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

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ON OVERSIGHT
VISITS TO NOLUTHANDO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
OFFICE IN KHAYELITSHA ON 21 JULY 2015**

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ON OVERSIGHT VISITS TO NOLUTHANDO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT OFFICE IN KHAYELITSHA ON 21 JULY 2015

Report of the Standing Committee on Community Development on its oversight visit to Noluthando School for the Deaf and Social Development District Office in Khayelitsha, dated 21 June 2015, as follows:

Delegation

The delegation included the following Members:

Botha, LJ (DA) (Acting Chairperson and leader of the delegation)

Lekker, PZ (ANC)

Mackenzie, RD (DA)

Makeleni, P (ANC)

Wenger, MM (DA)

Apology

Ms. MN Gillion (ANC)

The following Parliamentary officials accompanied the delegation:

Mr. B Daza, Senior Committee Coordinator

Ms. N Jamce, Committee Co-ordinator

1. Introduction

The Committee as part of its oversight mandate and complying with the Committee programme, resolved to embark on oversight visits to Noluthando School for the Deaf and Social Development District Office in Khayelitsha. The Committee undertook these visits to get a first-hand experience and to assess the activities of these facilities.

2. Overview

The delegation visited Noluthando School for the Deaf and Social Development District Office in Khayelitsha on Tuesday, 21 July 2015. The main objective of the visits was to assess the activities of Noluthando School for the Deaf and Social Development District Office in Khayelitsha. These visits were some of many visits which the Standing Committee on Community Development will embark on as part of its programme for the 2015/2016 financial year.

3. Visit to Noluthando School for the Deaf

3.1. Findings and concerns

- 3.1.1. Noluthando School for the Deaf is a special school situated in Khayelitsha that is dedicated to educate Deaf learners and learners with Autism.
- 3.1.2. The School operates from a private property that is owned by Mfesane. Noluthando School for the Deaf is currently serving 364 students between the ages of 3 to 18 years who have hearing impairments. These learners come from various communities.
- 3.1.3. Students are allowed to enroll at Noluthando School for the Deaf at pre-primary for language acquisition when they are three years old.
- 3.1.4. The Committee was informed that 10% of students are born to deaf parents while 90% are born to hearing parents. The school also informed the Committee that the problem with deaf children who are born to hearing parents is that parents cannot speak and understand the sign language.
- 3.1.5. The School offers academic education in Mathematics, Sign language, Life Skills, Physical Education, Natural Science, Technology and Creative Arts. In the Skills Section, learners are offered training in Hospitality, Sewing, Plumbing, Hairdressing, Bricklaying, Welding, Panel Beating, Motor Mechanics and Electrical. After students have successfully completed the course, the school facilitates access to prospective employment opportunities.
- 3.1.6. Students who complete grade nine at Noluthando School for the Deaf can go to De La Bat School in Worcester or Wittebome School in Wynberg for grade 10 -12 studies, where thereafter they can either enroll in NID College in Worcester or FET College to further their studies.
- 3.1.7. The committee was informed that more than 5000 students in the Province are on the waiting list to be accepted in the special schools for autism. The School also accepts students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at the age of six years.
- 3.1.8. Learners with autism are offered individualised educational and development programmes that consist of life skills, numeracy, literacy, language development, communication and speech.
- 3.1.9. The Committee was informed that in 2010, the Western Cape Province in conjunction with Free State Province formed a task team that supervised the formation of the curriculum for deaf learners.
- 3.1.10. In 2011 -2013, the Western Cape piloted the curriculum for deaf learners and in 2014 the curriculum was implemented to all five deaf schools in the Province after approval by the National Department of Education.
- 3.1.11. Members were informed that the University of Free State currently offers accredited South African Sign Language (SASL) training whilst the University of Stellenbosch offers Advance Training in SASL literature and poetry training.
- 3.1.12. Ms. Steyn, Programme Manager from the Department of Education informed the Committee that they are lobbying for universities to accept South African Sign Language (SASL) as a first language. This will make it possible for deaf learners to enroll at tertiary institutions.
- 3.1.13. Noluthando School for the Deaf indicated that they are planning to host a conference to discuss early Intervention and education of deaf children between the ages 0-3 years.
- 3.1.14. The school is considering alternative assessment to give Deaf learners a fair chance to compete with the hearing learners.
- 3.1.15. The School in collaboration with Deaf South Africa provide support to parents and family members of deaf children by offering free lessons on sign language on Saturdays.

- 3.1.16. Noluthando School for the Deaf has a school hall that is utilised for different events, sometimes the hall is hired by external organisations including government departments.
- 3.1.17. The School also has a Science Laboratory; currently two classes in the Lab are used as workshops for the school hospitality.

3.2. Challenges at Noluthando School for the Deaf

- 3.2.1. There is a high staff shortage particularly Deaf Teacher Assistance, Autism Teachers, ECD Teachers, Nurses, Social Workers and Speech Therapists.
- 3.2.2. The School hall does not have a kitchen and toilets. The school needs funding to revamp the hall.
- 3.2.3. Noluthando School for the Deaf is in need of the science lab equipment.
- 3.2.4. The School needs new busses to transport children to and from school. Currently the school has one 32 seater bus although the number of children is increasing yearly. The driver has to drive two trips every day and due to the shortage of transportation, some children end-up not attending school.

4. Visit to the District office of Social Development

4.1. Background information of the District Office

The District Office of Social Development in Khayelitsha originally functioned as one of 16 District Offices. In 2010 service delivery was modernised to establish six Regions with service delivery areas closer to the communities. Khayelitsha was divided into three service delivery areas and formed the Metro East Region with Somerset West, Kraaifontein and Eersterivier as the other three service delivery areas. Due to accommodation challenges, all three service delivery areas were located in the same building. In 2013, accommodation became available in Ilitha Park and one team moved to the new Metropolitan Building.

4.2. Findings

- 4.2.1. The District Office of Social Development in Khayelitsha offers child protection services, registration of ECD's and Old Age Homes, victim empowerment services, early intervention services, statutory services, social crime prevention services and community and partnership development.
- 4.2.2. The total staff establishment of Khayelitsha District Office is 93 personnel that consist of four Managers, 11 Supervisors, 56 Social Workers, 10 Social Auxiliary Workers, two Community Development Practitioners and two Assistant Community Development Practitioners.
- 4.2.3. The caseload statistics of Khayelitsha District Office is as follows:
 - a) the average caseload per Social Worker is 80;
 - b) average number of new clients reporting for services per month is 660;
 - c) probation reports submitted to court per month is 30;
 - d) number of assessment of offenders per month is 85;
 - e) number of children in foster care receiving services is 2280;
 - f) number of registered Early Development Centres is 205 and unregistered ECD's are 97
- 4.2.4. The Committee was further informed that highest caseload is on child neglect at 322, application for foster care placements 204, child abuse 137 and substance abuse 110.
- 4.2.5. The District Office of Social Development has been faced with fraud grant applications, where it was alleged that some of the Social Workers were involved. The Department indicated that to

stop this criminal activity, SASSA alerted and warned the public about the scam through radio and newspaper adverts and SASSA head office is busy with an internal investigation in this regard

4.3. Achievements of the Social Development District Office in Khayelitsha in the last financial year (April 2014 /March 2015)

- 4.3.1. A total number of 265 children were placed in foster care, these were children whose parents were either deceased or the child life is at risk. They were then removed from their families and be placed with safety parents appointed by the Department.
- 4.3.2. 1236 Orders were issued to eradicate the foster care backlog. Khayelitsha District Office was the first in the Province to reach this milestone.
- 4.3.3. 120 foster children attended three skills development camps and 80 attended two crime prevention camps. The Committee was informed that the Head Office of Social Development is in a process of accrediting the programmes offered in these camps. The camps are offered during school holiday and attended by youth especially those ordered by the Court.
- 4.3.4. 260 foster children attended career opportunity programs to capacitate them for post matric opportunities.
- 4.3.5. 48 foster children consequently enrolled in tertiary institutions at the beginning of 2015. The District Office highlighted that when children are in matric they are transported to and from institutions of higher learning by the Department for career exhibitions.
- 4.3.6. 29 ECD Centres were registered. The District Office indicated that in the past they had a challenge of non-compliance from ECD's and those that are still failing to comply are given conditional registration to ensure compliance.
- 4.3.7. 199 Youth were identified for the EPWP Geyser Installation Project in Kuyasa and they are still in the programme.
- 4.3.8. 107 Youth were assisted to apply for bursaries (Social Welfare Scholarship) and two applications were approved.

5. Challenges at Social Development District Office

- 5.1. The recruitment of foster parents is a major challenge in the province due to the small amount paid to foster parents. Currently foster parents are paid R27 per day.
- 5.2. There are limited rehabilitation centres in the Province; this makes it difficult to refer substance abuse clients.
- 5.3. There is a shortage of office space, as a result social workers consult with clients in open-plan offices and there is no privacy.
- 5.4. Lack of training and tools of trade for Social Workers.
- 5.5. High Shortage of vehicles, the available ones are old and 20 Social Workers share three vehicles.

6. Conclusion

The Committee successfully concluded the oversight visits in Khayelitsha.



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MS L/BOTHA, MPP

ACTING CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT