

PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

TUESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2020

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON ITS UNANNOUNCED OVERSIGHT VISITS TO THREE SCHOOLS IN MITCHELL'S PLAIN.

The Standing Committee on Education having conducted unannounced oversight visits to the Oval North Secondary School, A.Z Berman Primary School and Lentegeur Secondary School in Mitchell's Plain on 17 June 2020, reports as follows:

The delegation

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

Botha, LJ (DA) (Chairperson of the Committee and the delegation)
Allen, R (DA)
Christians, F (ACDP)
Kama, M (ANC)
Mackenzie, RD (DA)
Sayed, K (ANC)

Apologies

Apologies were rendered on behalf of Members: Bosman, G (DA), Brinkhuis, G (Al Jama-ah) and Makamba-Botya, N (EFF).

The following parliamentary official accompanied the delegation:

Ms. W Hassen-Moosa, Procedural Officer

1. Overview

On 12 May 2020, the Committee resolved to conduct unannounced oversight visits to various schools across the Cape Metropolitan Area. The visits also allowed members to assess how schools were dealing with the COVID-19 safety regulations and to check if all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was in place.

The Standing Committee on Education deemed it necessary to conduct the in-person oversight visits, in order to ascertain the situation at schools in the Western Cape following the announcement to open schools for Grade 7 and 12.

2. Visit to the Oval North High School in Mitchell's Plain on Wednesday 17 June 2020

Mr. Jacobs, the Acting Principal, received the Committee.

2.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 2.1.1 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all visitors to the school are required wear cloth face masks and sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff or learners.
- 2.1.2. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1.5m apart) is applied by all entering the school grounds.
- 2.1.3. The body temperature of all staff members who enter the school is taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infra-red thermometer.
- 2.1.4. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature or do not feel well. The classroom is also used to isolate those individuals who test positive for COVID-19.
- 2.1.5. All learners get screened and questioned before entering the classroom. The areas are well marked in order to guide learners to practice social distancing.
- 2.1.6. About 141 matric learners enrolled at the school in 2020 but the number has since dropped to 114 learners. Two learners have requested to study at home as they have comorbidities.
- 2.1.7. It was reported that teachers were coping with the situation (COVID-19) at present. The school has also arranged a motivational speaker for teachers to uplift them while at school.
- 2.1.8. One matric pupil's father tested positive for COVID-19 and the learner is currently in quarantine with her family.
- 2.1.9. The school has received Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which includes masks, hand sanitisers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". Learners received three face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 2.1.10. During the COVID-19 period, the school had to let go of eight School Governing Body (SGB) positions as there were no funds to pay them.
- 2.1.11. The schools' electricity account was in arrears.
- 2.1.12. The school had no break-ins or vandalism cases during the lockdown period.

2.2. Recommendation

The Committee RECOMMENDS that the school provides its municipal electricity account to Ward Councillor Petersen of the area of Mitchell's Plain to investigate the arrears incurred. The Committee to be provided with the outcome following the investigation of the arrears' account.

2.3. Information requested

The Committee REQUESTED the WCED to provide it with the exact number of PPE that the school had to receive from the WCED and this information must also be provided to the Oval North High School.

3. Visit to the A.Z Berman Primary School in Mitchell's Plain on Wednesday 17 June 2020

Mr. Peters, the Principal of the school, received the Committee.

3.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 3.1.1. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all visitors to the school are required to wear cloth face masks
- 3.1.2. All officials and visitors visiting the school sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff.
- 3.1.3. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1.5m apart) is applied by all entering the school.
- 3.1.4. The body temperature of all staff members who enter the school is taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infra-red thermometer.
- 3.1.5. The school had 196 Grade 6 learners registered but only 96 learners attended school after reopening during the lockdown.
- 3.1.6. The school received its Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which included masks, hand sanitisers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". The school had received its PPE but they were not sure about the amount of PPE they need to receive. The school provided each learner with three face masks as part of the PPE.
- 3.1.7. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature, do not feel well or test positive for COVID-19.
- 3.1.8. The school has not received any communication from learners that will not return back to school, only a few have indicated comorbidities. However the school has not implemented the deregistering of learners should learners not attend school for more than ten days as they were mindful of the situation the country was in.
- 3.1.9. The school indicated that it does not have enough space and teachers to comply with COVID19 safety protocols.
- 3.1.10. The school also indicated that it submitted its request for additional staff for all the grades on 27 May 2020 and there has been no indication of additional staff or replacements of teachers to assist the school. Also taking into account that there were 400 educators in the Education district that were at home with comorbidities.
- 3.1.11. During the visit there were eight staff members who were absent due to comorbidities and exposure to COVID-19.
- 3.1.12. The school indicated that its staff have not received any training from the WCED on how to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2. Information requested

The Committee requests the WCED to provide the following information:

- 3.2.1. During the meeting of the Standing Committee on Education of 29 May 2020, the Superintendent-General for the Western Cape Education Department, Mr. B Schreuder indicated that schools that have teachers with comorbidities or are off sick can apply for a replacement teacher to be assigned to those schools, with a waiting

period of 15 days. The A.Z. Berman Primary School indicated that it submitted on 27 May 2020, a request for substitute teachers, as it had four teachers off due to comorbidities and two teachers in isolation. But at the time of the visit, they had not received any response. The WCED is requested to provide feedback on this matter.

- 3.2.2. Clarity on the reasons why teachers, staff, and principals have not been trained and workshopped on how to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic in the school environment.
- 3.2.3. Report on how the WCED plans to deal with all learners (1 500 learners registered) at the school at the same time.

4. Visit to the Lentegeur High School in Mitchell's Plain on Wednesday 17 June 2020

Mr. Petersen, the principal of the school, received the Committee.

4.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 4.1.1. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic all visitors to the school wear cloth face masks.
- 4.1.2. All officials and visitors to the school were required to sanitise their hands after each interaction with staff.
- 4.1.3. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1.5m apart) is applied by all entering the school premises.
- 4.1.4. The body temperature of all staff members and learners who enter the school is taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infra-red thermometer.
- 4.1.5. The school received its Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which includes masks, hand sanitisers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE. The school however received less than the allocated amount of masks, the allocated amount that had to be received was 2 240, but this was not the case.
- 4.1.6. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature, do not feel well or in the event they test positive for COVID-19.
- 4.1.7. The school utilised its old "woodwork classroom" as a school hall and during the COVID-19 pandemic it was utilised as a staff room to allow for more space and maintain social distancing.
- 4.1.8. The school had 152 learners registered for Grade 12 in 2020 but only 116 learners returned to school. Ten parents opted to keep their children at home due to comorbidities.
- 4.1.9. The fencing of the school has been changed following the shooting of a teacher, therefore access points have been redefined to control and ensure the safety of learners and staff. The school is waiting for funds to complete the fencing.
- 4.1.10. A Health and Safety Officer from the WCED conducts regular visits to the school. The school requires maintenance to be conducted.
- 4.1.11. The School had to let go of four School Governing Body (SGB) appointees. One of them was a teacher and the rest were support staff.
- 4.1.12. The school utilised community members to assist in cleaning the area surrounding the school.
- 4.1.13. The school received assistance from the Safe Schools Programme which assigned safety guards at the entrance of the school.
- 4.1.14. The school provided food to 350 people from the community during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. This ended once the school reopened.

- 4.1.15. The school indicated to the Minister of Education that if the school field is maintained, the community can utilise the field and this would generate an income for the school.
- 4.1.16. The school utilises its former learners to assist with administrative and other duties.
- 4.1.17. The ablution facilities of the schools needs upgrading as the piping is old. The Department of Public Works officials and contractors were busy with the work on the day of the oversight visit. During the visit, the principal indicated that the parameter hall collapsed while the contractor was busy, which posed a risk for learners, and the fact that the digging was done at the parameter fencing on the side of the school adjacent to the railway line was an added risk. The school decided that if the toilets were not working at the time of reopening, they would delay the reopening until it was completed.
- 4.1.18. Parents complained that female learners did not want to utilise the school toilets as they were not clean. The school wrote to the Circuit Manager requesting urgent assistance.
- 4.1.19. The school had its own makeshift screen in each classroom to protect teachers and learners while in the classroom.
- 4.1.20. The school prepared study material for each grade which was sent to learners to revise at home during lockdown.

4.2. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDS that the WCED:

- 4.2.1. Investigates the possibility of building a school hall for the school.
- 4.2.2. Investigates the possibility of changing the school's entrance to A.Z. Berman Street instead of where it is currently, as this impacts on learners when there is gang violence in the area, as the entrance as it is now is from a residential street, which is a "Red Zone" area in Mitchell's Plain.

4.3. Information requested

The Committee REQUESTED the WCED to provide:

- 4.3.1. The exact number of masks that were allocated to the school. The principal indicated that they received less than 2240, which was the amount stated as allocated to the school.
- 4.3.2. Time frames regarding the construction work on the ablution facility of the school.

5. Conclusion

The Committee successfully concluded its unannounced oversight visits 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 endeavour to succeed in overcoming the challenges noted in this report.

6. Acknowledgments

The Committee thanks the principals and teachers of all three schools visited.

2. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON ITS UNANNOUNCED OVERSIGHT VISITS TO THREE SCHOOLS IN THE METRO CENTRAL EDUCATION DISTRICT AREA

The Standing Committee on Education, having conducted unannounced oversight visits to the Oaklands Secondary School in Lansdowne, Groenvlei Secondary School in Lansdowne and Voorspoed Primary School in Hanover Park on 17 July 2020, reports as follows:

The delegation

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

Botha, LJ (DA) (Chairperson of the Committee and the delegation)
 Allen, R (DA)
 Christians, F (ACDP)
 Sayed, K (ANC)

Apologies

Apologies were rendered on behalf of Members: Bosman, G (DA), Kama, M (ANC) and Makamba-Botya, N (EFF).

The following parliamentary official accompanied the delegation:

Ms. W Hassen-Moosa, Procedural Officer

1. Overview

The purpose of this visit was to allow members to assess how schools are dealing with the COVID-19 safety regulations and to check if all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was in place.

The Standing Committee on Education resolved to conduct the oversight visits to inspect the situation at schools in the Western Cape following the announcement of the decision to open schools for other grades during the COVID-19 epidemic.

2. Visit to the Oaklands Secondary School in Lansdowne on Friday, 17 July 2020

Mr. Jeffery, the acting Principal of the school received the Committee.

2.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 2.1.1. The school is situated in a residential area opposite to the M5 freeway. There is only one remote controlled entrance to the school. There is security personnel present at the school. It has an alarm system and CCTV cameras that are monitored by the school's Secretary.
- 2.1.2. The school is fully enclosed with wire fencing of 1.8m, which surrounds the school. There are adequate ablution facilities.
- 2.1.3. The Acting Principal indicated that strict measures needs to be taken when allowing visitors onto the school premises and also ensured that Members of the Standing

Committee adhered to the safety measures (PPE) put in place by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

- 2.1.4. Currently, 200 Grade 12 learners have returned to complete the academic year. Two of the learners were at home due to commodities and were doing distance learning with the school's assistance.
- 2.1.5. During the week of the visit, about 250 Grade 10 learners returned to school as per the schedule provided by the WCED and the Department of Basic Education.
- 2.1.6. The school achieved a 98% pass rate in 2019 and were hoping that they would be able to maintain their pass rate despite the COVID-19 epidemic which has taken away school days.
- 2.1.7. The school encourages learners to take Pure Mathematics instead of Mathematic Literacy.
- 2.1.8. The school has received Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which includes masks, hand sanitisers and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry".
- 2.1.9. All learners get screened before entering the classroom. The screening checks temperature and COVID-19 symptoms.
- 2.1.10. Most Learners are from Khayelitsha and Philippi, with very few learners from Oakland.
- 2.1.11. Classrooms are spaced according to the social distance with no more than 20 learners per class.
- 2.1.12. The school provides school model packs for learners who have not yet started school every two weeks so that they can study at home.
- 2.1.13. There are no systems to support teachers so that they don't get "burn out."
- 2.1.14. There is no learner transport scheme at the school. Learners utilise public transport, which is a problem at times.
- 2.1.15. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the teacher-learner ratio at the school was 1:50. During the lockdown, the school could only accommodate two grades per day to maintain the social distance in its classrooms, the teacher-learner ratio became 1:20.
- 2.1.16. The projectors are utilised even more now, but only seven out of 11 are working currently, and laptops are used for specialised teaching such as Pure Maths and Physical Science.
- 2.1.17. There is a feeding scheme at the school, and teachers also donate sandwiches to learners.
- 2.1.18. Four teachers have made applications in terms of comorbidities.
- 2.1.19. The school received great support from the District office.

2.2. Resolution

The Committee RESOLVED that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, tables a motion in the House acknowledging the good work done by the management of Oaklands High School in dealing with the "unknown" COVID-19 pandemic at the school.

3. Visit to the Groenvlei Secondary School in Lansdowne on Friday, 17 July 2020

Mr. N.T Adamson, the Principal of the school, received the Committee.

3.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 3.1.1. The school is situated between Lansdowne and Hanover Park, it is surrounded by 1.8m bulletproof fencing. There are only two entrances to the school, the main entrance gate and a pedestrian gate.

- 3.1.2. The school has an alarm system and CCTV cameras that are monitored by the receptionist and has a 24/7 security personnel at the school.
- 3.1.3. The school has adequate demarcated parking and ablution facilities. All external windows and doors are fitted with steel burglar bars and gates.
- 3.1.4. The crime rate in this area is very low. No criminal incidents were reported for the last twelve months.
- 3.1.5. Currently, the school has 120 Grade 12 learners that have returned to complete the academic year. Only two matric learners have withdrawn.
- 3.1.6. During the week of the Committee visit, about 221 Grade 10 learners returned to school, as per the schedule provided by the WCED and the Department of Basic Education.
- 3.1.7. Classroom sizes can accommodate about 20 learners.
- 3.1.8. Volunteers assist with the feeding scheme to provide learners with a hot meal daily. The school decided to continue feeding learners when the school was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.1.9. 15 teachers have been tested for COVID-19, of which one teacher tested positive, and 14 tested negative.
- 3.1.10. The school has an isolation area for those learners that have a high temperature or COVID-19 symptoms.
- 3.1.11. The school took the initiative and planned for its re-opening from April 2020 in order to have its safety measures in place.
- 3.1.12. The school principal has comorbidities and can only be at the school on Fridays, but in his absence, the Deputy Principal of the School is the Acting Principal.
- 3.1.13. The school has received its PPE equipment, which includes masks, hand sanitisers and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating “No mask, No entry”.
- 3.1.14. All teachers and learners get screened for temperature and COVID-19 symptoms before entering the classroom. The school had to employ four of its former learners to assist with the screening process.
- 3.1.15. The school has employed a school physiologist to assist with those learners and teachers that are in quarantine.
- 3.1.16. The school developed a new policy in accordance with the COVID-19 guidelines of the WCED. The school has done everything themselves and has not received support other than the PPE equipment and the guidelines provided by the WCED.
- 3.1.17. The school has accommodation challenges. It can only accommodate three grades per day. Therefore they have scheduled Grade 12 learners to attend school from Monday to Friday. Grade 11 learners thrice a week. The other grades would only attend twice a week.
- 3.1.18. All grades except for Grade 12 would be assessed as follows: 80% on assessment and 20% on the final exams this is according to the guidelines provided by DBE and WCED.
- 3.1.19. The school provides school model packs every two weeks for those learners that have not yet started school so that learners can study at home.
- 3.1.20. Fridays are wellness days at the school for teachers. This is to show appreciation for the work they do.
- 3.1.21. There is a staff WhatsApp chat, which allows the school to engage with teachers in preparation for the next day.
- 3.1.22. Communication with parents takes place when the need arises.
- 3.1.23. The teacher: learner ratio before the National lockdown was 1:50 but now the school is dealing with smaller classrooms.
- 3.1.24. WCED provides Zoom meetings for subject support, which assists the school. Also, more teachers have to learn how to utilise the Zoom App for teaching. The assistance

with the subject-related backing from the WCED was acknowledged by the school. The only downfall is the overload of paperwork that the school was currently experiencing.

3.1.25. The school achieved an 85% matric pass rate in 2019.

3.2. Information requested

3.2.1. The Committee requested the WCED provides a report on the rehabilitation of the Groenvlei School Hall. A request to fix the school was submitted eight years ago, and until to date the school indicated that it was still waiting for a feedback from the WCED on fixing the school hall.

3.2.2. The Committee requests that the WCED provides the numbers in regard to non-response on communication from schools to parents/guardians pertaining to those learners “whose grades” are already back at school. The Committee would like to know if the WCED is aware of these numbers, if so, it must provide the schools' breakdown on this.

3.3. Resolution

The Committee RESOLVED that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, tables a motion in the House acknowledging the good work done by the management of the Groenvlei High School in dealing with the “unknown” COVID-19 pandemic at the school”.

4. Visit to the Voorspoed Primary School in Hanover Park on Friday, 17 July 2020

Mr. R.J. Esau, the Principal of the school, received the Committee.

4.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

4.1.1. This school is next to the M7 freeway in Hanover Park. It is surrounded by palisade fencing and has one pedestrian gate and the main entrance gate. It is fitted with an alarm system which is dysfunctional due to vandalism.

4.1.2. During the day, there are voluntary community workers who render a security service at the school, at night, there are two security officers that patrol the school's perimeter.

4.1.3. This school is in a very volatile area, and the crime rate is very high due to gangsterism, substance abuse, domestic violence, housebreakings, theft, and vandalism.

4.1.4. All external windows and doors are fitted with steel burglar bars and steel gates.

4.1.5. During the week of the committee visit, Grade 6 learners started school as per the schedule provided by the WCED and the Department of Basic Education. Only 74 of 148 learners returned to school. Grade 3 was 20 of 147 learners. Grade 2 was 25 of 146 learners, and Grade 1 was 15 of 113 learners that returned to school from the start of July 2020. Grade 7 learner 122, but only 40% of those learners have returned to school. Over 224 parents applied for learners not to return to school. Even though letters were sent to parents, there was no response from parents.

4.1.6. The school has received its PPE equipment, which includes masks, hand sanitisers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating “No mask, No entry”.

4.1.7. All teachers and learners are screened before entering the classroom. The screening checks their temperature and COVID-19 symptoms. The school has received five

thermometers but needs to purchase five more as they were not enough. Also, according to the Principal, the thermometers are not always accurate.

- 4.1.8. The school has an isolation area for those learners and teachers that have a high temperature or COVID-19 symptoms.
- 4.1.9. The school had six cases of learners who tested positive for COVID-19, all have since recovered, and are back at school.
- 4.1.10. The school doesn't allow its learners to bring their own regular school bags. It provides a unique school bag to each learner that is easy to sanitise and remains at school. Learners are not permitted to take the school bags home.

5. Matters arising

The Committee resolved that during this period of the National Lockdown (Level 3 to 1) the Standing Committee Members' would embark on visits to various schools across the province. It was also resolved that committee Members can claim from the Standing Committee on Education's budget for utilising their own vehicle to get to and from visits in order to maintain social distance.

6. Conclusion

The Committee successfully concluded its unannounced oversight visits and took cognisance of the urgency of the challenges experienced by the various schools that were visited. It was evident that the schools needed the Committee's support to succeed against the challenges noted in this report. The Committee would also like to acknowledge the outstanding initiative taken to prepare teachers, learners and parents for the reopening of the schools after the two months spent in Lockdown as part of the National Disaster.

7. Acknowledgments

The Committee thanks the WCED, principals, and teachers of all three schools visited.

3. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON UNANNOUNCED OVERSIGHT VISITS TO TWO SCHOOLS IN THE CAPE WINELANDS EDUCATION DISTRICT AREA

The Standing Committee on Education, having conducted unannounced oversight visits to the Wolseley Primary School and Wolseley Secondary on 22 July 2020, reports as follows:

The delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Education included the following Members: Botha, LJ (DA) (Chairperson of the Committee and the delegation)

Allen, R (DA)
 Kama, M (ANC)
 Marran, P (ANC)
 Sayed, K (ANC)

Apologies

Apologies were rendered on behalf of Members: Bosman, G (DA), Christians, F (ACDP) and Makamba-Botya, N (EFF)

The following parliamentary official accompanied the delegation:

Ms W Hassen-Moosa, Procedural Officer

3. Overview

The purpose of this visit was to allow members to assess how schools are dealing with the COVID-19 safety regulations and to check if all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was in place.

The Standing Committee on Education resolved to conduct the oversight visits to inspect the situation at schools in the Western Cape following the announcement of the decision to open schools for other grades during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Visit to the Wolseley Primary School (Wolseley Laerskool) in Wolseley on Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Mr. A Pienaar, the Principal of the school, received the Committee.

2.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 2.1.1. The school is situated in a quiet residential suburb, with a farm area at the back of the school. There is only one entrance to the school that is remote-controlled and is surrounded by a 1.5m wire fence. The school is fitted with an alarm system that is monitored by Ceres Alarms and CCTV that is monitored by the school principal.
- 2.1.2. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitize their hands after each interaction with staff
- 2.1.3. The practice of social distancing (*Being more than 1.5m apart*) must be applied by all entering the school grounds.
- 2.1.4. 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 infra-red thermometer, before the staff and learners can access to the school.
- 2.1.5. The school has received Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which includes masks, hand sanitizers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating “No mask, No entry”. Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 2.1.6. There are 21 classrooms, with a staff complement of 11 teachers and 133 learners. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were only 43 learners at the school in the first week of reopening.
- 2.1.7. All 19 Grade 7 learners have returned to complete the academic year.
- 2.1.8. Currently the school numbers have increased: Grade 1 has 22 learners, Grade 2 has 15 learners, Grade 3 has 18 learners, Grade 4 has 24 learners and Grade 5 has 19 learners that have returned to school.
- 2.1.9. The crime rate in this area is very low and most incidents relate to vandalism, theft, and housebreaking.
- 2.1.10. The school has been divided into two sections, and had accommodated the high school in the past, but currently only accommodates primary school learners.

- 2.1.11. The learners indicate apprehension about being back in school even though, according to the Department of Health, the country is at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The school indicates that there are no psychologists to assist learners and teachers with this apprehension.
- 2.1.12. Classrooms are very spacious and the biggest classroom has 16 learners currently.
- 2.1.13. The school indicated that every learner and teacher has received two masks and hand sanitiser along with the cleaning equipment. The necessary PPE is all in place.
- 2.1.14. There has been a request from three learners to enrol in distance learning due to comorbidities and other reasons.
- 2.1.15. There has been no infection of any staff or learners to date.
- 2.1.16. The school has made a classroom available as an isolation area if any learners or staff have a high temperature or are not feeling well.

2.2. Key aspects pertaining to challenges

- 2.2.1. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school was forced to let one of its School Governing Body (SGB) teachers go.
- 2.2.2. The school is registered as a Quintile 5 school but accommodates learners from very poor areas and only 30% of the school fees are received from parents. The school relies on activities, such as the Breede River Cycle Tour, which assists the school in covering the outstanding fees and paying for an extra teacher.
- 2.2.3. Given the above circumstances, the school has now had to double-up with teachers on certain subjects, after relieving a SGB teacher of her duties due to inefficient funds.
- 2.2.4. The school has put in a request, via its circuit manager, to the Cape Winelands Education District to change the school's quintile status to no fees, but no response on this issue has been received.
- 2.2.5. The school had very little parent involvement, as the community it serves is poor.

2.3. Recommendation

The Committee RECOMMENDED that the WCED provide detailed feedback on the request to change the quintile status of the school, given the fact that the learners are from underprivileged communities.

2.4. Resolution

The Committee RESOLVED to engage with the WCED with regards to not informing schools in the Cape Winelands that the Standing Committee will be undertaking unannounced oversight visits in the area.

3. Visit to the Wolseley Secondary Primary School (Wolseley Sekondêr Skool) on Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Mr. R.F. Vergotine, the Principal of the school, and Mr. Abrahams, the deputy Principal of the school, received the Committee.

3.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 3.1.1. This school is situated in a residential area opposite an open field. The school has a staff complement of 28 and 841 learners. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are only 171 learners that have returned.

- 3.1.2. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the schools must wear cloth face masks and sanitize their hands after each interaction with staff
- 3.1.3. The practice of social distancing (*Being more than 1.5m apart*) must be applied by all entering the school grounds.
- 3.1.4. 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 infra-red thermometer, before the staff and learners can access to the school.
- 3.1.5. Currently, 95, Grade 12 learners have returned to complete the academic year, five learners have not returned, and no explanation has been provided for their absence.
- 3.1.6. During the week of 20 July 2020 Grade 10 learners started, as per the schedule provided on the grades that would be returning to school by the WCED and the Department of Basic Education. 76 learners returned to school.
- 3.1.7. The school has adequate demarcated parking and ablution facilities.
- 3.1.8. The school is also surrounded by a 1.8m wire fence and has only two entrances. Only the main entrance is in use and is remote controlled.
- 3.1.9. The school has an alarm system that is monitored by Ceres Alarms. This school is in a very volatile area, but the crime rate is moderate in this area, with incidents relating to substance abuse, domestic violence, housebreaking, theft, and vandalism.
- 3.1.10. All external windows and doors are fitted with steel burglar bars and steel gates.
- 3.1.11. The PPE is in place. Even though no training was provided by the WCED, the teachers and staff managed to work it out and put all guidelines indicated by the WCED in place. The school has received Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which includes masks, hand sanitizers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating “No mask, No entry”. Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 3.1.12. Wolseley Secondary School is the only high school in Wolseley. They receive 60% of their learners from the neighbouring schools.
- 3.1.13. The school receives only 50% of the school fees as most learners come from underprivileged communities.
- 3.1.14. Due to the school being registered as a Quintile 4 status school, they do not offer the feeding scheme at the school. The school reported that it had submitted an application to have its status changed to that of a no-fee school, but there had been no feedback on this matter.
- 3.1.15. One Grade 12 learner tested positive for COVID-19 two weeks into reopening the school and the school had to close for one day to sanitise the classrooms.
- 3.1.16. The school transports 200 learners via the Learner Transport Scheme. Six routes have been approved and one is still to be approved. On that one route, two Grade 12 learners require transport to school. The school has assisted in the interim in getting those learners to and from school during weekdays until the problem is resolved.
- 3.1.17. There has been no infection of teachers at the school. There is an area that will be utilised for isolation if teachers or learners become sick.
- 3.1.18. All teachers are registered for the online teaching programmes of the WCED.
- 3.1.19. The school envisages that once all grades are back they will need to rotate grades (such as only having two grades per day, to maintain social distancing).

3.2. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDED that the WCED:

- 3.2.1. Provides detailed feedback on the request to change the quintile status of the school, given the fact that the learners are from underprivileged communities.

- 3.2.2. Provides a report on the reasons as to why the bleach, that had to be delivered to the school before teachers reported for duty, had not been delivered, which the school then needed to purchase its own bleach due to this shortfall.

4. Conclusion

The Committee successfully concluded its unannounced oversight visits 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 endeavour to succeed against the challenges noted in this report. The Committee would also like to acknowledge the outstanding initiative taken to prepare staff and learners, as well as parents, for the reopening of the schools after the two months spent in lockdown as part of the National Disaster.

5. Acknowledgements

The Committee thanks the principals and teachers of the two schools visited.

4. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON ITS UNANNOUNCED OVERSIGHT VISITS TO TWO SCHOOLS IN THE METRO NORTH EDUCATION DISTRICT AREA

The Standing Committee on Education having conducted unannounced oversight visits to the Marconi Bean Primary School and Sinenjongo High School in Milnerton on 18 August 2020, reports as follows:

The delegation

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

Botha, LJ (DA) (Chairperson of the Committee and the delegation)
 Allen, R (DA)
 Bosman, G (DA)
 Christians, F (ACDP)
 Sayed, K (ANC)

Apologies

Apologies were rendered on behalf of Members: Kama, M (ANC) and Makamba-Botya, N (EFF)

The following parliamentary official accompanied the delegation:

Ms. W Hassen-Moosa, Procedural Officer

5. Overview

The purpose of this visit was to allow members to assess how schools are dealing with the COVID-19 safety regulations and to check if all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was in place.

The Standing Committee on Education resolved to conduct the oversight visits to inspect the situation at schools in the Western Cape following the decision to open schools for other grades during the COVID 19 epidemic.

2. Visit to the Marconi Bean Primary School in Milnerton on Tuesday, 25 August 2020

Mrs. Plaatjies, the Principal of the school received the Committee.

2.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 2.1.1. The school is situated in a residential area. There is only one entrance to the school that is remote controlled. Two security personnel are posted at the school on a 24/7 basis. There is an alarm system but there is no CCTV camera system. The school's perimeter consists of a 1.8m palisade fencing. There is adequate ablution facilities.
- 2.1.2. This school has 39 classrooms and approximately 20 teachers. All windows are fitted with burglar bars and all outside doors are fitted with reinforced steel gates.
- 2.1.3. The crime rate is very high in the area, with mainly housebreakings, theft, vandalism, domestic violence, and gangsterism.
- 2.1.4. The school also hosts a soup kitchen on its premises every day.
- 2.1.5. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic all security officials and visitors to the school wear cloth face masks.
- 2.1.6. All officials and visitors visiting the school sanitize their hands after each interaction with staff.
- 2.1.7. The practice of social distancing (being more than 1.5m apart) is applied by all entering the school grounds.
- 2.1.8. The body temperature of all staff members who enter the school is taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infra-red thermometer.
- 2.1.9. The school received Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which includes masks, hand sanitizers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating "No mask, No entry". Learners received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE. The only item that the school did not receive is the plastic apron for the kitchen staff.
- 2.1.10. The school has transformed a classroom into an isolation area for those learners and staff who have a high temperature, do not feel well or tested positive for COVID-19.
- 2.1.11. In July 2020, the school was set alight during protest actions in the area. Two classrooms were damaged.
- 2.1.12. The school made provision for small classes in order to maintain social distance in its classrooms.
- 2.1.13. The school is in need of a school hall.
- 2.1.14. The school is registered as a Quintile 4 but is situated in a very poor community. There has been a request for the Quintile status to be changed to a no-fee school, but as yet, no feedback has been received. Given this status, the school cannot receive the National Feeding Scheme funds, but this has not hindered the school from feeding 450 of its 1800 learners daily. The school attempts to provide two meals a day but there are times when only one meal can be offered.
- 2.1.15. The school has a waiting list of more than 100 learners from Eastern Cape to start schooling in the new schooling year.
- 2.1.16. Two teachers tested positive for COVID-19 when the school reopened in August 2020.

2.2. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDS that:

- 2.2.1. The WCED investigates the possibility of changing the Quintile status of the school, which would allow more learners to be fed through the National Feeding Scheme.
- 2.2.2. The Department of Transport and Public Works must prioritise the rehabilitation of the classrooms that were damaged during the protests in the area.

2.3. Information requested

- 2.3.1. The Committee REQUESTED the WCED to provide it with a report on the reasons why the schools has not received its stock of plastic aprons.

3. Visit to the Sinenjongo High School in Milnerton on Tuesday, 25 August 2020

Mrs. OP Ponote, the Principal of the school, received the Committee.

3.1. Key aspects pertaining to the walkabout at the school

- 3.1.1. This school is opposite an informal settlement in an Industrial area. It is surrounded by palisade fencing and has one pedestrian gate and the main entrance gate. This school is fully enclosed. It is fitted with an alarm system which is dysfunctional due to vandalism.
- 3.1.2. There is one private security during the day and three at night. This school is in a very volatile area, the crime rate is very high in this area due to gangsterism, substance abuse, domestic violence, housebreaking, theft, vandalism, and high political interference.
- 3.1.3. The school has adequate demarcated parking and ablution facilities. All external windows and doors are fitted with steel burglar bars and steel gates.
- 3.1.4. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all visitors to the school are required to wear cloth face masks.
- 3.1.5. The practice of social distancing (Being more than 1.5m apart) is applied by all entering the school grounds and classrooms.
- 3.1.6. The body temperature of all staff members who enter the school is taken in a non-invasive manner by using an infra-red thermometer.
- 3.1.7. The school has received its Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which includes masks, hand sanitizers, and bleach. The school entrance displayed signs and posters indicating “No mask, No entry”. Each learner received two face masks from the school as part of the PPE.
- 3.1.8. The school is newly built and was handed over in 2015.
- 3.1.9. The school has transformed one of its a classrooms into an isolation area for those learners or staff who have a high temperature, do not feel well or test positive for COVID-19.
- 3.1.10. This school has a hall that can accommodate approximately 500 people. This hall was set alight during the protests in the area.
- 3.1.11. There are 192 learners enrolled for Matric, of which two have indicated that they will not be returning to school.
- 3.1.12. The school makes provision for smaller classrooms in order to maintain social distancing in its classrooms.
- 3.1.13. The school achieved a Matric pass rate of 78% and above over the past three years.
- 3.1.14. The school opens for study over the weekends and after school hours.

3.2. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDS that the WCED and the Department of Transport and Public Works prioritises the rehabilitation of the school hall and the kitchen which were damaged during the protests in the area.

4. Conclusion

The Committee successfully concluded its unannounced oversight visits and took cognisance of the urgency of the challenges experienced by the schools that were visited. It was evident that the schools needed the Committee's support to succeed against the challenges noted in this report. The Committee would also like to acknowledge the outstanding initiative taken to prepare staff, learners and parents for the reopening of the schools after the two months spent in Lockdown as part of the National Disaster.

5. Acknowledgments

The Committee thanks the principals, and teachers of all two schools visited.