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STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON THE ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FOR THE 2018/19 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Standing Committee on Education, having considered the Annual Report of the Western Cape Education Department for the year ended 31 March 2019, 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 WCED or Department) on 15 October 2019 as part of its oversight function.

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's Annual Report Programme for the 2018/19 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 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 Schäfer, together with the Head of the Department, Mr B Schreuder, provided an overview of the successes and challenges faced by the WCED during the 2018/19 financial year. The WCED's vision is to ensure that it improves education outcomes and opportunities for youth development. The WCED developed and published its five-year strategic plan for education in the Western Cape during the 2014/15 financial year. This plan has formed the basis for the annual performance plans for the last five years. The strategic objectives developed are reproduced in each of the seven budget programmes reported on in this report.

3. Findings

- 3.1. The Minister informed the Committee that every decision taken concerning education in the Western Cape over the last five years was informed by the need to improve learner outcomes and to provide greater access to quality education for all.
- 3.2. The WCED informed the Committee that it obtained an unqualified audit opinion with findings on predetermined objectives and internal control deficiencies. This audit opinion was a regression from the 2017/18 financial year, during which the Department achieved a clean audit outcome.
- 3.3. The WCED reported on its three important objectives, which are: 1. To improve the level of language and mathematics in all schools; 2. To increase the number and quality of passes in the National Senior Certificate; and 3. To increase the quality of education provision in poorer communities.

- 3.4. An improvement in language and mathematics is a key focus area for the WCED and the Western Cape Government and the 2018 systemic test results in these subjects show a steady improvement since 2011.
- 3.5. The WCED indicated that it was progress in improving education in schools in the poorest communities. In 2009, the matric pass rate in Quintile 1 schools was 57,5%. In 2018 it was 70,5%. There have also been pass rate increases of 10,6% in Quintile 2 and 15,6% in Quintile 3 schools during the same period.
- 3.6. The WCED reported that the total percentage of candidates who passed matric had increased from 75,7% in 2009 to 81,5% in 2018. This needs to be seen in the light of the increasing learner numbers in the system as a whole – 130 000 over the last five years, resulting in increasing class sizes and increasing numbers of matriculants coming to the Western Cape.
- 3.7. The WCED is proud that the Western Cape achieved an increase in the percentage of bachelor's passes, with 42,3% of learners achieving this quality pass. Since 2009, the bachelor pass rate has increased from 31,9% to 42,3% – a remarkable increase of 10,4%.
- 3.8. The Western Cape continued to experience a disproportionately high in-migration in comparison with other provinces. The increased number of learners in the province will continue to place pressure on school accommodation and the available budget. Pressure points in grades 1, 5, 9, 10 and 11 will be experienced as a result of both the movement of learners through the system and the in-migration points of entry into the system.
- 3.9. The WCED reported that in November 2018, the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, 2018 (Act 2 of 2018), was passed by the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. The main focus areas of the Act are:
- The establishment of an evaluation authority to be known as the Western Cape School Evaluation Authority (or "SEA"), which is intended to improve the school quality assessment framework and to conduct independent evaluations of school quality that are credible, transparent and effective in enabling school improvement in the province. The outcomes of these assessments will be published.
 - The specific provision for Collaboration Schools and Donor-funded Schools. The WCED's Collaboration Schools: The project is one of a range of pro-poor initiatives by the WCED designed to improve the quality of education in the poorest schools and is already having a real impact by addressing the ongoing inequalities in education between wealthier and poorer communities.
 - The establishment of short-term intervention facilities for learners who have been found guilty of serious misconduct, as an alternative to expulsion.
 - The enabling of classroom observation.
 - The provision for an exception to the prohibition of alcohol on school premises, on application to the Head of Department, for adult events after hours.
- 3.10. The WCED reported that e-learning was a key benefit for the Department. The programme would reduce the gap between poor and well-resourced schools by improving access to the best educational resources and support and by ensuring that learners were equipped for the 21st century.
- 3.11. The National Treasury has informed the WCED that the budget allocated to the Department will be cut by 5%. According to the WCED, this will have an impact on education in the province.
- 3.13. The WCED reported that, during the 2018/19 financial year, its teachers participated in the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI). The programme provided 27 training courses in Languages, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Natural Sciences and Technology, Life Skills and Physical Education to 2 053 teachers of Grade R, Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase, and Senior Phase. Inclusive education and e-learning activities are integral parts of these interventions. The CTLI supported the Grade R-3 intervention project.

- 3.14. The Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS), in collaboration with the WCED, introduced the MOD programme (Mass participation, Opportunity and access, and Development) in 181 schools across the eight education districts. A total of 97 of these centres operate at primary schools and 84 at high schools. The programme provides learners with opportunities to practice sport and to participate in enrichment activities. Additionally, the Safe Schools Programme and School Enrichment Programme of the WCED have linked up with the MOD centres to offer a variety of activities.
- 3.15. The policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) was gazetted in December 2014. The SIAS tool is intended to identify learners who need support, what support is required and how it should be delivered. SIAS facilitates early detection of learning difficulties and learners who have been identified as needing support are given appropriate attention as early as possible. Training in SIAS and in curriculum differentiation strategies is equipping teachers to respond to the diverse teaching and assessment needs of learners without necessarily referring them to another institution out of the school.
- 3.16. The WCED reported that consultations between the Minister of Education, the Head of Department and trade unions on the affordable basket of educator positions for 2019 and the distribution of the affordable basket of positions were concluded on 8 August 2018. Given the fiscal challenges related to the compensation of employee's budget for the 2018/19 MTEF and 2019/20 MTEF, the WCED's main objective was not to reduce the number of educator positions at education institutions. The above-mentioned objective was achieved by introducing cost-containment measures.

4. Concerns raised

The Committed raised the concern pertaining to the following factors that cannot be underestimated: The continued extremely high learner in-migration into the province; severe fiscal constraints, which do not keep pace with learner growth and inflow into the province; severe drought conditions that threaten the water security of the province and job security in those industries most affected; socio-economic conditions that adversely affect teaching and learning in the classroom; and the scourge of gangsterism in communities with the resultant psycho-socio impact on learners' performance.

5. Public comments

Mr M Mbiko of the Nyanga Tourism Platform, Mr M Mkhize, Chairperson of the School Governing Body of the Linge Primary School, Ms A Barnard, School Governing Body of the Windsor High School, Mr M Gabier, Member of the Progressive Professionals Forum, Mr A Khan, Vice-chairperson of the School Governing Body of the Windsor High School and Ms N Daniels, an educator, were afforded the opportunity to make oral submissions on the Annual Report of the WCED. The Minister of Education and the Head of Department duly responded to the questions posed and submissions made by the members of the public.

6. Resolutions

The Committee RESOLVED to, at a future date:

- 6.1. Invite the WCED to brief it on:
 - 6.1.1. The School Evaluation Authority: Roll-out and powers of that authority;
 - 6.1.2. The Maths and Language Strategy;

- 6.1.3. The quintile system and how budgets are allocated to those schools that are Quintile 5 schools, which are situated in poorer areas; and
- 6.1.4. How the WCED utilises data, what type of data and what are the contributions that the WCED are making through the National Data-driven District Project as part of the South African School Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS).
- 6.2. Undertake an inter-provincial study tour to another provincial legislature. The visit should discuss education and the status of schools in that specific province. The Committee is to decide on which province to visit at a later stage.
- 6.3. Invite the National Treasury to brief the Committee on the proposed 5% budget cuts for the WCED. The Committee should seek clarity on what the impact of this decrease in the budget would be on education in the province and what the reasons behind the budget cuts are.
- 6.4. Schedule a joint briefing between the Standing Committee on Education and the Standing Committee on Transport and Public Works. During this meeting the WCED and the Department of Transport and Public Works should brief the standing committees on the infrastructure of schools in the province.
- 6.5. Invite the City of Cape Town and local municipalities to brief the Committee on schools that have high municipal accounts, such as water and rates, and to formulate a plan to assist those schools.
- 6.6. The members of the public who gave input during the meeting must provide the Committee with documentation pertaining to their input. The Committee will deliberate on and consider the information once received.

7. Information requested

The Committee REQUESTED that the WCED, by 30 January 2020 submits:

- 7.1. A list of schools, as per Programme 6 (PPM610), scheduled for maintenance projects that have been completed.
- 7.2. A detailed report on the special schools test results for 2018.
- 7.3. A breakdown of the teachers at the 22 Schools of Skills and 24 Schools for Severe Intellectual Disability who are being trained in the new curricula. This breakdown should include the names and areas in which there is equipment to assist these teachers.
- 7.4. A breakdown of the qualifications of senior managers at district offices.
- 7.5. A report on the components that make up the review process as referred to on page 77 of the Annual Report.
- 7.6. A summary of Programme 2 (PPM221) on the number and percentages of school governing bodies in sampled schools that meet the minimum criteria in terms of effectiveness every year. The WCED is to provide a sample school and the minimum criteria requirements.
- 7.7. A copy of the Development and Implementation of the Teacher's Professional Plan as outlined on pages 35 to 45 of the Annual Report of 2018/19.
- 7.8. The leave forms of those teachers who attended the Standing Committee's discussion on the Annual Report of WCED on 15 October 2019, given that these teachers attended that meeting during school hours.
- 7.9. The report on the sick-leave patterns, considering those taking sick leave on Mondays and Fridays, as well as on paydays or the day after paydays.
- 7.10. A copy of the succession plan for WCED officials and the list of personnel affected, especially senior management.
- 7.11. A copy of the improvements or strategy or plan to improve incapacity leave at the WCED.

8. Conclusion

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 and the members of the public. The manner in which the meeting was conducted was of a high standard and the Committee thanked everyone who participated.



MS. L. BOTHA, MPP

**CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT**