

WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

[No 4 - 2026] Third Session, Seventh Parliament

TUESDAY, 7 APRIL 2026

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

23. Mr P Johnson to ask Mr D J Maynier, Minister of Education:

With regard to underperforming public schools in the Western Cape:

- (a) How many schools are currently classified as underperforming,
- (b) what criteria are used to identify underperforming schools,
- (c) what (i) strategies and (ii) interventions has his Department put in place to support these schools,
- (d) (i) how is improvement measured and
(ii) how often is progress reviewed,
- (e) how many schools have improved their performance and exited the underperforming category in the past three years and
- (f) what has been the total cost to his Department for these interventions in (i) 2022/23, (ii) 2023/24 and (iii) 2024/25?

Answer:

23. My department has informed me of the following:

- (a) Of the 1 554 public schools in the Western Cape, 76 primary schools and 111 secondary schools have been identified as underperforming.
- (b) In terms of Amended Circular D3 of 2023:
 - Primary schools must be deemed to be underperforming if, using Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and Mathematics as proxy, a school is deemed to be underperforming if less than 60% of learners perform at level 4 and above in Grade 6.
 - A secondary school should be deemed to be underperforming if its pass percentage in the National Senior Certificate examination falls below 70 per cent or it has produced less than 30 % bachelor passes.
 - In the case of combined schools, the school should be deemed to have underperformed if one or both grades (Grades 6 and 12) have underperformed. The letter of notice should clarify in which phase the school has underperformed.

- A school shall be deemed as chronically underperforming if it is identified as such by the province for a period of three consecutive years.
- (c) (i) At primary school level, the province has prioritised early identification and preventative support through structured School Self Evaluation (SSE), School Improvement Planning (SIP), and focused curriculum and leadership interventions.

At secondary school level, particularly in chronically underperforming schools, targeted turnaround strategies, Academic Performance Improvement Plans (APIPs), learner profiling, and sustained curriculum support have been implemented to stabilise performance and improve outcomes in key subjects.

(II) Flagship provincial initiatives, including the #BackOnTrack programme, curriculum recovery programmes, professional learning communities, and the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI) supported professional development, continue to strengthen teaching and learning across phases. Strong participation in learner support programmes, including Saturday classes and seasonal schools, reflects growing school and community commitment to sustained improvement.

- (d) (i) Progress in all identified schools will continue to be monitored through established district, provincial and national reporting cycles, using existing Western Cape Education Department (WCED) systems and tools.

(ii) Districts submit quarterly consolidated reports on progress, challenges and corrective actions for the underperforming schools.

(e)

Year	Primary School exiting the underperforming category	Secondary School exiting the underperforming category
2022/23	18	9
2023/24	31	73
2024/25	56	4

- (f) There is no separate designated budget allocated for underperforming schools, provision was used from the existing #BackOnTrack budget for both primary and secondary schools.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION

DATE: 10 APRIL 2026