Towards the end of March 2024, the National Treasury and the Department of Basic Education provided a detailed briefing on the projected costing and the proposed implementation methodologies for the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill [B2B-2022] (NCOP). Key points included the detailed projections of the financial requirements necessary to implement the amendments effectively.

5. Legislation

In the 2023/24 Financial Year, the Committee dealt with the following items of legislation:

5.1 Provincial Bills

5.1.1. Vote 5: Education in the Schedule to the Western Cape Additional Adjustments Appropriation Bill (2023/24 financial year) [B7-2023].

5.1.2. Vote 5: Education in the Schedule to the Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B1-2024]

5.2. National Council of Province Bills

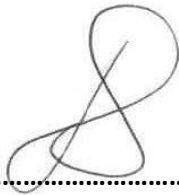
5.2.1. The Basic Laws Amendment Bill, [B2B-2022] (S76) (NCOP).

6. Facilitation of public involvement and participation

In line with its mandate to facilitate public participation as part of the legislative process, the Committee held eight public hearings on the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill, [B2B-2022] (S76) (NCOP). The public was also invited to give input on the Provincial Money Bills, and the Annual Report of the Western Cape Education Department.

7. Financial particulars

The Standing Committee spent R508 471.00 during the 2023/24 financial year.



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MS DM BAARTMAN, MPP

**CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT**