



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Budget Speech

2023 / 2024



education

Department:
Education
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Let's grow North West together



**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2023/2024 BUDGET VOTE SPEECH DELIVERED BY
MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MRS NTSETSAO VIOLA MOTSUMI (MPL) AT THE
NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE, 23 MAY 2023**

“A budget of Hope and Action”

Madam Speaker, Honourable Susanna Basetsana Dantjie;
Deputy Speaker, Honourable Lenah Miga;
Honourable Premier, Mr Kaobitsa Bushy Maape;
Chief Whip, Honourable Lazarus Mokgosi;
Honourable Members of the Executive Council;
Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature;
Honourable Members of Parliament here present;
Executive Mayors, Mayors and Speakers of Municipalities here present;
Modulasetilo wa ntlo ya Dikgosi, Kgosi Ofentse Thari Maotwe II;
Dikgosi tsa rona tse di tlotlegang;
Provincial Chairperson of the African National Congress, Cde Dumile Nono Maloyi;
Leaders of political parties;
Leaders of faith-based organisations;
Leaders of trade unions and other civil society organisations;
Members of the media;
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

Bagaetsho dumelang!

In her widely acclaimed memoir entitled **Becoming**, Michelle Obama wrote, “...*becoming isn't about arriving somewhere or achieving a certain aim. [Becoming should be seen] instead as forward motion, a means of evolving, a way to reach continuously toward a better self. The journey doesn't end.*”

Madam Speaker, Honourable Premier, Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe that this message resonates very well with the core mandate of our department - to build the future of our children, which perfectly fits in with our vision to grow North West together.

Taking cue from the above assertion, allow me, **Madam Speaker,** to remind this August House that, for us, as the Department of Education, growth is a journey, not a destination!.

Hence, we are continuously moving the needle to the right direction to improve the delivery of public quality education in our schools.

We alive to the fact that in our pursuit of improving the quality of basic education and creating a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive economic growth path, the journey will not be free from trials and tribulations.

Fortunately, our forebears and struggle veterans in the governing party, the African National Congress, laid a solid foundation for us and the next generations to boldly confront any barrier that tends to militate against our efforts of building a developmental state.

They also taught us that before we embark on a journey, we must note in advance that adversities and setbacks are inevitable; such may delay us, but they will never overcome us if we persist long enough and work as a team.

Madam Speaker, notwithstanding the predominantly rural background of our province, the North West Department of Education is determined to soar in the blue skies with the eagles when it comes to the final matric examination results. We need to fight, in earnest, for a top three spot in the 2023 final matric results and beyond.

That said, we know that if we want to fly high in the sky with the eagles, we cannot run with the turkeys.

The improvement of the 2022 matric results by a pass rate of 79.8%, from 78.2% of 2021, confirms the contention that our department is a system on the rise.

The 2023/24 budget that I have the honour to table before this August House here today, **Madam Speaker,** remains firmly focused on improving the quality of learning and access in our schools.

In framing this budget, we are inspired by the words of His Excellency President of the Republic of South Africa Mr Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa that “*The people of South Africa want action, [not just words and promises], they want solutions and they want government to work for them.*”

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members of this August House, the time for words and promises is over. Now is the time for action.

It is a bare fact that success in implementing this budget constitutes an important milestone in this final year of the Sixth Administration.

We, therefore, have no choice, but to roll up our sleeves and put a shoulder to the wheel with a view to accelerating realisation of the deliverables in the Basic Education Sector Priorities (2019-24), which are clearly captured in our 2023/24 Annual Performance Plan (APP).

Madam Speaker, it will be remiss of me not to briefly take stock of the progress made by the department in the previous financial year.

In the interest of time, I will only share progress achieved thus far in regard to the implementation of a curriculum that provides skills and competencies for a changing world, and an infrastructure development plan.

I, therefore, wish to implore the Honourable Members of this August House and the People of North West to read a detailed progress report regarding implementation of all Basic Education Sector Priorities (2019-24) alluded to above in the 2022/23 Annual Performance Report, which will be published soon.

Madam Speaker, our department has made great strides in starting to equip our learners with skills and competencies for their future world of work.

In the previous financial years, we intensified our efforts to resuscitate and further develop technical vocational, technical occupational and focus schools across all districts in the province.

Madam Speaker, I must take this opportunity to proudly inform this August House that in this department, we currently offer twenty-four (24) Technical Occupational subjects in six (6) of our 32 Special Schools, namely, Keurhof and Oom Paul Special Schools in Bojanala District, Coligny Special School in Ngaka Modiri Molema District, MM Sebitloane Special School in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Momapati District, De Wilge and Daeraad Special School in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.

The technical occupational stream focuses on preparing learners for work immediately after completing secondary school education.

In 2022, our department embarked on piloting the implementation technical vocational subjects in eleven (11) schools across the province. The technical vocational stream includes subjects focusing on electrical, mechanical, and civil engineering. In short, this stream seeks to improve in producing artisans as part of responding to the National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030.

We appreciate the fact that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges are making efforts to produce artisans, but a proper foundation thereof starts at school level.

Madam Speaker, agriculture is one of the economic pillars of this province. Therefore, the value of establishing more Agric-focus schools in the province cannot be over-emphasised.

Prior to 2019, the Department had 13 Agric-focus schools. To date, the number has increased to 18.

To fulfil their potential and also to support them to increase both participation and performance, the department provides them with funds through the Mathematics, Science and Technology Conditional (MST) Grant to erect appropriate structures and to buy machinery and equipment. We further transfer funds to them for practical assessment tasks.

The MST grant is also used to provide relevant resources to our 32 technical schools and 10 MST focus schools in the province.

Madam Speaker, the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is upon us. Noting that the 4IR is more about technology-driven change, last year, we piloted the implementation of Coding and Robotics in Grades R to 3 in 15 primary schools, and in Grades 4-9 in 111 schools.

The department provided necessary training to upskill teachers to deliver on coding and robotics. This is still at a pilot stage and its implementation started this year. The implementation of Coding and robotics in Grades 4 to 6 is planned for 2024, and the grade 9 class will follow suit in 2025.

In the last financial year, we got a donation of 5 000 tablets from Statistics South Africa. These devices will top-up the number of similar gadgets that were previously distributed to schools.

The department is in the process of connecting all quintiles 1-3 Public Ordinary Schools through WIFI or broadband. This is to allow learners and educators to get wider exposure to learning materials. To date we have connected 24% of the schools. We are to increase the target to 75% of performance in the current financial year.

Looking at the tremendous progress made in terms of implementation of curriculum diversification as outlined above, **Madam Speaker**, the notion that the North West is lagging behind in preparing the learners for the future world of work and the 4IR must be dispelled as misleading, if not wholly fallacious.

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, a trend of forfeiting funds allocated for building school infrastructure in our province to other provincial education Departments should be seen as a thing of the past.

For the past three financial years, that is, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, our department demonstrated a remarkable improvement in the performance on spending and delivery of the Education Infrastructure Grant. This, notwithstanding the persistent capacity constraints we are grappling with in our Physical Infrastructure Management Chief Directorate and also externally within our individual implementing agents, which is usually compounded by community disruptions.

Honourable Members, surely you will agree with us when we confess that it is no mean feat to recruit and subsequently retain specialists in the built environment. This persistent challenge calls for a totally different strategic approach.

Regardless of such monumental challenges, our department has managed to achieve sizable successes in the school infrastructure area.

Among other achievements for 2022/23, we completed Waterkloof Primary and Secondary Schools in collaboration with the Royal Bafokeng Platinum through the Rand-for-Rand approach, provided additional hostel facilities to 3 mega schools, completed 109 maintenance, augmented water supply through drilling of boreholes at 71 schools, constructed additional sanitation facilities in 49 schools, maintained and repaired dysfunctional toilets in 180 schools and built 15 specialised rooms in public schools and provided 300 additional classrooms to identified schools.

Honourable Speaker, we are proud to inform this August House that the construction of the following multi-year projects is in progress: Machakela-Mamodibo Secondary, Thulare Secondary, Huhudi Primary, Tlokwe Secondary, Monnaamere Primary, Tigane Secondary, Tlakgameng Primary, New Koster Secondary, Kgetleng Primary, Sediko Primary, DP Kgotleng Primary, Gaseitsiwe Secondary, Tshedimoso Primary, Goakhanya Primary and Kosea Moeka Primary Schools. We envisage to have all of them completed in this financial year.

In terms of the latest developments, **Madam Speaker**, sod turning was done at Kgosi Shope Secondary School on 14 April 2023; and we have appointed a contractor for Coligny Special School Project recently.

We must declare, **Madam Speaker**, that as part of our efforts to circumvent the recurrence of under-performance and simultaneously mitigate the effects of capacity constraints in terms of human capital and skills within the infrastructure unit, we have, among others, employed the services of a Programme Support Unit (PSU), improved monitoring and support of the implementing agents and tracked our performance on regular basis.

It is worthy to highlight at this juncture that in the previous financial year, the department, through the assistance of PSU, has also successfully conducted Infrastructure Condition Assessment in all public schools.

This ground-breaking exercise has produced a comprehensive report on the state of health of public school infrastructure in the province. This report will be used as the basis for the roll out infrastructure plans regarding the repairs, refurbishment, maintenance and replacement of public school buildings, which should take cognisance of the 60% (maintenance) and 40% (Capital) budget split as per the Revised Education Infrastructure Grant Framework.

The summation of our achievements recorded during the course of the previous financial year would not be complete if we do not mention our continuous significant contribution towards creating job opportunities for the youth in the province.

Without bombarding this August House with figures, which are aptly captured in our Annual Performance Report: 2022/23, Honourable Speaker, allow me to state that in the previous financial year, we provided skills development and created job opportunities to scores of youth in the province through the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative, Internship Programmes, Learnership programme in collaboration with ETDP-SETA and Extended Public Works Programme. We further hired young people as Marking Assistants in our 21 marking centres.

In spite of all the highlighted achievements made in the previous financial year, we took a hard knock by under-spending about R1.1 Billion of our 2022/23 budget. As part of the strategies of ensuring that such an anomaly does not recur, Madam Speaker and Honourable Premier, we have immediately brought to book the senior managers who contributed to that material under-spending.

BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE 2023/24 MTEF PERIOD

Madam Speaker, the Department of Education welcomes the allocated budget of R 20 575 525 000 for the 2023/24 financial year.

This represents an increase of R 229 382 000, which is a growth of 1.1 percent from R 20 346 of the 2022/23 financial year.

This continuous budget increase for education by the ANC-led government underlines an even more rationale behind government's classification of education as an apex priority.

Madam Speaker and Honourable Members, the services rendered by the department are categorised into seven programmes. A summary of the 2023/24 budget allocation per programme is as follows:

2023/2024 BUDGET ALLOCATION PER PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME	2023/2024 BUDGET ALLOCATION	WORD DESCRIPTION
1. Administration	R 981 960 000	Nine Hundred and Eighty-One million, Nine Hundred and Sixty Thousand Rand
2. Public Ordinary Schools Education	R 15 021 810 000	Fifteen billion, Twenty-One million, Eight Hundred and Ten Thousand Rand.
3. Independent School Subsidies	R 50 866 000	Fifty million, Eight Hundred and Sixty-Six Thousand Rand
4. Public Special School Education	R 904 898 000	Nine Hundred and Four million, Eight Hundred and Ninety-Eight Thousand Rand
5. Early Childhood Development	R 979 188 000	Nine Hundred and Seventy-Nine million, One Hundred and Eighty-Eight Thousand Rand
6. Infrastructure Development	R 1 297 549 000	One billion, Two Hundred and Ninety-Seven million, Five Hundred and Forty-Nine Thousand Rand
7. Examination and Education Related Services	R 1 339 254 000	One Billion, Three Hundred and Thirty-Nine million, Two Hundred and Fifty-Four Thousand Rand
Total	R 20 575 525 000	Twenty Billion, Five Hundred and Seventy-Five Million, Five Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Rand

Madam Speaker, we must hasten to state that the spending focus in this budget will go towards service delivery outputs as clearly captured in our 2023/24 Annual Performance Plan and of course the pronouncements derived, respectively, from the SONA and SOPA which are intended to improve access and strengthen the quality of public education delivery in the province.

An overview of the budget distribution per programme for the 2023/24 financial year is as follows:

Programme 1: Administration (R 981 960 000, 0,2 percent increase)

The strategic goal of this programme is to ensure effective and efficient governance, management and financial support systems in the department.

In the current year, this programme is allocated R981 960 000.

Madam Speaker, we are still in disbelief that last year we could not clawback our good record of unqualified audit outcome, which was broken in 2021/22 when we obtained a qualified audit report for the first time, after receiving unqualified audit outcome for seven consecutive financial years.

It emerged once again that the commitment, immovable assets, work in progress and contract management registers were the main causes of a qualified audit report for the department.

In spite of this, our grip on strengthening our governance, administrative and financial systems, monitoring and evaluation, internal audit, risk management, internal controls, management of commitment and immovable asset and contract management registers and implementation of the Post-Audit Action Plan is maturing. Consequently, our qualifications from the Auditor-General are becoming gradually less. We remain hopeful to obtain an unqualified audit report in this current financial year.

Compensation of Employees

Honourable Speaker, during the previous financial year, R15 398 008 000 was allocated for compensation of employees.

The above compensation budget was, among others, spent on filling office and school-based vacancies and dealing with other compensation pressures.

We must admit from the outset that we underspent the above allocation by R 483 Million. This, primarily due to the high rate of vacant posts which took long to be filled. We have since adopted strategies to avoid the recurrence of the risk of a high vacancy rate.

Madam Speaker and Honourable Members, in the current financial year, R15 406 801 000 has been allocated for the compensation of employees budget, which consumes seventy nine point six percent (79.6%) resulting in it being the highest cost driver of total allocated budget of R20, 575 525 000. This is predominantly due to the inherent labour intensive nature of the basic education sector.

Notwithstanding the current pressure on the fiscus, the department will particularly ensure that the implementation of the Post Provisioning Norms responds adequately and effectively to the teaching needs of every school in the province.

To further support the effective delivery of curriculum in schools, we are at an advanced stage regarding a process of increasing the current cap for the number of Departmental Heads in schools from four (4) to six (6), in schools that have high learner enrolments.

Honourable members, there can be no better way to put an end to unscrupulous labour practices than now.

The department has decided to in-source all office-based cleaning and gardening services, which were previously offered by private service providers. This, with a view to providing job security and better working conditions for eligible General Assistants who have been serving our department with dedication for many years but employed by private service providers. All else being equal, we will start by appointing them on a 6-month contract, with effect from 01 July 2023 and convert their appointment to permanent status in January 2024.

We must concede, our department took too long to fill vacant support staff posts in schools. Since our schools cannot function effectively without those services, schools resorted to employing Administrative Assistants and General Assistants either with no pay or paying them meagre wages from the school funds. To mitigate the situation, we have advertised 860 Administrative Assistant and General Assistant posts. Their assumption of duty is targeted for the 1st June 2023.

We will contribute towards youth development by hosting 80 new graduates and student interns (30 funded by the ETDP SETA), and recruit grade 12 and out-of-school youth to enter the teaching profession through the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme.

Through the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative Phase 4, we will further provide employment opportunities to 16 000 unemployed youth in our schools. They will assist in curriculum, reading, care and support, sport, arts and culture activities and ICT integration. This PYEI Phase 4 will be launched per district in June 2023, as part of our youth month celebrations.

Learning and Teaching Support Material

For 2023/24, a larger portion of goods and services allocation will be spent on procurement of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM), specifically, textbooks and stationery for learners.

Allocation for LTSM in the current financial has increased by 4,5 percent from R 643 Million to R 672 Million for the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24, respectively.

Madam Speaker and Honourable Members, the delivery of stationery to school for the 2023 academic year was disrupted by unexpected anomalies, namely, an impasse between stationery manufacturers and the department over price escalation, poor quality of the stationery material and a shocking discovery of department's stationery material sold at some foreign nationals' spaza shops, on account of the alleged collaboration among the affected spaza shop owners, stationery distributors and officials of the department. A police case in that regard was opened and the investigations are underway.

Meanwhile, the department is holding continuous engagements with the stationery manufacturers to reach amicable settlement of the standoff.

***Motlotlegi, Mmusakgotla,** re kgalemile ka mafoko a a bogale modiradikwalelo yo o neetseng dikolo tsa rona kuno ya maemo a a kwa tlase. Maikaelelo a rona ke go tlosa moabeladitirelo yoo mo lenaaneng la baabeladitirelo, fela re sa itlhokomolose ntlha ya gore re na le palo e e kwa tlase ya badiri ba dikwalelo mo nageng ya rona.*

Re tshwanetse go otlhaya moabeladitirelo yoo botlhoko, gore fa e le gore go na le moabeladitirelo yo o nang le maikaelelo a go nyatsa kgotsa a go fapoga mo tumelanong ya gagwe le ba Lefapha, o tshwanetse go akanya gabedi!

The contracts of the existing stationery manufacturers and textbook publishers come to an end this year. The processes of appointing new ones for the next three years will be concluded by June 2023.

Other Goods and Services

In 2022/23, goods and services was allocated R928.452 000. In the current year, R1 289 650 000 has been allocated for procurement of goods and services, representing an increase of 39 percent. This is to comply with the change in the EIG Conditional Framework in terms of budget split into 60% allocation for maintenance and 40% to capital projects.

Madam Speaker, the success of quality curriculum implementation in schools hinges mainly on the effectiveness of school principals. This financial year, we are going to provide cell phones - with minutes and data bundles - to principals of all public schools.

Besides incentivising them, it is envisaged that this novel idea will, among other advantages, make communication for school principals easier and cheap, and enable them to access work-related documents, educational resources and information at the touch of a button.

Total Transfers and subsidies

The allocation for the total transfers and subsidies for 2023/24 is R2 293 608 000, which represent an increase of 4% from R2 206 682 000) of 2022/23 financial year.

In short, transfers and subsidies for the 2023/24 period cater for Section 21 norms and standard for schools including Grade R in Public schools, Presidential Youth Employment Initiative, Subsidised Independent Schools, Special Schools, National School Nutrition Programme Grant and subsidy transfers to ECD Centres.

We are delighted to state that the implementation of the ANC-led government pro-poor programmes such as the National School Nutrition Programme, scholar transport, sanitary dignity programme and no-fee schools is steadily but surely helping in addressing the manifestation of the stubborn challenges of poverty and inequality in our schools.

Honourable Members, we are beginning to reap the dividends of our investment.

We have registered a resounding success in universalising quality education for all in the past few years. Above all, our no-fee schools are beginning to perform comparably with affluent schools, dispelling the notion that schools in rural areas do not do well compared to fee-paying schools in terms of the quality of learner attainment.

The allocation of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) for 2023/2024 financial year is R621 287 000 to feed 750 022 learners in 1330 Public Ordinary Schools. The same budget will be spent on payment of monthly stipend of R1 712,00 to Four Thousand Five Hundred and Seventy-Two (4572) voluntary food handlers.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Premier, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are currently piloting the provision of breakfast in 300 schools and the introduction of a chicken livers as alternative protein menu in 100 schools, 25 schools in each district.

As part of job creation programmes within the education sector, the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative is allocated funds to the tune R405 590 000 in the 2023/24 financial year.

Programme 2: Public Ordinary School Education (R15 021 810 000, 0,4 % increase)

The Public Ordinary School Education Programme has been allocated R15 021 810 000.

This allocation will be spent predominantly on accelerating the quality implementation of services and programmes that seek to provide foundational skills of numeracy and literacy, especially the ability for every 10-year-old to read for meaning by 2030; and skills and competencies for a changing world, with emphasis being on the Three-Stream Model, entrepreneurship education, focus schools, coding and robotics, and the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which constitute key components of the Basic Education Sector Priorities (2019-24).

Madam Speaker, the existing studies provide evidence that weak learning foundations in the early grades, especially in literacy and numeracy, are among the major root causes of high learner failure and drop-out rates towards the end of secondary school education.

Based on that plausible research finding, the department has placed the three foundational skills of reading, writing and arithmetic at the heart of early grade curriculum in schools.

To that end, the department has put measures in place to improve reading outcomes for every 10-year old learner to read for meaning and with understanding, which must of course be institutionalised in the foundation and intermediate phases.

Madam Speaker, plans are already afoot to strengthen our partnership with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), National Reading Coalition (NRC), ETDP-SETA which provides funding for the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme (PSRIP) and universities to enhance the quality of our teachers in teaching reading; and to upskill them to teach learners skills and competencies for a changing world.

Through the Library Services Unit, we intend to provide and top-up supply of library materials that include books, supplementary teaching and learning resources and reference materials to schools.

As integral part of our strategies to fight for a spot in the top three performing provinces with regard to matric results, the department will provide curriculum implementation supervisory training to all Departmental Heads in underperforming schools and dedicated content training workshops, using specific subject diagnostic reports, to Grades 10-12 teachers in Home Languages and in the following gateway and high enrolled subjects: Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Geography, Economics, Accounting and Life Sciences.

To further strengthen the efforts to realise our matric results target, our implementation of the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan (LAIP) will, among others, give greater emphasis to Home Language performance, ensure greater participation in gateway subjects, engage more learners with potential to improve the distinction and bachelor performance, prioritise progressed learners for customised support and measure performance quarterly in order to gauge the effectiveness of our strategies and inform further interventions.

We have put aside an amount of R 6,5 Million for the running of the next SGB elections, which will take place in March 2024, and subsequent establishment of SGBs in public schools. This will, in short, cover the costs for advocacy programmes, capacity building workshops and monitoring.

An amount of R 24 000 000 is allocated for school furniture in this financial year. This budget is meant to address shortages of school furniture caused by increased learner enrolments as well as the need to replace old and broken school furniture.

Honourable Speaker, the old adage that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy is still relevant even in today's modern world. Taking cognisance of that, as a department, we believe in the notion that a healthy body leads to a healthy mind.

Research has shown that sport in schools helps learners to keep fit and at the same time maintain an alert mind, which are essential for learning.

To enhance our school enrichment programmes in the current financial year, we intend launching the Wednesday School Sport Programme on 07 June 2023 in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District and establishing school sport hubs in each district.

We intend establishing hubs for cricket in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District, tennis, netball and hockey in Ngaka Modiri Molema District, rugby in Bojanala District and soccer in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District. We are roping in the collaboration of the Department of Arts, Culture, Sport and Recreation, Cricket North West, Rugby North West, SAFA-North West and other sport federation in this endeavour.

Honourable Speaker, it is generally accepted that a lack of access to sanitary pads is one of the causes of girl learner poor academic performance, low self-esteem, absenteeism and dropout from school.

In order to prevent the above from occurring and to restore, maintain and protect the dignity of our girl learners, the department has allocated R18 509 000 to provide sanitary pads 92 344 Grades 4 to 12 pubescent girl learners in quintiles 1 to 3 Public Ordinary Schools and Special Schools through the Sanitary Dignity Programme.

The high prevalence of teenage pregnancy in our schools has always been a cause for alarm. Although teenage pregnancy is an inter-sectoral and multi-sectoral concern, our department seems the hardest hit since that phenomenon hampers the education of the affected girl learners.

Experts argue that teenage pregnancy should be understood as a symptom of dire economic conditions rather than a cause of it. Whatever the case may be, school-aged girls, predominantly from indigent backgrounds, are the most vulnerable victims of teenage pregnancy in our province.

The painful reality is that teenage pregnancy is often associated with high new HIV infections among adolescents.

To cut to the chase, Honourable Speaker, we have allocated R15 654 000 for the 2023/2024 financial year to be disbursed on awareness campaigns and training on the prevention of TB, HIV, teenage pregnancy, sexual and gender-based violence, alcohol, drug and substance abuse as well as for care and support for vulnerable learners, monitoring, support and administration of the programme.

Programme 3: Independent School Subsidies – (R50 866 000, 31,6% Increase)

An amount of R50 866 000 is allocated to subsidise 31 Independent Schools in 2023/24 financial year. That is an increase of thirty-one point six percent (31.6%) from 2022/23 budget allocation.

Transfers to these schools will be made quarterly in line with the National Norms and Standards for School Funding. Regular monitoring on both subsidised and non-subsidised independent schools will be conducted to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

Programme 4: Public Special School Education (R 904 898 000- 4,9% Increase)

A budget to the tune of R 904 898 000 is allocated to Public Special School, representing an increase of four point nine percent (4.9%) on the 2022/23 budget allocation, is provided to support Learners with Special Education Needs in our Thirty Two (32) Special Schools and Two Hundred and Thirty (230) Full Service Schools.

With regard to Special Schools, the budget will cater for running costs, improvement of ICT, provision LTSM, hostel and transport subsidy.

Additional assistive devices will be procured with a view to enabling learners in Special Schools and those who experience barriers to learning and development in mainstream schools to improve their academic capabilities and potential.

In addition to the main budget for Public Special School Education as indicated above, an amount of R17 Million is allocated through the Learners with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability (LSPID) Conditional Grant. This allocation will be spent to provide the necessary support such as outreach services, accredited training of caregivers, provisioning of resources and equipment to identified care centres and schools that provide education to learners with severe to profound intellectual disabilities.

Programme 5: Early Childhood Development (ECD) – R 979 188 000, 0,5% Increase)

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, jaaka Lefapha La Thuto, re rulaganyetsa isago ka kitso ya gore ditlamelwana tsa pula di baakanngwa go sale gale.

Following the epic migration of Early Childhood Development (ECD) from the Department of Social Development to Basic Education in 2022, we inherited 2447 ECD Centres, 1280 of which were registered.

The registration of the remaining number of ECD Centres is part of our targets for the current financial year.

We must acknowledge it, Honourable Speaker, the initial stage of integrating the ECD function into Education was not without teething problems.

One of the significant challenges we encountered was the delayed transfer of funds to ECD Centres.

This was primarily because the ECD function shift to Education was not done lock, stock and barrel. The officials who were responsible for processing the transfer of funds to ECD Centres while the ECD function was still under Social Development were not transferred to Education.

At last, through collaboration with Social Development, we managed to turn the corner and transfer the funds due to all eligible ECD Centres in the previous financial year. We are now on track in that regard.

Government aims to achieve universal access to early learning through ECD services by 2030. To realise this bold vision, the department has seen the need to increase budget allocation for ECD.

R 979 188 000 has been allocated to Early Childhood Development (ECD) in the current financial year.

In the pursuit of improving access to ECD services, we will spend the 2023/23 ECD allocation on subsidisation of eligible 660 community-based ECD Centres based on the pre-determined criteria, registration of 800 ECD Centres, providing resources to community based ECD Centres as well as Grade R learners in Public Ordinary Schools and those in community based centres.

This allocation will also be used, inter alia, to strengthen the quality of curriculum implementation offered to the Grade R class to ensure a smooth transition from preparatory to formal schooling.

Moreover, we intend introducing Coding and Robotics for Grade R learners in ECD Centres and in primary schools.

To this end, we intend to train 1025 Grade R teachers and practitioners and to enrol 200 practitioners on the ETDP-SETA accredited training on National Qualification Framework Level 4 and above.

It is also part of our plans under this programme, Honourable Speaker, to create 40 ECD pockets of excellence to design effective and efficient ECD services for the future. This innovation will be piloted across the Province in the current financial year.

In addition, **Madam Speaker**, we are going to utilise the social sector EPWP Incentive Grant of R 3 389 Million to pay stipends of 115 Classroom Assistants placed in 115 public primary schools offering Grade R and 4 Data Capturers at Head Office.

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, ka nako ya ngwaga wa matlole, setheo se seshwa sa ECD, se se kwa Dr Ruth S Mompoti, se abetswe diranta di le dimillione di le robongwe. Paakanyo le tsepamiso ya ditheo tseo tsa ECD tse di lemogilweng go ralala porofense, tiriso ya madi a tsona etla nna mo lenaneong le le tlang la tllhabololo ya ditheo.

Programme 6: Infrastructure Development – (R 1 297 549 000, 4,5% Increase)

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, this R 1 297 549 000 allocated to infrastructure development budget will be spent on the provision and improvement of the quality of school physical infrastructure in the province.

We have to honour the obligation, as a department, to provide a conducive learning environment in our schools that is devoid of both physical intimidation and emotional frustration. Our school buildings should provide learners and teachers with the freedom of interaction, safety, dignity and respect for effective learning and teaching to unfold.

In the current financial year, we intend using the above budget specifically for new and replacement school buildings, additions, refurbishment and upgrades to dilapidated buildings, maintenance and repairs, which will of course, include storm-damaged schools.

It is also worth mentioning that we are in the process of eradicating suspect asbestos structures in about 114 schools in the province. As a matter of fact, the project has already started with the testing and verification of the asbestos materials. The learners in the affected schools were decanted to suitable alternative accommodation.

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, the plight of learners of Lorwetleng Primary Schools and Tlotlang Thuto Secondary School remains one of our biggest concerns.

We have taken a deliberate and conscious decision to put to an end to the longstanding dilemma affecting the construction of the two schools in this financial year.

We are considering to identify new sites, in consultation with the concerned tribal authorities and local municipalities, where the schools could be built as matter of extreme urgency. We hope to communicate a strategy to deliver those school projects by the end of June 2023. This, notwithstanding the ongoing legal processes.

We are also on the process of continuing with the construction project of Schwiezer-Reneke Primary School, which has been an eyesore for the concerned community and the province in general for over the years.

The establishment of Rysmierbult Mega School in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District has been accelerated. Thus far, engineers have been appointed and they are busy with designs. The issues of land and dolomite have been resolved and construction of the school is planned to start by the end of the third quarter of the current financial year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Premier, Ladies and Gentlemen, our dream of establishing the first hybrid Special School with emphasis on catering for the educational needs of Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder in our province is about to come to fruition. The plans to establish the school are gaining remarkable traction.

Early this month I led a project team comprising of officials from infrastructure, curriculum, human resource management and inclusive education to benchmark against special schools for Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Western Cape. We gained invaluable lessons which, undoubtedly, stand us in good stead to establish an ideal Special School for Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder in our province.

A budget has been set aside for the design and implementation of the envisaged Special School in the 2023-2025 Mid Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

As I have indicated earlier, the department has successfully concluded the condition assessment in financial year 2022/23. Briefly, the project sought to provide a clear picture of the health status for the entire school infrastructure portfolio in the province.

The information derived from the condition assessment report has been updated on the Education Infrastructure Management System (EFMS) and is available to officials for planning and maintenance purposes. Updating the EFMS with project information, which has become compulsory from this financial year onward, will ensure that the department has up-to-date information about the infrastructure conditions of all public schools in the province.

In that sense, we can safely say that the condition assessment report has placed the department in an informed position to plan its capital, maintenance, and renewal budget accordingly.

In meeting the national target to advance women in construction, the department has further planned a contractor development programme focusing on advancing women in construction to repair structural damages to school buildings, representing 26 projects.

In addition, we have a plan in place for implementation of a community-based school maintenance programme.

The above two programmes, namely, community-based school maintenance and women contractor development, will use community members, who under the supervision of certified artisans, will develop a team that can look after the wellbeing of our school buildings.

Since these programmes will be established according to the Skills and Contractor Development Guidelines of the Construction Industry Development Board, the people who participate successfully in these programmes will be certified by the Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA) as bricklayers, electricians, plumbers, roofers, glaziers, and other trades that may be required for the maintenance of school infrastructure.

Honourable Speaker, based on a conservative estimate of seven (7) equivalent full-time jobs per Million Rand, both capital and maintenance budget is projected to provide employment for approximately 4 400 people in the 2023/24 financial year.

Furthermore, we have planned to employ 71 youth through the EPWP Integrated Grant.

It is on the basis of the above, that as a department, we firmly believe that over and above skills development, we hope that these flagship programmes will contribute to the existing local economy development initiatives.

As part of acceleration of infrastructure procurement processes, as defined by Framework for Infrastructure Procurement and Delivery Management (FIPDM), we will strengthen procurement processes within the infrastructure unit by establishing committees constituting of infrastructure specialists, supported by SCM specialist. This will lead to faster turnaround times on procurement processes for infrastructure projects.

We would like to inform this August House that plans to alleviate/mitigate the effects of Eskom load shedding to our Special Schools, Technical Schools, schools that offer CAT, District Offices, HR Offices, Examinations Office in Mahikeng are in progress. Feasibility studies to establish specifications and the cost-benefit analysis will be completed soon.

Programme 7: Examination and Education Related Services - (R1 339 254 000, 4,5% Increase)

I am still happy to announce that the matric Class of 2022 made us proud by increasing our matric results from 78,2% of 2021 to 79,8%.

Our learners managed to achieve this milestone despite challenges posed by Covid-19 pandemic, floods and community protests.

This R1 339 254 000 allocation will be spent on operational activities of examinations and assessment such as printing of question papers, payment of security services at marking centres, training of all marking personnel who ensure that examination and assessment processes are credible as well as to meet the ever increasing demands of improved learner performance across the system.

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, through examinations and assessment processes, we anticipate to employ about 500 youth, mainly from our local universities and TVET colleges, to serve as marker assistants in our 2023 Grade 12 Examination marking centres.

CONCLUSION AND APPRECIATION

Honourable Speaker, we are fully aware of the systemic challenges facing the department that tend to threaten quality and efficiency regarding the level of service delivery to our people. Nonetheless with a dedicated and hardworking team of men and women at all levels of the department, we will do our best to serve the people of this beautiful province.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following:

- The Premier of North West, Honourable Kaobitsa Bushy Maape for his continued support and adept leadership.
- The Speaker of the Provincial Legislature, Mme Basetsana Dantjie - Thank you for your guidance. I am not saying it is easy but based on the experience I gained from the legislature and through your teachings, *ga go thata jalo jalo*.
- Honourable Members for this August House;
- Colleagues in the Executive Council for their unwavering support;
- Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee for their vigilant oversight and guidance roles;
- The Provincial Chairperson of the African National Congress, Cde Dumile Nono Maloyi -

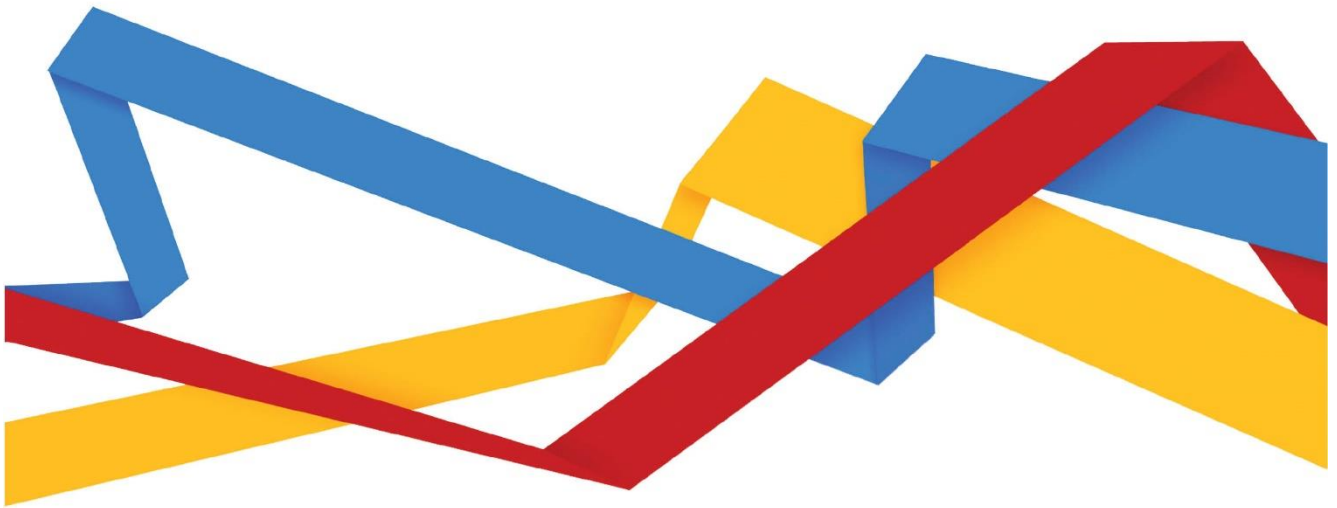
I remember how members of the ANC in the North West province began singing NONO rego Rata Ka ofela in the direction of the provincial congress in addition to the "Adiwele" slogan. Indeed, everything now makes sense. The encouragement and guidance I received from the movement motivated me to work harder in the department and show others that the African National Congress did not err by sending me to this important portfolio;

- And once more, I want to thank the African National Congress, which is a gigantic and the oldest liberation movement in Africa, for giving me this opportunity to serve the People of the North West. We will ensure that every child in this province gets quality education;
- Cde Collen Mokone Maine, “President” - You never stopped encouraging me to study and read more so that I arm myself with information because you are always confident that common sense cannot rule a government. Despite the fact that we argue virtually daily (ka the Tick Tok), thank you very much;
- Nathan Oliphant - I'm really benefiting from your efforts, my friend. Your suggestions and ideas have helped the department see things more clearly as it moves quickly. I appreciate you;
- Big thanks to those of you who follow us on Social media platforms, for your immense support and for providing us with information. Thanks to you, our ground troops, I am able to step in when there are problems, which makes my job much easier;
- The Acting Superintendent-General Dr S.H. Mvula and Team Education - Wow, your dedication is immeasurable! You are truly deserving of the moniker "iZinja'ze game". Let's keep waving high the department's flag with pride;
- Most importantly, our school communities – teachers, parents and learners for their continued trust in us and hard work. Despite their struggles, the majority of learners and educators continue to press on. Kudos to you, manyora, *a me*;
- Education sector social partners – labour unions, SGB associations, civil society, our various education partners for their different roles in ensuring that we deliver quality education in our schools;
- We are eternally grateful to two colleagues, Mrs Kedibone Memory Rabanye - Department Head for Languages at Letsatsing Science Secondary School - and Mrs Botsang Patricia Lekome - Provincial Setswana Coordinator for their role in translating selected parts of the speech into Setswana;
- Mme Stephinah Mmamotho Semaswe, the former Superintendent-General for Education, my dearest mother, many thanks for the priceless lessons you provided me with;

- To my family, especially, my husband Rainy Kgotso Motsumi, I would like to say thank you for all the sacrifices you have made. You have made my job easier, made sure that all political gaps are closed, and ensured that our children Amantle Aluta and Aarona Azania Asante do not feel abandoned by me because of my work schedule. ***Ke a leboga Mogatsaka A modimo a go boloke, a go phatsimisetse tsotlhe mo bophelong;*** and,
- To my parents, I would not be where I am if it wasn't for your sacrifices. It is not every day that parents get to reap the benefits of their labour of love; and for that I stand in awe of God, our Creator.

Really, it is not by my own strength to make it this far, I am gratified to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Thank you very much!



Let's grow North West together

