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PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

MONDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2025

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Report of the Standing Committee on Education on its oversight visit to the Paulus Joubert Secondary School in Paarl on 13 May 2025.**

The 2024/25 strategic objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speaker's priorities that 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 (hereafter the Committee), having conducted an oversight visit to the Paulus Joubert Secondary School on 13 May 2025, reports as follows:

The delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Education included the following Members:

Van Wyk, LD (DA) (Chairperson of the Committee)
Booyesen, M (DA)
Bosman, G (DA)
Christians, FC (ACDP)
Ngqentsu, B (ANC)
Sayed, MK (ANC)
Stephens, DR (PA)
Walters, TCR (DA)
Windvogel, R (ANC)

The following parliamentary official accompanied the committee:

Ms W Hassen-Moosa, Procedural Officer

1. Overview

The Standing Committee on Education visited the Paulus Joubert Secondary School to gain insight into the school's operations, infrastructure and educational framework. The visit provided an opportunity to engage with the school's leadership and better understand both the achievements and challenges faced by the school.

2. Visit to the Paulus Joubert Secondary School

Mr TSM Adonis, Principal, and Mr N Petersen, Director: Cape Winelands Education District, were present during the visit.

2.1. Key aspects discussed at the school

Mr TSM Adonis provided an overview of the school.

- 2.1.1. The maintenance of the school is coordinated by Mr A Ontong and supported by a team that includes Mr R Felaar (Chief Caretaker), Mr A Moses, Mr B Williams, Mr K Ross, Ms G Heyns, Mr A Swartz and CWP workers. Their responsibilities span a wide range of tasks, including installing lights, inspecting gutters and downpipes, repairing safety wires and classroom doors, moving furniture, cleaning graffiti, repainting walls, replacing locks and installing glass panes. All emergency repairs must be reported immediately to ensure swift action.
- 2.1.2. A key infrastructure project for 2025 is the development of a shared rugby field for both the Paulus Joubert secondary and primary schools. A planning meeting was held on 23 April 2025 to initiate the process. The school is collaborating with a service provider to develop cost estimates and maintenance plans for the new field, which will include a clubhouse and associated facilities. A committee comprising school principals and governing body representatives has been proposed to oversee the project.
- 2.1.3. The school's overall matric pass rate improved from 61,1% to 68,8%, with bachelor's passes increasing from 9,5% to 17,2%.
- 2.1.4. To further support academic achievement, the school has implemented a comprehensive academic support programme. This includes identifying high-risk learners, offering autumn, winter and spring schools, as well as after-school classes, Saturday sessions through the Back on Track Programme, and telematics-based learning. Educator training and mentorship programmes for Grade 12 learners are also in place. Motivational sessions are held once per term, and learners benefit from exposure to effective teaching practices through collaboration with other schools, such as Klein Nederburg.
- 2.1.5. The National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) is a vital initiative at Paulus Joubert, feeding between 500 and 600 learners daily. In the morning, porridge is served to about 120 learners, followed by full meals during breaks. Four volunteers – three women and one man, appointed by the School Governing Body (SGB) – assist with the programme. Despite its success, the school faces challenges due to a shortage of dining space, often having to use teaching venues for meal distribution.
- 2.1.6. Safety remains a high priority at the school. Security is managed by three staff members who control access from 07:00 to 16:00. During school holidays, safety

is arranged through the cluster system and funded by Safe Schools. However, security challenges persist due to frequent damage to the school's fencing, particularly over weekends. This has allowed unauthorised access by community members and gang members, posing serious risks. Burglaries, especially in the first quarter and on weekends, have become common. Incidents include cable theft, which has disabled the school's alarm system and increased vulnerability to further intrusion.

- 2.1.7. The school serves 1 451 learners with 44 educators, maintaining a learner-to-teacher ratio of 33:1. This ratio supports focused instruction and provides learners with appropriate academic support.
- 2.1.8. The school has a proud history of sporting and cultural achievements, having produced many successful athletes, including Springbok rugby player Kurt-Lee Arendse, 7s player and SA women's coach Renfred Dazel, and the late Thinus Linee. In cricket, Angelo Carolissen and Salieg Nackerdien have made significant contributions. The alumni network includes respected professionals such as Prof Jerome Peter Fredericks, Dr Jan Daniels, Dr Gillian Arendse and Senior Advocate Donald Jacobs, among others.
- 2.1.9. The school celebrates its heritage through traditional events such as the Miss Paulus Beauty Contest, Alumni Black Tie Dinner, High Tea Gala, seasonal derby days, a Golf Day and athletics competitions. Teachers are also recognised for their involvement in regional and national sports leadership.
- 2.1.10. The school benefits greatly from strong community and alumni involvement. Alumni organise development sessions, contribute to mentorship programmes and promote a culture of learning and success. Additionally, coaches from the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport play an important role in delivering sports and cultural education to learners.

Challenges identified

- 2.1.11. Several discipline and socio-economic issues affect the school. Learners have been cutting fences to gain unauthorised access to the premises, and graffiti on school walls reflects deeper discipline challenges. These problems are exacerbated by broader socio-economic realities in the community, highlighting the need to foster a more positive behavioural culture among learners.
- 2.1.12. The school currently lacks a clear infrastructure plan to guide development and improvements. The parking facilities are inadequate, and the school hall was constructed without a stage, which limits its functionality. The school is implementing a R461 000 accessibility project, although only a few learners with disabilities will benefit. Sports infrastructure is limited, and Agricultural Sciences is not offered due to a shortage of qualified staff.
- 2.1.13. Security and safety remain persistent concerns. Ongoing issues require the involvement of local police and anti-gang units to protect staff and learners. There is also a lack of clarity regarding the funding and support received from the Safer Schools Programme. Incidents compromising the safety of staff and learners need to be addressed urgently.
- 2.1.14. Staffing shortages are a significant challenge. Teacher shortages have led to larger class sizes, and cuts to teaching posts have negatively impacted the curriculum. The school relies on funding from the governing body to pay additional teachers and to sustain educational programmes.
- 2.1.15. Financial sustainability is uncertain due to the short-term nature of the current five-year lease agreement, which hampers long-term planning. There is also limited clarity about revenue generated from alumni contributions and school fundraising events.

- 2.1.16. The school faces legal and governance constraints related to land use. The Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act 6 of 2004) (MPRA), and public finance legislation impose strict rules that limit how the school's land can be used or developed. This creates tension between the school's operational needs and compliance requirements.

3. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

- 3.1. The school should investigate the most feasible way of allowing limited and controlled access to the school grounds.
- 3.2. The school should engage the school's Alumni to explore ways for them to contribute to the upkeep of the school and to provide additional resources.
- 3.3. The school should consider offering Agricultural Sciences as an additional subject.
- 3.4. To address discipline, the Winelands Education District should continue its efforts to foster a positive behaviour culture in the school.
- 3.5. With regard to land use and compliance, it is necessary to provide clarity about the legal constraints imposed by the Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act 6 of 2004) (MPRA), and public finance regulations. All land-use plans should be formalised to prevent conflicts and ensure adherence to legal requirements.
- 3.6. The 2025 Infrastructure Project to develop a shared rugby field for the Paulus Joubert secondary and primary schools should be supported and monitored.

4. Information requested

The Committee REQUESTED the WCED to provide:

- 4.1. Detailed information on the five-year lease agreement, including an explanation of why a 99-year lease was not considered as an option.
- 4.2. Reasons why the school has not been identified as a departmental infrastructure priority.
- 4.3. Clarity on the ownership and specifications of school infrastructure projects, such as the hall that was built without a stage, ablution facilities and many other construction issues.
- 4.4. A report on the Accessibility Project. It is important to assess the necessity and cost-effectiveness of the R461 000 investment, especially considering the small number of learners who require these facilities.
- 4.5. Details on any safety incidents at the school, as well as any funding or support received through the Safer Schools Programme.
- 4.6. The strategies to address teacher shortages and to manage the impact of large class sizes.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Paulus Joubert Secondary School is a vibrant educational institution that has made great strides in academic performance, learner support and community engagement. While the school faces ongoing challenges related to safety and infrastructure, its dedicated staff, committed learners and strong community partnerships provide a solid foundation for continued success. Ongoing investment in security measures, facilities and learner development programmes will further strengthen the

school's mission to provide inclusive, high-quality education in a safe and empowering environment.

6. Acknowledgments

The Committee thanked the WCED, the Principal and the teachers who were present during the visit to the Paulus Joubert Secondary School.

2. Report of the Standing Committee on Education on its oversight visit to the Crestway High School in Retreat.

The 2024/25 strategic objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speaker's priorities that 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 (hereafter the Committee), having conducted an oversight visit to the Crestway High School on 5 August 2025, reports as follows:

The delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Education included the following Members:

Van Wyk, LD (DA) (Chairperson of the Committee until 19 August 2025)
Booyesen, M (DA)
Christians, CF (ACDP)
Sayed, MK (ANC)

Apologies

Kaizer-Philander, WF (DA)
Stephens, DR (PA)
Walters, TCR (DA)

The following parliamentary official accompanied the committee:

Ms W Hassen-Moosa, Procedural Officer

1. Overview

The Standing Committee on Education's visit to the Crestway High School highlighted the school's significant transformation from being the worst-performing institution in the Western Cape to one demonstrating notable academic and cultural progress. Key developments included visionary leadership, strategic academic planning and the implementation of a digital classroom with AI-assisted learning tools.

The school now offers a wide range of enrichment programmes, maintains strong partnerships with universities and NGOs, and has improved its matric pass rate from 35% to 66%. Prof Jonathan Jansen played a pivotal role in this turnaround, providing daily mentorship and discipline-focused interventions.

2. Visit to the Crestway High School

Ms C Jacobs, Principal, Ms C Meyer-Williams, Director: Metro South Education District, and Prof Jansen from Stellenbosch University were among the officials present during the visit.

2.1. Key aspects discussed at the school

Ms Jacobs provided an overview of the school. The presentation for the Crestway High School outlined several key areas of the school.

2.2. Key points for the oversight report: the Crestway High School

- 2.2.1. The Crestway High School, through its vision and mission, is committed to holistic education that empowers learners to reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to society. The school promotes inclusive education in a safe environment, underpinned by values of respect, collaboration and skill development.
- 2.2.2. The Principal is recognised as an outstanding visionary leader, having collaboratively developed a School Improvement Plan (SIP) with key stakeholders. A strategic academic focus is evident, particularly in grades 8, 9 and 12, with emphasis on Mathematics and systemic test outcomes.
- 2.2.3. A shift towards distributed leadership is underway to reduce overreliance on the Principal and strengthen leadership capacity across the school.
- 2.2.4. A state-of-the-art digital classroom is being set up in partnership with the Stellenbosch University, private sector entities, NGOs and the WCED. This facility will feature AI-powered learning tools, including the AMIRA reading assistant, to address literacy challenges in the GET phase.
- 2.2.5. The school offers a wide range of academic support and enrichment programmes, including remedial reading, mentorship by alumni, career exhibitions and post-examination activities.
- 2.2.6. Cultural and sporting activities are robust, with programmes such as choir, eco-club, netball, cricket, athletics and chess contributing to holistic learner development.
- 2.2.7. The school is staffed by a combination of permanent, acting, contract and SGB-appointed educators. Leadership positions are filled, though some are in acting capacities. Non-teaching staff members include administrative and support personnel.
- 2.2.8. The overall learner–teacher ratio stands at approximately 31,9:1, with variations across grades and language streams. This ratio reflects the need for additional teaching staff to support academic interventions.
- 2.2.9. The school provides daily meals to 250 learners, exceeding its official allocation through staff donations and partnerships with local organisations. Additional support includes weekly soup servings and bread donations.
- 2.2.10. Comprehensive safety measures are in place, including access control, emergency procedures and compliance certifications. The school collaborates with various stakeholders, including SAPS, CPF and local government, to ensure a safe learning environment.
- 2.2.11. The Grade 12 pass rate improved significantly from 35% to 66%, with increased distinctions and B symbol passes. This reflects a positive shift in academic culture and learner outcomes.

- 2.2.12. The school has cultivated strong partnerships with universities, NGOs and professional bodies, enhancing access to resources and expertise. Notable collaborators include Prof Jonathan Jansen, UWC, UCT, CTLI, AIMS and the Citizen Leadership Lab.
- 2.2.13. The school is actively involved in conservation science through its Eco-Club. In collaboration with CPUT and other research institutions, the school is conducting a bird ringing and tracking study that contributes to environmental education.
- 2.2.14. Challenges identified by the school are the following: the persistent underperformance in lower grades, community instability affecting learner well-being, limited resources and staffing, low parental involvement and non-payment of school fees, which remain significant challenges. Strategic interventions are in place to address these issues

Special intervention: Prof Jonathan Jansen's Turnaround Strategy

- 2.2.15. At the beginning of 2024, the Crestway High School was identified as the worst-performing school in the Western Cape, grappling with severe discipline issues, gang-related disruptions and a matric pass rate of only 35%. The school's transformation was significantly catalysed by the voluntary intervention of Prof Jonathan Jansen from the Stellenbosch University, whose personal connection to the school and professional expertise in education reform played a pivotal role in its renewal.
- 2.2.16. Prof Jansen's involvement was driven by a sense of personal responsibility, having grown up adjacent to the school grounds. Motivated by a tabloid headline highlighting the school's poor performance, he offered his services as a turnaround specialist free of charge to the Western Cape Education Department. With the support of the Stellenbosch University, he committed to daily engagements with the Crestway High School, working closely with Principal Cheryl Jacobs and her team to restore discipline and academic focus.
- 2.2.17. Key interventions included:
 - **Restoration of order and discipline**, beginning with punctual gate closures and consistent learner monitoring.
 - **Support for educators** through classroom management strategies and morale-boosting engagement.
 - **Resource mobilisation**, facilitated through university and donor partnerships, which provided modern teaching tools and essential materials.
 - **Constructive accountability**, implemented by means of post-examination reviews and solution-oriented feedback mechanisms.
- 2.2.18. The success of Crestway's turnaround has since inspired a broader initiative – Professors Back to School (PBS) – which aims to embed experienced education academics in underperforming schools to prepare future teachers better and to support school improvement efforts.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Crestway High School, which was formerly the lowest-performing school, has improved significantly in terms of academic performance, school culture and learner support. Its matric pass rate has increased from 35% to 66%. Prof Jonathan Jansen's voluntary participation was crucial to this turnaround; his discipline-focused tactics, daily mentoring and resource mobilisation initiatives helped bring order back and gave staff and students a fresh sense of direction.

The Crestway High School, which is backed by capable leadership, dedicated teachers and cooperative partnerships, is a shining example of what happens when responsibility, compassion and creativity come together. Even though there are still issues, the school's advancements demonstrate its dedication to fostering futures, regaining dignity and providing each student with a top-notch education.

4. Acknowledgments

The Committee thanked the WCED, the Principal and the teachers who were present during the visit to the Crestway High School.