

STATEMENT BY MINISTER DAVID MAYNIER

WESTERN CAPE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Date: 3 August 2025

Release: immediate

Note to editors: please email or WhatsApp Kerry for a soundbite. Statement and soundbite also available on the WCED media WhatsApp group.

PLEASE NOTE: We will not release the names or locations of the schools for security reasons.

MEDIA RELEASE: More schools fall victim to senseless theft and damage during the holidays

School properties are at particular risk of burglary and vandalism during school holidays, which is why the Western Cape Education Department subsidised holiday security at 424 schools in high risk areas during the winter holidays.

Despite this investment, 57 incidents of burglary and vandalism at 46 schools were reported during the June/July holiday period. This is a significant increase from the same period in 2024, when 45 incidents affecting 39 schools were reported.

Most of these incidents were minor in nature, but nonetheless have an impact on the daily functioning of our schools. Items stolen or damaged include building fixtures and fencing, electrical wiring, food and cooking facilities for school meals, sports equipment, computers and other electrical equipment, plumbing fixtures, and a variety of school consumables.

The estimated cost of repairing or replacing damaged and stolen items is over R1 million, which is unacceptable in the difficult financial circumstances the sector currently faces. Funding will now have to be diverted from educational activities because of the selfish actions of criminals.

Keeping our schools safe requires the support of our school communities, and quick reporting can make all the difference in apprehending perpetrators and retrieving stolen goods. We appeal to the public to keep a close eye on their local schools and to report any suspicious activity to the South African Police Services (SAPS) immediately.

Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety, Anroux Marais, has also expressed concern over the increase in criminal activity, saying:

"Stealing from our schools is stealing from our children, and we urge any member of the public with information about these crimes to come forward immediately. We further urge SAPS to prioritise investigation of crimes in and around our schools, so that together we can keep our school properties safe."

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