

2024/25 VOTE 4

BUDGET SPEECH

LIVE ON ALL DIGITAL PLATFORMS



NORTHERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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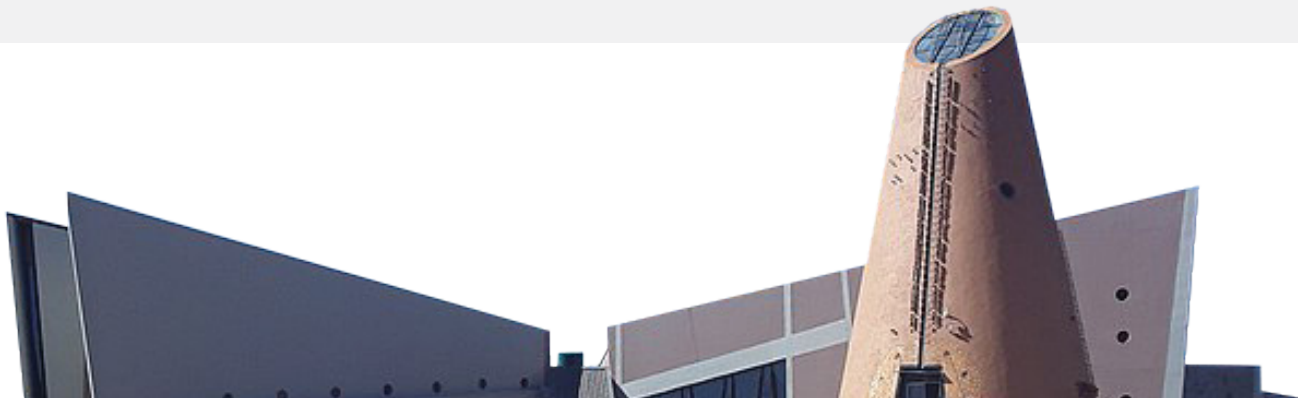


THURSDAY
12
SEPTEMBER
2024

TIME: 15H00
**NORTHERN CAPE
LEGISLATURE**
KIMBERLEY



MEC for Education
Abraham Vosloo



Northern Cape
Department of Education





**SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE MEC FOR EDUCATION, MR
ABRAHAM VOSLOO ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2024/25 BUDGET
VOTE 4 TO THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE,
KIMBERLEY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker;
Honourable Premier of our Province, Dr. Zamani Saul;
Honourable Members of the Executive Council;
Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature;
The Head of the Department and Senior Officials of Government;
Representatives from our Teacher Unions and SGB Associations;
Distinguished Guests;
Comrades and Friends;
Members of the media;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am truly honoured to present to this august house, Budget Vote 4 of the Northern Cape Department of Education for the 2024/25 financial year. This important portfolio of Education, continues to serve as an apex priority for the 7th Administration of the Northern Cape Provincial Government.

Honourable Speaker,

I would fail in my responsibility if we do not pause for a moment and reflect on the past 30 years of democracy in South Africa and in particular the role Education has played in shaping our country. The Education system has undergone massive changes since 1994, both administratively and legislatively. All this was done by the democratic government led by the African National Congress to ensure inclusivity, accessibility, equality and transformation in the Education system.

Honourable Members,

We must acknowledge that the Education system in South Africa is well on track, despite a number of challenges we encounter from time to time. These challenges have to do with the slow processing of appointments for temporary and substitute educators to meet the adequate developmental needs of education. It is however, our concerted efforts to resolve these challenges within the allocated fiscus for the year.

A total of 311 355 learners in the Northern Cape have access to Education, taught by 9 807 educators in 554 public ordinary schools. In addition to this, more than 34 855 learners have access to Early Childhood Development and supervised by 772 Grade R Practitioners. Whilst these numbers are increasing year on year, it's evident that more and more children have access to basic education and benefitting from our no fee schools, fee exemption, learners transport services, school nutrition programme and support programmes, which I will reflect on later in my Budget Vote.

Honourable Speaker,

We have also gathered here at a time when we as South Africans celebrate our diversity, through our different cultures during Heritage Month. This month reminds us of our skewed past and how we all came together as one nation to build a South Africa that belongs to all.

It against this background that I also want to condemn the racial TikTok video, which involves 4 learners from Duineveld High School in Upington. The racial intolerance and utterances made in this video goes against the norms and values we instil in our learners at schools. It also reverse the gains that we have made over the past 30 years of democracy through diversity, nation-building and social cohesion. All 4 learners have been suspended and will appear before the disciplinary hearing on the 17th of September 2024. Both the Chairpersons of the Portfolio Committees of Education in Parliament and the Provincial Legislature will receive a comprehensive report, after the investigation and disciplinary processes have been concluded.

Honourable Speaker,

Today, we present this budget speech, conscious of our integrated vision of the Province and that of the Department, being to “**Build the elements of, Capacity for, and Momentum Towards a Modernise, Growing and Successful Education System.** All our efforts are geared towards a quality public education system, within the context that the ruling Party, prioritised education as an apex priority.

The modern, developed and industrialised world is running on the wheels of education. To be able to survive in the competitive world, we all need education as a torch that leads the way.

We need an education system that responds to the needs of the 4th Industrial Revolution and remains on the “cutting edge” of a changing world.

Madam Speaker, in delivering this Budget Vote, the total budget appropriation for the Northern Cape Department of Education for 2024/25 financial year is R8.11 billion. Of this appropriation, R1,06 billion is for the various Conditional Grants administered by the Department. The Budget of the Department is allocated within the following programmes:

Programme 1: Administration

The total allocation for this programme has decreased from R864 million to R813 million.

Programme 2: Public Ordinary School Education

The current allocation for this financial year, is R5.9 billion, which accounts for an a decrease of 5.88%.

Programme 3: Independent School Subsidies

The Province is funding five qualifying independent schools and the budget allocation has increased to R11.6 million.

Programme 4: Public Special School Education

The Department has allocated R199 million for this programme to support learners with special needs. This represents a budget increase of 1.5% from the prior year.

Programme 5: Early Childhood Development

The budget allocation of the ECD programme has increased to R215 million in the current financial year.

Programme 6: Infrastructure Development

The budget allocation of this programme has increased by 12.5% to R716 million.

Programme 7: Examinations and Education Related Services

The allocation for this programme has decreased from R352 million to R174.5 million.

NO FEE SCHOOLS

Madam Speaker, to this effect, 74.22% of schools in the Northern Cape have been declared no fee for the 2024 school academic year. A total of 403 public ordinary schools are no fee schools, and benefits 195 633 learners in the Province. The percentage of no fee learners in the Northern Cape Province stands at 69,57% as per the Revised National Poverty Distribution Table, whereby the Province has surpassed national average by 8,07%.

FEE EXEMPTION

Schools exempted 35 928 learners from the payment of school fees during the 2023/2024 financial year. This represents a total of 127 schools out of 140 total fee paying schools which applied for compensation for fee exemptions.

This year we allocated an amount of R18 million for an estimated 36 000 learners who will be exempted from paying school fees. We once more, urge all parents and guardians whose children qualify for fee exemption to make use of this progressive policy provision to ensure that no child is denied access to attend any school due to an inability to pay school fees.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)

Madam Speaker, universal access to ECD will be one of our main priorities to formalise the sector to comply with the norms and standards. The Department has finalised its ECD Strategy and will provide Grade R classrooms incrementally over the next five years at all primary schools, where no Grade R classes are offered.

Honourable members, we are also in the process of introducing the smart ECD centres as part of our modernisation strategy. During the 2024/25 financial year the following community based ECD Centres will be opened:

- Douglas ECD Centre
- Riemvasmaak ECD Centre
- Colesburg ECD Centre
- Lerato Park ECD Centre

The Department is subsidising 13 600 children in registered ECD centres across the Province as well as support 3 400 children in playgroups using the ECD Conditional Grant and the equitable share allocation.

The Department continues to work with private/corporate funders to support the ECD sector through the construction or renovation of ECD centres to comply with the minimum health and safety standards.

Newly constructed ECD Centres for the 2024/25 financial year:

- ECD centre at !Xunkhwesa Combined School in Platfontein, a collaboration between Palms for Life, San Vision Foundation and the Northern Cape Department of Education.
- !Khwe ECD Centre in Platfontein, funded by National Development Agency. The use of !Xu and !Khwe languages at these centres are being explored as an extra-curricular activity.
- Lebelelang ECD Centre funded by Kolomela Mine in Postmasburg is nearing completion. This ECD centre will also house a care centre for children with disabilities between ages 8 to 17 years and a protective workshop for adults with disabilities.
- Renovations at the Ya Rona Day Care Centre and the Banabotle ECD by Sishen Iron Ore Mine.
- Renovations at the Dibeng ECD Centre by the Dibeng Community Solar Trust is underway.
- Cotlands ECD programme funded by Sishen Iron Ore mine will run a toy library in the Gamagara and Gasegonyana Municipal areas.

The registration of ECD Centres will be simplified through the mass registration campaign to work towards full compliance of the norms and standards.

GRADE R AND FOUNDATION PHASE

There has been an increase of Grade R learners in the system from 19 263 to 20 383 in 2023, resulting in the additional appointment of 37 Grade R practitioners in the system.

The Grade R ECD practitioner stipend has been increased from R8 500 to R9 822,81 for practitioners with ECD NQF Level 4 and 5, and practitioners on REQV 13 and 14, stipends were increased from R13 000 to R15 023,13 with effect from 1 April 2024.

A total of 323 (41,8%) of 772 Grade R Practitioners have REQV 13 qualifications while 51 practitioners (6.6%) are fully qualified with REQV 14 qualifications. A total of 225 Grade R practitioners has been awarded bursaries to improve their qualifications with various higher education institutions.

The Department commenced with the renewal of Grade R Practitioners contracts from 2025 to 2027. The roadshows are currently being held in all districts in preparation for the renewal of ECD practitioners' contracts.

CODING AND REBOTICS

Coding and Robotics was piloted in 8 Primary Schools in Frances Baard and Pixley Ka Seme Districts during the previous financial year. The full implementation of Coding and Robotics will be done in Grades R – 3 in the 2025 school academic year.

Grade R Practitioners and Grades 1 to 3 teachers will be trained during September 2024 holidays on Coding and Robotics in preparation of the full implementation of Coding and Robotics in 2025.

In its efforts to further strengthen the introduction of Coding and Robotics, the Department distributed 1 540 tablets, donated by Stats SA to selected schools in the Frances Baard and Pixley ka Seme Districts to have an opportunity to prepare learners for a technologically driven future and to remain aligned with global educational trends.

The Department will launch the introduction of Coding and Robotics in January 2025 when schools open.

ROLL-OUT OF TABLETS

In 2023, 12 000 tablets were issued to all high schools and Grade 12 learners offering Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Geography, Business Studies and Accounting. These educational tablets were pre-loaded with software focusing mainly on the Grade 12 curriculum with provisions for scaffolded content from Grade 10.

In 2024, a process of updating the software unfolded and is continuing. To date, 24 schools in Frances Baard (2 430 tablets) and 14 schools in ZF Mgcawu (1 786 tablets) received the updated software. The process will be completed in October 2024 and the class of 2025 will enjoy the full benefit of the updated version. Given the success achieved with the Grade 12 tablet project, an extension of the project to Grades 10 and 11 was approved to fully leverage the project's impact and ensure its long-term sustainability.

To date, 8 000 tablets have been procured from MTN and Vodacom and the remaining 869 tablets are being issued to Grades 10 and 11 learners in the Namakwa District.

The Afrikaans version of the software will be available to all Grade 10,11 and 12 learners from October 2024. A total of 43% of our learners are Afrikaans speaking and it will provide an opportunity to make full use of the software in their language of learning and teaching.

MATRIC SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

The following primary (school-initiated) and secondary (office-initiated) support programmes unfolded:

- Seasonal Camps;
- Saturday Classes;
- Weekend Lock-in sessions;
- Teacher Empowerment and;
- Incubation Camps

The Department was able to provide support to learners from all performance groups in 2023/24. 9 876 Learners benefitted through the provisioning of supplementary classes which focussed on revision, remediation and consolidation of heavily weighted NSC content.

A total of 13 125 learners will sit for the 2024 Nation Senior Certificate Examinations.

Our Matric Support Programmes benefited 9876 learners (75,2%) across all performance groups. Middle-group and Top-Achieving learners were also prioritised. The net result of this was that the Grade 12 pass rate improved by 8,1% from 63,8% in 71,8% year-on-year in the June 2024 examination.

The Department initiated activities aimed at monitoring the delivery of the curriculum, and provided support to the 77 underperforming high schools. These activities mainly focused on the establishment of systems to ensure the coordinated delivery of curriculum. The timeous completion of the curriculum is critical in achieving above average results. Specialised support to underperforming high schools resulted in 42 underperforming schools improving performance year-on-year in the June 2024 examination.

The net result of this was that the matric pass rate has been on an upward trajectory for the past 4 years, from 66% in 2020 to 75,8% in 2023, and we are confident that the Class of 2024 will exceed our expectations.

READ TO LEAD CAMPAIGN

The Northern Cape Department of Education hosted a Reading Indaba during September 2023. The intervention was aimed at tackling the challenges schools face that hinder the reading skills of learners particularly in the Northern Cape. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) which culminated from the Reading Indaba were launched in various districts.

A Reading Retreat was held during the September 2023 school holidays in all districts. The programme is sustained through establishment of reading clubs in various schools where learners are assisted in their reading clubs, not only to read, but to put their thoughts, feelings and ideas in writing.

Interactive whiteboards, laptops and a reading software have been procured and installed at two schools, the Kudumane Primary School in John Taolo Gaetsewe District and ER Motswaledi Primary School in Frances Baard District, to start with the establishment of the Reading Laboratories.

The Northern Cape Department of Education is enthusiastic and prepared to incrementally implement the Mother-Tongue Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) programme in Grade 4 in 2025. The programme aims to enhance educational outcomes by utilising learner's first language (mother tongue) in the classroom, promoting better understanding and academic performance.

THE NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS (NTA)

The National Teaching Awards (NTA) is a flagship support programme, designed to recognise and support exemplary teachers. Under the auspices of the National Minister and myself as the MEC at Provincial Level, the NTA has celebrated excellence for nearly 25 years. Moving forward, the Northern Cape Department of Education will adopt a broader, more integrated and inclusive approach to these awards.

Our goal is to ensure increased participation in the NTA, which will translate into quality education and improved learner outcomes. We are committed to work tirelessly and encourage our dedicated and caring teachers in their mission to develop each learner into a responsible citizen of our democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa.

In addition to the 15 National Categories, we are proud to introduce new Provincial categories that will be phased in:

- Excellence in ECD
- Excellence in Sport
- Excellence in Cultural Activities
- Excellence in Innovation
- MEC Special Award

We aim to improve NTA participation across the Province, with the expectation that every school will have at least one participant annually. School Principals will have the responsibility to orientate, motivate and endorse teacher application processes at school level.

DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION (DBE) ONLINE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM

Our Online Teacher Development Programme (OTDP) is designed to provide professional development workshops, courses and programmes towards the development of our educators. This initiative uses both asynchronous and synchronous approaches to accommodate various topics and goals.

The Department is in a process to register all teachers in our public ordinary and special schools on the Online Teacher Development Platform system. This will allow our teachers to have access to the micro-learning modules, in order to take responsibility for their own development.

FILLING OF EDUCATOR POSTS

Annually the Department issues Educator Staff Establishments to all 554 Schools, comprising of 517 Public Ordinary Schools, 11 Special Needs (LSEN) and 26 Full Service Schools. In line with the prescribed date of 30 September each year, the Department has never failed to meet its deadline of issuing the Educator Staff Establishments.

For the 2024 academic year, as a means of alleviating overcrowded classrooms, the Department received requests from schools via the respective District Offices for a further 119 additional Educator Posts. After conducting the necessary due diligence in collaboration with the relevant District Officials, 86 posts were ultimately allocated, on top of the originally budgeted number of growth posts allocated each year.

In addition to addressing the challenge of overcrowded classrooms, the allocation of the additional posts was primarily aimed at High Schools, so as to meet the demands of the tight timeframes attached to the Matric Syllabus.

LEARNER TRANSPORT

Madam Speaker, the Learner Transport Programme (LTP), together with the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), and other initiatives such as the Sanitary Dignity Programme were introduced to ensure access to education to all children, and at retaining the risk of dropping out of the schooling system.

Honourable Members, the increased demand for the provision of transport for learners is putting immense pressure on the limited budget for this programme. As already stated the Learner Transport Programme is one of the mechanisms through which we secure general and universal access to education. Currently, 27 850 learners are transported over 446 routes by 240 service providers. This represent an increase of 1 772 more beneficiaries (learners), from 10 more schools, on 19 more routes, by 13 more service providers - than the previous school academic year (2023).

NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME

The right to education is one of the basic rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution. However, given the prevalence of poverty in communities across the country, the learning process in schools tends to be negatively influenced by factors such as malnutrition and hunger. It is against this background that the democratic government established the National School Nutrition Programme (PSNP) in schools.

The NSNP aims to provide nutritious meals to all Quintiles 1-3 schools as well as selected Quintiles 4 and 5 schools accommodating learners from disadvantaged communities.

The NSNP is funded through a conditional grant of R260,46 million and an additional R18,9 million from the Equitable Share is allocated for identified Quintiles 4 and 5 schools for the 2024/2025 financial year.

A total of 269 021 learners in primary and secondary schools learners from Quintiles 1-3 and targeted Quintiles 4-5 schools are receiving a nutritious meal daily. These learners are in 502 schools across the Province.

This programme is benefitting more than 87% of learners in the public ordinary schools. 1 664 Voluntary Food Handlers are contracted for 12 months to cook and serve learners with meals. They receive a stipend of R1,804.08 monthly.

A further total of 176 152 learners are receiving the NSNP funded breakfast daily at Quintiles 1-5 primary schools. These schools are funded by Kathu Solar Park and the Tiger Brand Foundation. The Breakfast Programme was launched by the Deputy Minister of Basic Education in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Honourable Members, the Department introduced the School Safety Volunteer Programme in schools on 14 December 2023. The project is aimed at reducing rampant vandalism, burglaries, theft, violence, gangsterism, drug trafficking and many more unacceptable anti-social behavioral patterns in schools by deploying School Safety Volunteers, sourced from the surrounding communities at the identified schools. By so doing, the project aims to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning by removing the barriers and threats in the learning environment.

A total of 430 Safety Volunteers have been deployed in 86 very high-risk schools across the Province and receives a stipend of R3 000 per month. There has been a drastic reduction in incidents of property crime at schools. The Department is busy reviewing the School Safety Volunteer Programme which will determine the way forward.

SCHOOL SPORT

The recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Department of Education and Department of Sport, Arts and Culture will serve as a springboard to catapult School Sport to newer heights.

The Schools Athletics programme, which is the biggest mass participation programme will be given priority in terms of funding. Track and Field and Cross-Country will be prioritized and funded in its totality.

The long-awaited Wednesday Leagues will be pursued from the next academic year. This will guarantee regular participation in sport and ensure the holistic development of each learner in our schools.

Farm Schools Festivals will be reintroduced to ensure that all learners, irrespective of their location in this vast Province, is reached through sport. District Farm Schools Festivals will be held during October 2025, which will round up the year's sporting activities.

The month of August will also see the reintroduction of Girls' sport, culminating in a Provincial Girls' Sport Festival from 29–31 August 2025.

LEARNER PREGNANCY PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

The Northern Cape Province is confronted with high levels of teenage pregnancies, which hinder the retention and advancement of girls, preventing them from completing their school career.

In the Northern Cape, all five districts are affected by the scourge of learner pregnancies. The John Taolo Gaetsewe (JTG) District previously had the highest incidence and prevalence rates, making it the epicenter, but recently Frances Baard has reported the highest rates.

A campaign targeting learners aged 14 and above, under the theme “**Not Me, Not Now**” was undertaken by the former MEC in 2023 in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District. The campaign’s objectives included rolling out Comprehensive Sexuality Education through engaging both in-school and out-of-school youth, promoting awareness, prevention, and responsible sexual behavior.

Due to the need for programmes that addresses learner pregnancy in schools, additional funds were allocated by Provincial Treasury to implement a multi-sectoral Learner Pregnancy Programme in the Frances Baard, John Taolo Gaetsewe and Pixley Ka Seme Districts.

INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT (IMGD)

PROGRESS ON THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

For the financial year 2023/24, a total of 41 School Management Team (SMT) members from John Taolo Gaetsewe were funded through the SIOC cdt. and graduated from the North West University in April 2024. A total of 28 Frances Baard SMT members funded by the ETDP/SETA and graduated on 6 September 2024 from the University of Pretoria. From a total of 146 SMTs, the remaining 77 SMT members' studies are ongoing.

In addition, the ETDP/SETA further allocated 57 Advance Diplomas in School Leadership and Management study opportunities to SMT members of Pixley Ka Seme, Namakwa, and ZF Mgcawu Districts. SIOC cdt. funded 100 study opportunities for SMT members in John Taolo Gaetsewe.

To date, we have a provincial total of 254 SMT members benefiting and studying for the Advance Diploma in School Leadership and Management.

For the 2024/25 financial year the Department in partnership with SIOC cdt. plans to register 180 SMT members in Tsantsabane Local Municipality and John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality with 60 SMT members at Sol Plaatje University and 120 at North West University.

The Department plans to induct a total of 386 newly appointed SMT members in January 2025.

2024 SGB ELECTIONS

The SGB elections were held from 1 – 31 March 2024. A total of 552 public schools (excluding two Child and Youth Care Centres) had a successful SGB elections of which 337 schools were successful on the first time of the SGB elections.

We want to congratulate New Douglas Primary School who achieved the highest parental participation of 840 learners which is 92.9%.

The newly elected SGB members were capacitated on their roles and responsibilities and financial management with a total of 5 474 actual trained across all districts in the first quarter of 2024/25.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure development serves as a critical pillar of our education system, fundamentally ensuring that every learner has access to safe and conducive learning environments. The Northern Cape Department of Education's infrastructure planning and delivery is committed to supporting quality education by developing resilient, sustainable, and strategically located school facilities that cater to the evolving needs of our communities.

Our approach is anchored in comprehensive and forward-thinking planning that not only meets the latest regulations and standards, but also anticipates and addresses future challenges.

As we advance, our primary focus remains on upgrading and providing additional supply in terms of basic services, maintaining existing infrastructure, and resolving critical issues such as overcrowding and inappropriate structures.

Infrastructure projects successfully completed:

New Schools: We successfully completed the construction of two new schools, Barkley Rooirand Primary School and Kimberley Academy, providing a modern educational environment for our learners.

Upgrades and Additions:

Sanitation: Upgraded sanitation facilities at 12 schools, ensuring improved hygiene and health standards. There are no schools in Northern Cape with only pit latrines. With the exception of one pit latrine at Bagalotlhare High School, but not in use. This pit latrine will be demolished by end of September 2024.

Water Supply: Enhanced water infrastructure at 4 schools to secure consistent and safe water access.

Electricity: Upgraded electrical infrastructure at 29 schools to meet the demands of modern educational technology and safety standards.

Maintenance Projects: Completed comprehensive maintenance at 28 schools, ensuring that they meet all safety, operational, and educational standards.

Additional Classrooms: Addressed the needs of growing learner populations by providing 85 new ordinary classrooms and 4 Grade R classrooms, significantly alleviating overcrowding.

Plans for the 2024/25 financial year:

New and Replacement Schools: We have 10 new and replacement schools in various stages of construction, including:

Frances Baard District: New Rietrivier Primary School.

John Taolo Gaetsewe District: Bankhara Bodulong Off-Shoot Primary School, Kuruman New English Medium Secondary School, Magojaneng New Primary School.

Pixley Ka Seme District: Eureka Intermediêre Skool, Petrusville Primêre Skool.

ZF Mgcawu District: Carlton van Heerden Sekondêre Skool, Cillie Primêre Skool, Franciscus Intermediate School, Oranje-Oewer Intermediêre Skool.

The Department is at the forefront of exploring and implementing cutting-edge solutions, including solar energy projects, alternative sanitation systems, and modern building technologies, to improve the resilience and sustainability of our educational infrastructure.

EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

Madam Speaker, the Department has decentralise the Certification Services to our five District Examinations and Assessment offices.

The main purpose of this is to deliver services to the people at community level to address challenges young people face when they must travel to collect certificates. Applicants will now be able to apply for a Statement of Result at their nearest district office.

The Department is currently in the process of compiling a list of all unclaimed certificates from schools. This list will be published with information of candidates whose certificates are available for collection.

In terms of the 'Three Streams Model', multiple learning pathways (academic, vocational and occupational) are created that enable learners to make choices in their schooling career within the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 offered in schools. It is worthwhile to note that great strides have been made in introducing the General Education Certificate (GEC) assessment model, where learners are given expanded opportunities to display capabilities on inquiry-based learning, solve real world problems and design practical solutions. The General Education Certificate (GEC) will be fully implemented as from 2025. For this year, 193 schools in the Northern Cape were sampled to participate in the GEC pilot.

The Department of Education will continue protect the credibility of examinations in the Province using cutting edge technology. Since the inception of the National Senior Certificate examination, no major irregularity has been reported in the Northern Cape Province. The safeguarding, scanning and tracking of examination material and the safety of officials in the front line will be prioritised.

The Department is also embarking on the introduction of E-marking in Accounting and Mathematics that will drastically enhance the quality of marking. The Department is also excited about the implementation of a new On-line Marker-Application System in 2024. This system allows educators who wishes to apply to be markers to apply online for these positions. It also allows supervisors to approve verified applications online. The selection-process is automated and as such the whole process eliminates subjectivity as it is unbiased focussing only on qualifications and experience of the potential marker.

The 2024 National Senior Certificate examination will commence on 21 October 2024 and conclude on 28 November 2024. The Annual National Pledge Ceremony will take place on Friday 18 October 2024. This is an important occasion, where all Grade 12 learners, parents and officials will sign a pledge and commitment agreement for a National Senior Certificate Examination (NSC) free of any irregularities.

The marking will take place between 1 to 15 December 2024 and the results will be released on 16 January 2025. In anticipation of the results, children must be supported and assured of continued support during the examination period.

Honourable members, as I conclude, I quote: “ We may not prepare the future for our children, but we can atleast prepare our children for the future”.

Franklin Roosevelt

Every effort we put into our children today, will someday be measured and accounted for in our children’s future. I extent an invitation to all of you to join me on this journey.

Premier and Honourable Members, I take this opportunity to thank my political home, the ANC for entrusting me with this important portfolio. I also thank our Honourable Premier, Dr. Zamani Saul and my colleagues in the EXCO for their support and guidance.

I also take the opportunity to thank the Provincial Legislature and in particular, the Portfolio Committee for their oversight responsibility and constructive engagements in the execution of our mandate. I thank all the SGB Associations and Teacher Unions who operate within the education sector for their outstanding role in enabling the Northern Cape Department of Education to deliver quality learning and teaching in the Province.

I give special thanks to Ministerial Office, the Head of the Department and the Senior Management for their commitment and leadership towards the noble, but most important cause of Education.

Most importantly, I want to thank my family and the many people who supports us and pray for us in our work as the Executive, for their unwavering support, without which we would not be able to manage our portfolios.

I thank you!

2024/25 VOTE 4

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**Northern Cape
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