



education

Department:
Education
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

North West Department of Education **BUDGET SPEECH** **2025/26**



MEC Ntsetsao Viola Motsumi
North West Department of Education

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2025/2026 BUDGET VOTE SPEECH DELIVERED BY MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MRS NTSETSAO VIOLA MOTSUMI (MPL) AT THE NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE ON 22 JULY 2025

“A budget to strengthen systems”

Honourable Speaker, Desbo Mohono;
Honourable Deputy Speaker, Collen Maine;
Honourable Premier, Lazarus Kagiso Mokgosi;
Honourable Chief Whip, Mottalepula Rosho
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;
People of the North West Province.

Madume bagaetsho,

It is a great honour and privilege to rise before this esteemed House to present the 2025/26 Budget Vote for the Department of Education.

I do so during the globally celebrated Mandela Month. A time when the world reflects on the life and legacy of uTata Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, a leader who gave voice to the voiceless, hope to the hopeless, dignity to the oppressed, and vision to a world in crisis.

Without necessarily bragging, President Nelson Mandela was and will remain the finest son of the African soil. He was a loyal member and leader of the African National Congress. Madiba dedicated his life to the struggle for the liberation of his people and the people of the world.

The ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities, that our global icon Madiba was prepared to die for, resonates well with what the following fallen heroes of the African National Congress stood for.

Apart from perishing in the month of July, individually, the below-mentioned cadres demonstrated unmatched passion for education.

“Let’s Grow North West Together”

On the 12th of July 2025, the nation and the international community paid their last respects to the late Comrade David Dabede Mabuza.

Needless to say, Comrade David Dabede Mabuza affectionately known as “DD” served as the Deputy President of the African National Congress, as our country’s Deputy President, as the Leader of Government Business, and as Premier of Mpumalanga Province.

After completing his matric, he chose to join the teaching profession. In a nutshell, he began his career in education, first as a teacher, as a principal, and later as the Mpumalanga MEC for Education.

Today, Mpumalanga Province has a lot of boarding schools in farm and rural areas, which he built to improve access to education for sons and daughters of the farm workers.

Back to our home soil – North West Province - on the 6th July 2020, death robbed the people of the North West and South Africa of Comrade Mothibedi Gordon Kegakilwe. A renowned strategist, a man of sharp intellect, sound sense of a practicality, deep resolve and fierce loyalty to the cause of stability and unity.

Ladies and gentlemen, Comrade Gordon Kegakilwe was also a teacher by profession. He obtained a degree in education, an honours degree in chemistry and a master’s degree in governance from the University of Free State.

Just like Madiba and Mabuza above, Comrade Gordon Kegakilwe distinguished himself as one of the most illustrious, to have come up the ranks of the African National Congress as a tried and tested leader.

He was a committed activist who served the province in various leadership roles before his two-time appointment, in separate terms apart, as MEC for Local Government and Traditional Affairs, which was later reconfigured to Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs,.

Typically, Comrade Gordon Kegakilwe was passionate about the issues affecting the poor and the most vulnerable section of the population.

True to his calling, the legacy that Comrade Gordon Kegakilwe left for us is that of being quick to respond to matters of service delivery. It still pains my heart to remember that, like a soldier, he lost his life while in the forefront of a fight against the scourge of Covid-19 as the MEC for COGTA.

Honourable Speaker, as we reflect on the Mandela’s 67 years of activism during this month of July, I wish to enjoin this August House to also remember and acknowledge one of the finest sons of the soil, the late Comrade Dikago Pule.

Born and bred at Ga-Khunwana Village in Ngaka Modiri Molema District, Comrade Dikago Pule will forever be fondly remembered as a dependable revolutionary, the former North West University SRC President who was part of the #FeesMustFall movement. A rising star in politics, who died in a horrific crash on the 24th of July 2023, hours after being elected as the Treasurer of African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in Ngaka Modiri Molema Region. His mortal remains were laid to rest on the 29th of July 2023.

At the age of 30, Comrade Dikago had built a formidable political profile before his tragic passing.

Many within and outside the political fraternity, agree that Comrade Dikago Pule represented a new generation of leaders required to entrench unity and renewal not only in the ANCYL but across the broader spectrum of structures sought to improve service delivery. We will always remember him for his political agility and as a unifier.

In honour of the remarkable legacy of Comrade Dikago Pule, negotiations are underway with the Traditional Council of Barolong Boo Ratlou Ba Ga Seitshiro under Kgosi Moshoele to rename a school at his home village of Ga-Khunwana after him.

Honourable Speaker, I do not mean to idolise the above comrades and many other government and political leaders who, individually, lost their lives in the month of July.

Nonetheless, I deliberately implored this Esteemed House to remember the role that they actively played in the ongoing fight against the "triple challenge" of unemployment, poverty, and inequality in our country.

As uTata Madiba aptly puts it *"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."*

Honourable Members, the Budget Vote we are here to present reflects the very essence of Mandela's teachings. It is not merely a financial proposal. It is a moral and political commitment.

It affirms that the true measure of our tenure as leaders in government, is the difference we make in the world and the positive changes we bring to others, particularly our learners.

Let us remember, Honourable Members, that every cent allocated in this budget has the power to change a life and when we change the life of a child, we change a nation.

It cannot be emphasised enough that basic education should be seen as a primary driver of transformation in South Africa. To this end, we are deliberately putting the school at the centre of service delivery in the basic education sector.

Honourable Speaker, at this point, I wish to briefly share with the people of North West Province the milestones achieved through the previous financial year's budget allocation, before I outline the Department's strategic priorities and planned interventions for the 2025/26 financial year.

Ladies and gentlemen, our assertion that the Department is on an upward trajectory is not just a talk, but a reality.

I wish to place it on record once more, that our Matric Class of 2024 recorded a remarkable 87.52% pass rate, reflecting a notable increase of 5.89 % compared to the Class of 2023.

Further outstanding achievements of the Class of 2024, worth emphasising, are its substantial increase in Bachelor passes, improving from 36% in 2023 to 45%, and an increase in the number of distinctions in key subjects (excluding Life Orientation) to 11,8% of the previous academic year.

These achievements underscore the growing impact of our collaboration with a range of stakeholders which, without being exhaustive, include the sector labour formations, governing body associations and public-private partnerships.

We are eternally grateful to those community members who stood firm in protecting our learners' access to school against gangsterism and service delivery protests during the examination period.

Honourable Members, beyond academic success, the Department continues to shine through exceptional learner performance in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, a vital pillar of holistic education and character development.

During the 2024 academic year, our learners and schools demonstrated excellence at national platforms, upholding the North West Province's commitment to nurturing talent in music, science, heritage, sport, and digital innovation.

In science and innovation, Zanele Plaatjie, a Grade 10 learner from Obusitse Secondary School in Ratlou Local Municipality, had the honour of representing the province in the prestigious Sakura Science Exchange Programme held in Japan. Meanwhile, Reaotshepa Romane from Ramotshere Technical High School was awarded a gold medal at the 44th Eskom Expo for Young Scientists, for a project on Automatic Water Conservation and Energy Efficiency. Similarly, learners from Sebopiwa Molema Secondary School achieved second place at the National Tourism Career Expo.

In the realm of history and heritage, two exceptional history learners from Lichtenburg English Secondary School, Oarabile Molefe (Grade 10) and Oarabetse Mokowe (Grade 8), obtained first place at the Oral

History National Championships held in Benoni. Their outstanding performance earned them tablet devices as tokens of recognition from the organisers.

In school sports, Refethuto Primary School from Tswaing Local Municipality in Ngaka Modiri Molema emerged champions of the Kay Motsepe District Tournament. Furthermore, Eletsa Secondary School in Bojanala obtained first position provincially and an impressive second place nationally in the same tournament.

In the area of digital innovation, we collaborated with Glencore Mines and the University of Johannesburg to train teachers in Coding and Robotics. Our learners from Inkongane Primary School obtained third place at the SITA National Coding and Robotics Competition, showcasing our growing digital education capacity.

Honourable Members, our districts and educators have also received accolades for institutional leadership. Bojanala District secured:

- First position in the National Education Excellence Awards for District Leadership and Management,
- Second position in Primary School Learning Outcomes,
- A certificate of recognition at the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) Best Schools and District Awards, and
- As finalists in the Best Performing District.

The Department celebrated notable successes in teacher development, culminating in our teachers making an outstanding performance at the 2024 National Teaching Awards. Our dedicated teachers earned the prestigious title of the top-performing province among the nine provinces in South Africa, claiming not just accolades, but also two vehicles as a testament to their hard work and excellence. This achievement speaks volumes about the commitment of our teachers to improve their skills and also enhance the learning experience of our learners.

The Department achieved first positions in the following three categories:

- a) Excellence in Secondary School Teaching: Mr Thapelo Jacob Mthimkhulu from Chris Hani Secondary School in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District, who further represented South Africa in the exchange programme at Denmark this year.

- b) Excellence in Technology Enhanced Teaching and Learning: Mr Itumeleng Komane from Sunrise View Secondary School in Bojanala District, and
- c) Excellence in Life skills (Grades 1-6): Ms Nthabiseng Mavis Mateba from Are-Itshokeng Primary School in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.

In our endeavour to bolster stakeholder involvement and reignite societal pride in our public education system, I am pleased to announce that during the course of this year, the Department will launch a Provincial Alumni Forum. This initiative is aimed at mobilising and organising alumni of township and rural schools in a structured and purposeful way.

This innovation is a brainchild of a renowned gender non-conforming activist, Mildred Maropelala, who spoke passionately about her ongoing involvement with her former school, Romaine Secondary School, during one of my roadshows with School Governing Bodies and principals.

Such dedication served as a clear reminder that schools do not exist apart from their communities, and they thrive when communities remain actively involved in the affairs of their local schools. Many of us seated in this August House including doctors, lawyers, engineers, public servants, and civic leaders of our nation have roots in township and rural schools. Whether directly or indirectly, we are all connected to these institutions. It is, therefore, both a moral obligation and a patriotic duty to give back and support the schools that shaped our formative years. Our aim is to make it a reality not just a slogan, that education is indeed a societal matter.

Motlotlotlegi Mmusakgotla, re motlotlo go lo itsise fa Rre Phatudi Maponya, a itshupile go nna wa ntlha go thusana le botsamaisa jwa Lefapha go tlabolola dikago tsa Batswana Commercial Secondary School kwa a dirileng mophato wa marematlou teng (Grade 12). Re rotloetsa ba bangwe go mo sala morago.

We are further thrilled to announce that we are at an advanced stage of formalising our partnership with UNISA, which was initiated by Honourable Justice Dabambi of Economic Freedom Fighters, who is the President of the UNISA Convocation, to strengthen the capacity of the teachers and officials in carrying out their day-to-day roles.

We also prioritised induction and on-going training of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) on governance, financial management and leadership responsibilities across the province after their election in March 2024. Furthermore, School Management Teams and educators were also capacitated on promoting accountability and being performance driven.

In the Confederation of African Football (CAF) Schools Football Championship for Under-15 learners, a learner from Tlaskgameng was selected to join the National Boys Team for the continental stage of the tournament, which will be held this month. Additionally, Eletsa Secondary School were runners-up in the National Kay Motsepe Football Tournament, while North West Province obtained third place in the National Netball Tournament.

We will continue to foster healthy lifestyles through learner participation in the ABC Motsepe Choral Eisteddfod, the Provincial Arts and Culture Festival, SADC Essays, Youth Citizens Action Programmes, Oral History Projects, and inter-school sports festivals, including the Kay Motsepe Cup, CAF Football, Chess, and Athletics.

In pursuit of continuous professional development, the Department successfully implemented multiple training programmes aimed at strengthening the instructional capacity of our teachers. A total of 440 teachers received targeted training in early literacy and numeracy, with a deliberate focus on equipping Foundation Phase teachers with evidence-based strategies in reading and mathematics. These workshops, supported by experts in pedagogy, empowered our teachers with tools to improve foundational learning outcomes.

Further to this, we intensified our efforts to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution by rolling out digital skills training to 1 430 teachers, facilitated through our District Teacher Development Managers. This intervention has contributed meaningfully to modernising our teaching methodologies and enhancing digital integration in our classrooms.

In addition to the professional development of our teachers, the Department continues to invest in strengthening the administrative and operational backbone of our education system.

During the 2024/25 financial year, the Department trained 664 employees on various aspects aimed at enhancing administrative competence and promoting safe, supportive school environment. We successfully approved 324 bursaries to support professionalisation and innovation across the system.

Furthermore, we hosted 108 unemployed graduates and student interns, with 50 funded by the ETDP-SETA. As part of our drive to prepare young people for the digital economy, 200 unemployed youth were also trained through a Digital Skills Programme, fully funded by the ETDP-SETA.

The Department continues to carry out its obligation of ensuring that we provide the right teacher in front of the right class, teaching the right subject at all times. In achieving this, last year, we appointed 1 543 teachers, and subsequently converted them to permanent employment.

A total of 1 311 teachers have been identified for conversion to permanent employment before the end of the second quarter of the current financial year, bringing security and stability on employment of teachers.

In order to mitigate the vacancy rate in schools, the Department continues to prioritise filling of school management posts, and to date, 1 498 promotional school-based posts are advertised and are at an advanced stage to be filled.

Honourable Members, the Department takes pride in the progress registered in the area of infrastructure development—a pillar essential to providing safe and dignified learning environment.

The Department initially projected for practical completion and occupation of over 10 schools during the past financial year. To date, the following eight (8) schools are successfully occupied and two others are at an advanced stage for occupation:

- Bojanala District: Chaneng Primary, Gaseitsiwe Secondary , Mokala Primary and Mphehana Secondary
- Ngaka Modiri Molema: Kgosi Shope Primary and Tshedimoso Primary,
- Dr Kenneth Kaunda: Sarafina Secondary , and
- Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati: Tlaskgameng Primary.

After intervention to unblock the barriers, the following schools will be ready for occupation in 2026 academic year: Sediko Primary, Dirang Ka Natla Secondary, DP Kgotleng Primary, Kagiso Barolong Primary and Tigane Secondary.

The first phase at Mochusi Secondary School which includes additional classrooms, science laboratory, ablution blocks and administration block were completed. The second phase to renovate classrooms will be completed during 2026 academic year. These schools will provide significant relief to the persistent overcrowding challenges.

Collectively, these projects have created 4 272 jobs during their construction, delivering substantial benefits to the economy of the province.

After years of delays, finally Schweizer-Reneke Primary School is scheduled for completion by the end of December 2025. Planning for Loretlweng Primary has started.

Furthermore, the Department has appointed Contract Management to start with repairs of over 147 storm-damaged schools across the province and the process to introduce appointed contractors to stakeholders has commenced.

Lastly, through the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Maintenance Grant, 22 ECD centres were maintained.

BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE 2025/26 PERIOD

Honourable Speaker, this financial year, the Department will spend R 22,9 billion on Education, which represents an increase of 4,4% compared to R 21,9 billion of the last financial year.

The priorities and services rendered by the Department of Education are categorised into seven programmes.

A breakdown of the 2025/26 budget allocation per programme is as follows:

PROGRAMME	2025/26 BUDGET ALLOCATION (R' 000)
1. Administration	R 1 193 722
2. Public Ordinary School Education	R 17 051 124
3. Independent School Subsidies	R 58 305
4. Public Special School Education	R 1 053 085
5. Early Childhood Development	R 1 081 222
6. Infrastructure Development	R 1 375 248
7. Examination and Education Related Services	R 1 080 933
TOTAL	R 22 894 639

Briefly, this budget will empower the Department to strengthen the policies and systems poised to enable fulfilment of its core mandate of delivering quality basic education.

I hereby wish to table the Department of Education's Budget Vote 8 for 2025/26 financial year for consideration and approval by this Honourable House as follows:

PROGRAMME 1: ADMINISTRATION (R1 193 722 bn)

Honourable Speaker, in the 2025/26 financial year, this programme is allocated R1,2 billion.

The strategic purpose of this programme is to provide overall management and support services of the Department to ensure the fulfilment of its mandate. This programme underpins the efficient functioning of the entire Department, ensuring operational stability, institutional accountability, prudent financial management, and the continuous monitoring and evaluation of performance outcomes.

This allocation will be utilised to implement targeted interventions aimed at strengthening administrative systems and improving organisational performance, with particular attention to the issues raised by the Auditor-General; specifically, those related to operational efficiency, compliance with predetermined objectives, adherence to legislation, and the integrity of performance information.

We noted the decline of 6,2% on Goods and Services and an increase of 6.8% on Transfers and Subsidies allocation increases by 6.8%. This growth is mainly attributed to the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) allocation and a notable increase in the Early Childhood Development (ECD) grant

Human Resource Development

Looking ahead to 2025/26, the Department plans to provide in-service training to over 400 support staff, induct 400 newly appointed staff within 12 months of their appointment and award 158 bursaries to employees towards professionalisation of the public service.

We will continue to engage the ETDP-SETA and other partners to unlock further funding opportunities for skills development. The Department will also rollout an occupation – Accredited General Residential Repairer Skills Programme funded by ETDP-SETA for 250 unemployed youth who will do their practicals in identified schools and they will be paid stipend.

Basic Education Employment Initiative

Honourable Speaker, processes are at advanced stage to roll out Phase V of the Basic Education Employment Initiative, a component part of the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative.

For this financial year, the Department has been allocated 13 687 posts for placement of Education Assistants (EAs) and General School Assistants (GSAs) in 1 462 schools that are participating in the initiative. All successful young people have started reporting for duty at various schools.

More than anything else, in the past, this initiative brought immediate relief to many families, provided these young people with critical workplace exposure, practical skills development and a sense of purpose, setting them on a path to full-time employment in the long run. We hope it will continue to make the same difference this financial year and beyond.

Partnerships with TVET Colleges

In the same wavelength, the Department is forging partnerships with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in the province regarding the absorption of their students for experiential learning in public schools and offices of the Department. This groundbreaking initiative embodies the spirit of mutualism. All parties involved will benefit. Over and above assisting the participating students with opportunities for practical work towards partial fulfilment of their qualifications, it is envisaged that the initiative will benefit the Department and its schools to address its shortages of skills in office administration, financial administration and a wide range of artisans offered by our TVET colleges.

PROGRAMME 2: PUBLIC ORDINARY SCHOOL EDUCATION (R17,051,124 bn)

For this financial year, a budget of R17,1 billion has been allocated to Public Ordinary School Education for a wide range of services such as Compensation of Employees (CoE), goods and services, transfers to Public Ordinary Schools, Institutions, Households, Machinery and Equipment, Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM), National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), School Enrichment, Learner Attainment Improvement Programme, Professional Teacher Development, Curriculum Implementation, and Information and Communication Technology.

Compensation of Employees

Honourable Members, for this financial year, the Department has been allocated R14,9 billion for the Compensation of Employees (CoE) budget. This constitutes almost 87% of our total budget, with an increase of 5,5%.

Our resolve for this year is to fill all funded vacant school-based and office-based posts in strengthening the human capital in order to improve the effectiveness of the Department at all its levels.

Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM)

Honourable Speaker, the Department has allocated R712,3 million for Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM), which encompasses a wide range of materials, including textbooks, workbooks, stationery, and even digital resources, and its effective management ensures quality education delivery.

Learner Attainment Improvement Programme (LAIP)

R161,3 million has been put aside for the Learner Attainment Improvement Programme (LAIP), which takes care of the intervention or rather support plans to enhance learner performance.

As part of our learner attainment strategies for this year, Grade 12 learners from the selected schools will continue to receive SIM cards loaded with data to study virtually and online lessons, while on Curriculum Development, 185 Schools will be piloting Coding and Robotics. Teachers from the implementing schools have already received training.

The Department will continue supporting 31 Technical Vocational Schools, 18 Agricultural Focus schools, and 13 schools that have implemented Technical Occupational Subjects. All the teachers were trained for implementation. Technical Occupational subjects were expanded to 3 more schools in the current academic year.

A total of R3,4 million for Maths Science and Technology Conditional Grant is allocated to support five identified Agricultural Focus Schools to sustain performance of Agricultural Management Practices and Agricultural Technology subjects. Furthermore, an amount of R2,1 million is set aside for 10 FET schools piloting Occupational subjects in Grade 9.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our collaboration with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) is reaching new heights and deepening even further. For 2025/26, NECT has allocated an amount of R16 million to proceed with the implementation of the following: Literacy Improvement, Numeracy and Mathematics Improvement, Teacher and Learner Wellness, Organisational Performance, Incentivisation of District Performance, and Resource Mobilisation for Supporting Multi-Year Educational Improvement.

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, we are thrilled to announce that the Department has been allocated a discretionary funding of R5 million from ETDP-SETA, which will be used to establish a “4IR Centre of Excellence” at Boitseanape Technical High School in Ngaka Modire Molema District.

National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)

For 2025/26 financial year, NSNP has been allocated R693,7 million) to feed an estimated 751 847 learners in 1 319 schools. 4 571 Food Handlers will be appointed to prepare and serve meals to learners

with a monthly stipend. Schools would continue to receive chicken livers as an *additional* protein. Breakfast would be increased to cover all secondary schools.

Professional Teacher Development

The Department has set aside a budget of R24,7 million towards professional teacher development. The training programmes include languages and reading , Numeracy and Mathematics as well as a broad range of subjects and digital skills offered to teachers across all phases and grades, as well as subject specialists.

PROGRAMME 3: INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SUBSIDIES (R58 305 ml)

Honourable Speaker, the allocation of state subsidy to independent schools is a contentious issue.

To break the impasse, without upsetting the fundamental right to basic education, we are on a drive of ensuring that all eligible independent schools have a slice of the cake at one point or another.

This will be achieved through our consultative efforts to redress the balance for compliant needy South African-owned independent schools, in line with the Ministerial determinations and the National Norms and Standards for School Funding.

In the current financial year, we have increased the number of subsidised independent schools from 37 to 53.

An amount of R58,3 million is allocated to subsidise the above 53 eligible independent schools.

PROGRAMME 4: PUBLIC SPECIAL SCHOOL EDUCATION (R1 054 085 bn)

Honourable Speaker, the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter coincides with the strides we have made to ramp up an inclusive education system that accommodates diverse learning needs.

For the 2025/26 financial year, the Department allocated R1,1 billion to Public Special Schools, of which R22,5 million is specifically earmarked for the Learners with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability (LSPID) Conditional Grant.

With this budget, over and above providing additional assistive devices and intensifying coordination, we are going to strengthen the capacity of the 230 Full Service Schools, which are mainstream ordinary schools equipped with resources and facilities to promote access to education for learners with special educational needs.

I must admit, there is still much work to do to ensure that our special schools and ordinary public schools are fully inclusive in terms of space and necessary resources for all learners.

PROGRAMME 5: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (R1 081 222 bn)

For this financial year, the Department is allocated R164,3 million for ECD conditional grant.

This allocation will be spent on expanding access to quality ECD services, supporting eligible ECD centres to improve the overall quality of their programmes as well as to meet their basic health and safety standards, and improving the skills and working conditions of ECD practitioners.

I am humbled to announce that the Department is implementing the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act, which came into effect on 24 December 2024, notwithstanding the challenges of the delay in the issuing of the relevant regulations, particularly with regard to the admission of Grade R and language policy in public schools.

To enhance universal Grade R access and curriculum delivery in public schools, R13,4 million will be utilised to supply 400 schools offering Grade R with educational toys, fantasy furniture, and combination jungle gyms, all aimed at stimulating learning through play; and R22 million for enrolling practitioners in the accredited ECD NQF level 4 qualifications, empowering them with formal recognition and pathways for career progression.

It is worth noting, Honourable Speaker, that we need additional funding to ensure universal Grade R access, as required by the BELA Act.

PROGRAMME 6: INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT (R1 375 248 bn)

Honourable Speaker, for Infrastructure Development, the Department has allocated R1 375,3 billion. This allocation comprises of R1 359,3 billion for Education Infrastructure Grant (EIG), R9,5 million for Early Childhood Maintenance Grant and R6,4 million for the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Integrated Grant.

Honourable Speaker, our unwavering commitment to providing tailored support to meet the diverse needs of our learners in special schools is evident, not only in our dedicated programmes, but also in our strategic infrastructure development.

We are investing in accessible facilities, and safe learning environment that cater for the unique requirements of each learner, ensuring they have every opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential.

In the 2024/25 financial year, Department spent R132 million on hostels, maintenance and basic services of infrastructure facilities in special schools.

For 2025/26, the Department has budgeted R62 million for projects like:

- Coligny Special School: A flagship project that consists of new hostels and major renovations. The project is about 82% complete,
- Temoso Special School: A construction of a new/replacement school and hostel for an estimated 160 learners and 35 staff members,
- Tlamelang Special School: Also construction of a new/replacement school for about 150 learners and 75 staff members,
- Kwutlananong School for the Deaf : Will receive major renovation for its 225 learners and 89 staff members, and
- The processes of establishing the first dedicated Special School for Autism in the province in Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality is underway.

Honourable Members, the Department is still steadfast on its quest for restoring the dignity of learners in farm, rural and township schools.

At Moedwil, new brick and mortar hostels that replace the old asbestos hostels are also due to be completed 10 months earlier, by the end of third quarter of 2025/26 financial year, and will be ready for occupation in January 2026.

At Christiana Extension 4, a new mobile primary school, comprising of 20 classrooms, precast restrooms, fencing, boreholes, electricity and an administration block, will be established in the current financial year to accommodate over 800 learners from the overcrowded schools in Utlwanang township.

Various options are being explored at Magogoe in consultation with stakeholders including, and not limited to the traditional authorities, municipality, education stakeholder including Moruti Thwane a former school principal to reclaim Montshioa Memorial Middle School, which was closed in 2016.

At Stinkhoutboom, earthworks and the installation of a fence at R38 million are reaching completion, and construction of the top structure at R90 million will begin shortly, with the project set for completion in time for the 2028 academic year.

Bethel Girls High School will also be renovated to be ready to ensure maximal intake of learners in January 2026. The Department has already started with the initiatives by appointing the administration staff, of which the new Principal was appointed to restore and reclaim the performance history of the school.

During the 2025/26 financial year, the Department will commence with the construction of Sunway Primary School in Hartbeespoort, which will provide the much-needed relief of the overcrowding pressures encountered by Ennis Thabong Primary School.

The construction of a Mega School in Rysmierbult in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District is about to commence, where Phase 1 will deliver a fully equipped primary school and hostel facilities for 600 learners. Phase 2 will follow with a secondary school and an additional hostel for another 600 learners.

This initiative is designed to improve access to education in that district, by consolidating learners from non-viable and farm schools, thereby, significantly reducing the ongoing learner transport challenges and restoring the dignity of the historically marginalised learners from the farm and rural communities.

Our collaborative efforts continue to yield meaningful results. Vodacom has generously offered support in constructing the proposed merger of Shaleng and Mothelesi Combined schools. Mining companies such as Sibanye Stillwater, Harmony Gold and Impala Platinum have also pledged donations to build Sonop, Bakwena, and Tirelong schools.

Through Office of the Premier, we are at an advanced stage with proposals submitted to the Government of China for the construction of the proposed merger of Sengana and Moratwe Secondary in Bojanala District.

Furthermore, through the Japanese Embassy there is a commitment to build a state-of-the-art science laboratory at Tlhaole Secondary School.

These public-private partnerships, stemming from our engagements with the private sector, particularly during the Education Lekgotla of 29 April 2024 at Sun City are bearing fruits.

We extend our deepest gratitude to these organisations for their unwavering contributions and support. Collectively, these investments are anticipated to create 2 660 job opportunities, empowering the youth, women and disabled persons of our province and boosting socio-economic development.

New Infrastructure Assets

A budget of R332,5 million is allocated to the construction of new educational facilities to accommodate a growing learner population.

Existing Infrastructure

A total budget of R907,4 million is focused on upgrading existing infrastructure, such as additional classrooms including Grade R classrooms, toilets, NSNP kitchens, and administration blocks, dedicated

to revitalising and rehabilitating existing school infrastructure to ensure its longevity and functionality. This investment is crucial for maintaining the quality and safety of educational facilities across the province.

Security Fences

We have allocated R140 million budget to replace dilapidated fences in 120 schools with state-of-the-art high security fences to reaffirm our commitment to ensure the safety of our learners, staff and property in schools.

A budget of R212,8 million is allocated for ongoing maintenance and repair work to ensure the continued functionality of educational facilities. This budget is not allocated to supplement the maintenance component of the Section 21 grant for schools, but to systematically maintain and repair infrastructure across affected schools.

Non-Infrastructure Projects

An allocation of R135,4 million is set aside for non-infrastructure related projects and initiatives that support the overall educational infrastructure, such as equipment, furniture and administrative needs. These budget allocations demonstrate a strategic focus on improving and sustaining the educational infrastructure across the North West Province. The investments will facilitate the construction of new schools, upgrade existing facilities, ensure regular maintenance, and support special projects, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of educational standards and inclusivity.

Honourable Members, these strategic investments reflect our unwavering dedication to building a resilient education system that meets the needs of our learners and contributes to national development goals.

As mentioned above, the Department has allocated R9,5 million for Early Childhood Development (ECD) Maintenance Grant, which will be spent on the targeted 20 ECD centres to ensure their compliance with full registration requirements.

The education infrastructure backlog in our province remains significant, exceeding R25 billion. To address this challenge, the Department requires additional funding sources. We continue to request for funding for infrastructure through the education sector. Public-Private Partnerships option is further explored.

Honourable Members, through R6,4 million which has been allocated for the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Integrated Grant, the Department will create job opportunities for youth and support ECD operations which includes the appointment of 140 classroom assistants, 6 Data Capturers, and 27 General Assistants on 12-month contracts.

PROGRAMME 7: EXAMINATION AND EDUCATION RELATED SERVICES (R1 080 933 bn)

Motlotlegi Mmusakgotla, under Programme 7, the Department has set aside a budget of R114 million for Examinations and Education-Related Services.

This allocation reaffirms our unwavering commitment to maintaining the integrity, credibility, and inclusivity of our assessment and examination processes.

This funding will enable us to continue with the conduct, administration, and marking of the National Senior Certificate (NSC)/Grade 12 examinations, preparatory examinations, and the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA). These processes will be subjected to intensified monitoring and moderation to uphold high standards and credibility.

We remain deeply committed to inclusive education. Accordingly, this budget also provides for accommodations and concessions for candidates with barriers to learning, ensuring that no learner is left behind during the conduct of these high-stake assessments.

Honourable Member, we are thrilled to report that the General Education Certificate (GEC) Phase 1 implementation is well underway. A total of 358 of our secondary schools are currently participating, with full provincial rollout scheduled for the 2026/27 financial year. This initiative marks a significant step towards a more holistic and benchmarked approach to learner assessment in the General Education and Training (GET) Band.

To strengthen the foundation phase, an Early Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (ELNA) targeting Grade 1 learners has been successfully conducted in 26 selected schools. This forms part of our long-term vision to improve literacy and numeracy competencies at the earliest stages of learning.

This financial year, we will also conduct a Systemic Evaluation in Grades 3, 6, and 9. This important evaluation will help us assess the performance of the education system as a whole, identifying strengths and areas for improvement that will inform evidence-based interventions.

In alignment with our broader Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) strategy, the Department is actively digitising key assessment instruments and reporting systems. This digital transition is designed to streamline operations, enhance data accuracy, and support real-time decision-making.

In our pursuit for service excellence, we also recognise potential temporary employment in boosting our examination capacity and supporting youth employment. The Department will:

- Appoint 650 young people as marking assistants;
- Employ 250 security personnel to secure the integrity of the examination processes; and

- Lastly appointed 250 Chief Invigilators, Invigilators, and Examination Monitors for the 2025 May/June examinations.

Furthermore, Honourable Members, to strengthen the credibility and integrity of our assessment processes, the Department has concluded an end-to-end solution contract for the printing, packaging, and delivery of examination papers for a period of five years. This is an approach to mitigate challenges experienced in previous years, particularly incidents of question paper leaks that compromised the examination process and the public's confidence therein.

This end-to-end solution contract is equipped with advanced security protocols to eliminate leak risks and safeguard the integrity of the National Senior Certificate and other examinations. The contract includes:

- Biometric access controls for authorised personnel,
- CCTV-monitored printing zone,
- GPS-tracked logistics for all deliveries, and
- 24-hour secure storage facilities.

The expanded scope also provides for high-volume printing, secure packaging and labelling of scripts per school, delivery to and collection from all four districts, as well as the retrieval and safe delivery of scripts to marking centres. These measures are not only operational improvements, but also a clear message that this Department is serious about restoring and protecting the integrity of our examination system.

CONCLUSION AND APPRECIATION

Honourable Speaker, as I conclude the delivery of this Budget speech, I do so with full appreciation of the responsibility entrusted to us, and the collective effort required to realise our ambitions for the learners of the North West Province.

This Budget is not an isolated document. It speaks directly to the Annual Performance Plan (APP) of the Department, aligns seamlessly with the State of the Nation Address delivered by His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa, and responds to the clarion call made in the first SONA under the Government of National Unity (GNU) to unite behind the task of rebuilding and transforming our country, with education at the centre of our developmental agenda.

It also resonates profoundly with the State of the Province Address (SOPA) delivered by our Premier, Honourable Lazarus Kagiso Mokgosi, who continues to lead with integrity and vision. Premier, I thank you sincerely for entrusting me with the opportunity to lead this most delicate and life-shaping portfolio,

the Department of Education, a Department whose mission is to revolutionise the minds of our people, to liberate our communities through learning, and to ensure that truly, no child is left behind.

I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation for your leadership, your wisdom, and your unwavering belief that education must remain our apex priority.

To my colleagues in the Provincial Legislature, your continued support and robust engagement reflect the seriousness with which this House regards education. To the Portfolio Committee on Education, Arts Culture, Sport and Recreation, your vigilant oversight and guidance are proof once again that the transformation of education is not the task of the Department alone, but a shared responsibility we all carry with pride.

To my Comrades in the Executive Council, fellow MECs who always support the vision of a better education system in our province, I thank you for walking this journey with us.

I stand here too with profound respect and gratitude for my political home, the African National Congress, under the eloquent and visionary leadership of Comrade Dumile Nono Maloyi. Chairperson, you have been more than a leader; you have been a brother, a mentor, and a pillar of strength. Your counsel has often been the compass I turned to when the road ahead appeared foggy. Thank you for your guidance, your belief in our mission, and your tireless commitment to the people of this province.

To the leaders of society, the community voices who keep us grounded whether through vocal advocacy, late-night phone calls, persistent WhatsApp messages, challenging opinions on social media, or through the lens of mainstream media, thank you. You are the mirror that reflects our progress and reminds us that accountability is a cornerstone of democracy.

To the members of the media, I salute your tenacity in portraying the raw, honest, and often painful realities of our education system. Your work pushes us to do better, to respond faster, and to serve smarter.

Honourable Speaker, as I appreciate the sterling work done by Team North West Education, I wish to take this opportunity to introduce its newly appointed Superintendent-General Mr Lengane Johannes Bogatsu to this Esteemed House.

In the same vein, let me introduce to you our mascot “Diponono” who serves as an ambassador, representing the Department’s brand at various events, fostering a sense of identity, connection, and loyalty with its audience.

Let me also thank those who held the fort in the post of the Superintendent General starting with Dr Shadrack Mvula, Mr Maropene Seshibe and Mr Prince Masilo. You helped laying a firm foundation during a critical moment in our journey with zest, urgency and speed this Department requires.

To our education sector social partners, the labour formations, school governing body associations, South African Principal Association, civil society, and other education partners, your unwavering support and engagement continue to provide us with invaluable insight and stability in a sector that needs all hands on deck. Thank you for being the ever-present critical friends in this journey of reform.

To the Office of the Superintendent-General and my office staff, a team of hardworking men and women, who work behind the scenes with unwavering commitment, ke a leboga. You are my second family. Your ability to handle pressure, long hours, and the ever-changing demands of this role inspires me daily. You have stood by me through the toughest seasons with grace, wisdom, and excellence. I am proud to call you my team.

Lastly, Honourable Members, I would like to pause and offer deep personal thanks to those closest to my heart — my family.

To my husband, Rainy Kgotso Motsumi, thank you for being both patient and present. For countless evenings I have been away, for carrying the parenting load while I carried the public one — you have been my partner in the truest sense.

To our beautiful children, Amantle Aluta and Aarona Azania, whose love gives me the courage to rise daily and whose future inspires every policy we adopt, you are my light.

And to my parents, Mr and Mrs Jabanyane, both educators in your own right; thank you for the seeds you planted, for the wisdom you imparted, and for the indelible passion for teaching that you passed down. You didn't just raise a daughter — you raised a servant of the people, a leader shaped by your stories, your ethics, and your classroom resilience. I carry your legacy with pride.

Last but not least, Honourable Speaker, I give all glory to God, who gives me strength, wisdom, and courage to lead in this challenging yet rewarding calling. It is by His grace that I can serve the people of the North West in this noble portfolio of Education. I am constantly reminded of the words in Isaiah 41:10, which read as follows:

*So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

Indeed, it is through His divine guidance that I can stand firm and lead with conviction, knowing that this assignment is not just political — it is spiritual, generational, and transformational.

Honourable Members, the children of the North West are waiting for us to deliver. And deliver, we shall.

I now render the 2025/26 Departmental Budget Vote to you.

Ke a leboga. I thank you.

North West Department of Education

BUDGET SPEECH

2025/26

