

2019/20

Policy and Budget Speech

12 July 2019



education
DEPARTMENT: EDUCATION
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



YEARS OF FREEDOM

LET'S GROW SOUTH AFRICA TOGETHER





**Mr Bonakela Majuba
MEC for Education**

“The Mpumalanga Education Landscape that we envisage is that which will equip and empower our children to be better citizens, children who will contribute significantly in the growth and development of our economy.

These are learners who will be global players, children who will participate meaningfully towards the realisation of the Mpumalanga we want.”

2019/20 Policy and Budget Speech to be delivered by the MEC for Education, Mr Bonakele Majuba on 12 July 2019 at the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature in Mbombela

Honourable Speaker, **Mrs. Busisiwe Shiba,**

Honourable Deputy Speaker, **Mr. Vusumuzi Mkhathshwa,**

Honourable Premier, **Mrs. Refilwe Mtshweni – Tsipane,**

Honourable Fana Mlombo, Chief Whip of the Majority Party,

Honourable Members of the Legislature,

Members of the Portfolio Committee on Education, Culture, Sport and Recreation under the stewardship of **Honourable Nompumelelo Hlope,**

Members of the Executive Council,

Chairpersons of the House of Traditional Leaders, Inkhosi Sandile Ngomane,

Acting Director General, **Mr. Mathew Mohlasedi,**

Executive Mayors and Speakers of Municipalities,

Acting Chair of the African National Congress – **Mr. Mandla Ndlovu** and all other leaders of the Ruling Party and the Alliance partners present,

1st Deputy Provincial of SACP – **Mr. Mandla Tibane,**

Leadership of all Political Parties represented in this House,

Leadership of the Moral Regeneration Movement and faith based organisations,

Education Sector Unions

Leadership of the Associations of School Governing Bodies

Representatives from the Business Community

Acting Head: Education, **Mr. JR Nkosi** and Officials of the Department

Learners and Students

Representatives from the Media

Distinguished Guests

And Members of the Community following us on various Media platforms,

Sanibonani

AS WE USHER IN THE 6TH ADMINISTRATION

Madam Speaker, the **2019/2020** Policy framework and Budget vote presents an education dawn of the 6th administration which is a critical era of our time as we seek to leverage education to levels not reached before.

It intends to enhance learner performance in a way that will speedily turn around the fortunes of our province and our country to what President Cyril Ramaphosa calls “***The South Africa We Want***”, in our context – ***The Mpumalanga we envisage***.

This demands action- not decorated narrative, demands unity - not competition, demands persistence to overcome barriers and to provide wide ranging opportunities for children, especially those of the working class, the downtrodden and the poor.

The new education dawn dictates that we focus our attention on the improvement of reading for comprehension in the first years of schooling, create a safe and favourable teaching and learning environment, mobilise our communities to support schools, position schools and learners for the 4th industrial revolution and provide the requisite support to our schools and out of school youth.

The Son of the Soil that this country so loved, the late Chief of Staff of Mkhonto Wesizwe, Cde Chris Hani once said, “***We need to create pathways to give hope to our youth that they can have the opportunity through education and hard work to escape the trap of poverty***”.

Today, **Madam Speaker**, through this action plan, we confirm that we are available, ready and have all the required enthusiasm to deliver quality and credible education working side by side with all citizens of this Province- **Siyathumeka – Futhi Siyakhawuleza**.

The Mpumalanga Education Landscape that we envisage is that which will equip and empower our children to be better citizens, children who will contribute significantly in the growth and development of our economy.

These are learners who will be global players, children who will participate meaningfully towards the realisation of the Mpumalanga we want. We are thinking about learners embodied with skills of the changing world. Skills such as complex problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, service orientation and cognitive flexibility. Learners who will in turn convert our natural resources into sound products for economic growth.

Our children with all the innate potential cannot be limited, but our education should assist them to be the best that they can be.

We reiterate that we are looking at our education as a vehicle which will truly make them complete individuals and to flourish culturally, socially, politically and economically.

It is for this reason that **everything and everything** will be in place to address impediments as they arise in order for education to thrive at all cost.

We will decisively act within the framework of our laws against officials who deliberately procrastinate in discharging their professional responsibilities, or cause a minute of non-teaching or a school day with an empty classroom. We will not accept nor tolerate anything that deprive our children their constitutional right to education, if by any chance that happens –***we shall be there to ask why and what for and Act decisively.***

Every corner and every street within this province henceforth needs to be an education zone – a learning space – because our journey from the digital age towards the 4th Industrial Revolution demands that we do things differently, progressively, on time and in a more coherent, focused and productive manner.

Indeed, **Madam Speaker**, the Mpumalanga we envisage requires that we develop our learners when they are still young and receptive in the areas of digital skills, coding, robotics and entrepreneurial fields of study for the province to move with speed towards total emancipation from the scourge of poverty, hopelessness and unemployment.

We need to do this to revolutionise education provisioning and to usher in a new trajectory for our children.



YEARS OF FREEDOM

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Madam Speaker, we are fully conversant that the foundation for success in education rests within the ambit of Early Childhood Development domain, which provides and contributes to the attainment of the overarching objective of the National Development Plan and Sustainable Development Goals.

We are aware that there are many social ills which inhibit excellent academic performance and other related limitations that contribute to the failure of developing learners at an early age.

This requires that we work collaboratively with all the relevant Departments towards the realization of the **injunction of President Ramaphosa and the Premier's pronouncement to migrate the responsibility for Early Childhood Development from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Education** and to work towards providing compulsory two years of pre-school education as per the dictates of the National Development Plan (NDP).

What comforts us **Madam Speaker**, is that **93.8%** of children aged **5 to 6** years already have access to Grade R. This will make it easy for us to move with speed so that all age appropriate learners access Grade R by **2024**.

As we prepare to receive this function, the Department will this year commence with the audit of Early Child Development services in the Province and level the playing field so as to accelerate the provisioning of these services.

We will continue to professionalise the Early Childhood Development Sector by training ECD practitioners towards level four (4) qualifications and Level Six Diploma in Grade R teaching.

We can confirm that to date we have successfully translated **623** Grade R practitioners into post level 1 educators, which is a great achievement.

The Department has set aside **R 542 million** to accelerate the provisioning of Early Childhood Development Programmes in the **2019/20** financial year.

“Violence and other forms of social ills must not find space in any of our schools and to achieve this we are going to work tirelessly with all our communities, Departments, non-governmental institutions and labour formations to free our schools from this challenge.”

IMPROVEMENT OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Madam Speaker, we are making a commitment to roll up our sleeves side by side with our social partners to ensure that all our **556** secondary schools perform above **80%** by **2024**.

The fact that the Department improved the Grade 12 pass rate from **47.9%** in 2009 to **79%** in 2018 is clear evidence that it is realistic to demand more improvement considering the support that the Department continues to provide to schools and learners.

We are correct and are within our right to demand high returns consistent with our investment in education.

Let me take this opportunity to extend our profound appreciation and congratulate the Class of 2018 for improving the Grade 12 results by **4.2%** from **74.8%** to **79%**.

We have in the gallery some of the top ten learners from this class; I request that they stand up so that we congratulate them. Thank you, Congratulations once more.

Amongst the learners who have graced this occasion we have the following stars, **Mthembu Zamokuhle Wiseman**. He managed to obtain **300** out of **300** in Mathematics, **296** out of **300** in Physical Sciences (only 4 marks short to get a total).

We have **Simelane Smangaliso** from Govan Mbeki Local Municipality who obtained **300** out of **300** in Physical Sciences and **293** out of **300** in Mathematics.

We also have **Masilela Bandisa Prince** who obtained **300** out of **300** in Physical Sciences and **288** out of **300** in Mathematics.

All these students are from deprived families and we have correctly placed them at universities and provided them with full bursaries at no cost to their parents. We are proud to announce that they are doing very well.

This is a clear demonstration of what education can do to liberate our children from conditions of deprivation to prosperity. We must therefore not rest until every child in our province can be like, **Zamokuhle, Smangaliso and Bandisa**.

Our founding father of democracy Nelson Mandela says: "***It always looks impossible until it is done***". It is in our hands, let's grow Mpumalanga Together.

It is really possible considering the solid foundation that has been laid by my predecessors over the last 25 years. We wish to salute and appreciate all my predecessors for the sterling work done – ours is not to reinvent the wheel but to accelerate the speed of education transformation and ensure that the department reach greater heights.

We also wish to use this platform to make a clarion call to school management teams, teachers, non-teaching staff and union leadership not to drop the ball and renege from our commitment, but to continue serving the cause of education diligently and with commitment which has characterized the Department over the years. **Without the full support and unreserved**

commitment from these key stakeholders, our call for quality education will remain a pipe dream. Education remains a societal matter and a cornerstone for human development.

The Honourable Premier, **Mrs Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane** echoed these sentiments at the occasion of the State of the Province Address last week Friday and she said:

“We need to position our learners properly as we usher in the 4th Industrial revolution and as such it will be prudent to ensure that they do not shy away from subjects such as Mathematics, Science and Technology.

We will therefore, as government, roll-out fibre or broadband so as to guarantee reliable high-speed internet connectivity in our schools, hospitals and townships in order to ensure that our people are not left behind but also benefit from the 4th Industrial Revolution.

To this end, the province will intensify its efforts to improve the intake and pass rate of these subjects through the OR Tambo Maths, Science and Technology Academy.

We will also supplement this by providing mathematics laboratories with relevant state of the art equipment specially designed furniture, to enhance the teaching and learning of mathematics to ten Primary Schools this financial year.

The Province will again this year, from 26 July to 2 August host, in partnership with Sasol, the Sasol Techno X exhibitions in Secunda for the third time”.

This is a mandate to be realized.

In line with the dictates of the National Development Plan; we are targeting to improve the Grade 12 results to **82%** in 2019, improve participation and the quality of Mathematics and Physical Sciences passes in Grade 10 to 12.

The Department has implemented a host of intervention programmes towards this realization.

This includes the winter school programme that took place in June, the Radio Lessons we launched this week which will continue until the end of the academic year and the spring classes in September. Further to this, we will be conducting support visits to schools and motivation sessions as part of our quest to improve results qualitatively.

We will also accelerate our efforts towards the utilization of ICT-resources in teaching and learning to improve learner performance. We will venture into partnership with the private sector, government departments and other institutions that can support schools and learners offering Agricultural Subjects, Computer Applications Technology, Information Technology and Technical Subjects.

The Department has set aside **R 20 million** to support and improve the results of Grade 12 Class of 2019.

Madam Speaker, the Department will introduce and re-organize some schools into focus schools in line with the economic niche of the Province.

These schools will offer subject streams which are crucial to the growth and development of the provincial economy and broadening the skills and capabilities of our province.

These subjects will include Technical Mathematics, Technical Sciences, Maritime Sciences, Aviation Studies, Mining Sciences as well as Aquaponics.

The Department will this year commence with the identification of at least 1 school per circuit to be converted into a Technical Secondary School.

We are going to supply additional resources to improve and maintain the current **36** technical secondary schools.

We will consult School Governing Bodies and also lobby business to support this course.

Madam Speaker, there are **1 222** primary schools, which will be used as a vehicle to stimulate interest in maths and science from foundation and intermediate phase and improve the performance of our learners in Grades **3, 6** and **9**.

Four hundred and ninety two of these schools have already been designated as MSTA feeder schools and provided with e-resources. Teachers in these schools will be trained on the utilization of these resources.

The Department has provided 16 primary schools with Mathematics Laboratories and **an amount of R 10 million has been set aside to provide 10 more.**

Early grade reading remains an important area of our work in strengthening our primary school reading programme. We will train teachers on the teaching of reading, provide Readers toolkit, establish reading clubs in our schools and mobilise communities to support reading promotion. In this regard **R 10 million** has been set aside to procure **Foundation Phase Readers support material.**

The Department will further coordinate Grade **1-3** assessments so as to track learners in this critical area.

Radio Lessons

MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Radio Lessons

MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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MPUMALANGA
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



LET'S GROW SOUTH AFRICA TOGETHER

TEACHER EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Madam Speaker, for anyone to lead a revolution it requires a formidable cohort of grounded revolutionaries.

We are going to work collaboratively with all teacher formations to make the teaching environment to be safe, productive, to equip our teachers with the requisite skills and to provide for their day to day needs. This is a task we dare not fail.

Research has proven that when our teachers are motivated, appreciated and recognised they in turn produce excellent results.

We are therefore making a commitment to closely monitor all programmes aimed towards the development and capacitation of our teachers, this we will do by developing a register of teacher training needs and programmes to ensure that all deserving teachers benefit from these capacity building programmes.

The Department has set aside **R84 million** to facilitate teacher development programmes in this financial year.

DEVELOP A MASTER SKILLS PLAN LINKED TO INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Madam Speaker, the Fourth Industrial Revolution requires us to do things in a different way; it requires a new set of skills. As a result, the Department will this year review the Mpumalanga Human Resources Development Strategy and engage with key role players to develop a Provincial Master Skills Plan.

As we were crisscrossing the province, we also went to Nederland Park Secondary School in Msukaligwa Local Municipality, upon our arrival, we were greeted by a Grade 12 learner, **Nqobile Qwabe** who assured us that she is going to pass with distinctions. She further indicated that she intends to be a teacher.

That fascinated us very much; we promised her and all other learners who wish to be teachers that the Mpumalanga Government will support them all the way.

Nqobile Qwabe has graced this occasion and we request the house to appreciate her as we promise her and all other deserving learners that we have their interest at heart.

The Honourable Premier has already indicated that in September this year, we shall be sending an additional 85 students to Russia to pursue critical fields of study such as Medicine, Civil Engineering, Veterinary Science, Aviation/Aeronautical studies and Information Technology. Out of **85** students, **35** will be co-funded with MerSETA (*Mechanical, Engineering Related Sector Education and Training Authority*). This will add to the **282** students already studying in Russia. Amongst us are some students from Russia, may I ask them to rise and bow to the Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to all institutions that support our students with financial assistance to pursue different fields of study. **Siyathokoza Kwamambala**

We are calling on all Grade 12 learners and out of school youth to apply for the Ephraim Mogale Bursary Scheme, Funza Lushaka, and any other bursary opportunities. The application window is now open and closes on the 30th of September 2019. We also want to urge our learners not to miss the opportunity to apply to Higher Education Institutions and TVET Colleges.

The Department has set aside **R 210 million** to maintain **2 203** current bursary holders and to recruit a new cohort of **500**.



IMPROVE SAFETY AND SECURITY IN SCHOOLS

Madam Speaker, the safety of our teachers and learners in schools remains paramount and gives us sleepless nights.

Violence and other forms of social ills must not find space in any of our schools and to achieve this we are going to work tirelessly with all our communities, sister departments, non-governmental institutions and labour formations to free our schools from this challenge.

Those who harbour intentions to compromise safety of our schools are fore warned. We will find them and take them where they belong – behind bars.

We need to urgently work with school governing bodies and other stakeholders to ensure that each school has a functional safety committee. We will provide 200 schools with drug testing devices and metal detectors to enable schools to conduct random search and seizure.

We will ensure that all our schools have security fences and conduct social crime prevention programmes that focus on substance abuse, bullying and prevention of sexual offences, amongst others.

The Department will co-ordinate school debates on these, undertake planned visits to Correctional Services institutions and work with sister Departments and the community at large to make our schools safe havens.

Furthermore it is also important that teachers and learners are given an opportunity to realise how engaging in these horrendous acts may affect their future and careers.

The Department will convene a School Safety Indaba on the 29th of July 2019.

LIFE SKILLS, HIV AND AIDS

Madam Speaker, the course to support South Africa's HIV Prevention Strategy by increasing Sexual and Reproductive Health knowledge, skills and appropriate decision making amongst learners and educators remains a top priority.

We will train teachers to implement Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) and TB programmes for learners to be able to protect themselves from HIV and TB including alcohol and drug use.

The Department will also capacitate **1 140** teachers on care and support for teaching and learning focusing on the safety of learners and reducing barriers to learning. The Department has already appointed **180** Learner Support Agents to support learners in areas with high prevalence of TB, HIV and Drug Abuse.

To implement this programme, the Department has set aside **R 22 million**.

MASS PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

Madam Speaker, extramural activities play a cognitive role in a child's developmental process, teaches children valuable lessons and instil determination, hard work, resilience, communication and team work.

The Department together with the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation will develop a programme to increase participation and keep learners engaged in sport and cultural activities so that at the end talents are unearthed, nurtured and exposed accordingly. We have set aside an amount of **R 20 million** for this course.

Our schools were representing the province in the winter games on 20 June to 05 July 2019 in KwaZulu Natal and we are happy to indicate that the team raised the Mpumalanga flag by obtaining gold medals in Volleyball under 17 Girls, Hockey under 14 Girls and football under 19 Girls.

We congratulate the team.

We further wish to use this opportunity to congratulate all schools that represented the province at the occasion of the ABC Motsepe South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod National Championship from **24 to 28** June in the Gauteng Province. Six Schools obtained position one, four obtained position two and one obtained position three.

We have in our midst **Mbali Mashiane** from Silamba Secondary School and her conductor who obtained position One in the Mezzo Soprano Solo as well as **Mr RS More** and **Mr NV Mathibela** who are conductors of the Ndlela Secondary School choir which won position one in the mixed Choirs category as well as the conductor from Fairview Primary School who won position one in the Sextet and Chamber and the conductor of Masinakane Primary School Choir which obtained position One in the intermediate Phase African piece.

We congratulate Platorand Special School for winning the 2019 National Choral Music Achievement Award at the same occasion. The principal and conductor have graced this occasion.

We request that they all stand up so that the house may congratulate them. Siyabonga Kakhulu.

Madam Speaker, we have noted that there are a number of young conductors of school choirs who are not professional teachers. The Department will compile a list of these young men and women so that we can offer them support to be trained as professional teachers.

NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME

Madam Speaker, we wish to ensure that the primary intention of the National School Nutrition Programme is well understood by all and sundry so that there must be no day where the delivery of this programme is compromised in any corner of our province.

Anything that presents itself as an impediment towards the delivery of this programme must be resisted with the might of all our forces. Principals and members of the school governing bodies

must work with the Department to ensure that the nutrition programme benefits deserving learners at all times as prescribed in the policy.

Any service provider who fails to deliver must be dealt with in accordance to the framework that governs this programme.

Currently there are **908 424** learners in Quintiles 1 – 3 primary and secondary schools who must benefit from this programme on every school day without fail.

We will also ensure that the **5 179** food handlers are properly trained and contracted. These are men and women who must be treated with respect at all times and they also need to be compensated on time in all instances.

In line with the pronouncement by the Honourable Premier, that the Government Nutrition Programme function is transferred to DARDLEA, we commit to work with DARDLEA to ensure effective transition and reliable delivery of this service. We are of the view that no child should learn on an empty stomach.

The Department has set aside **R 688 million** towards achieving the objectives of the National School Nutrition Programme.



education

DEPARTMENT: EDUCATION
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



“We would like to impress on schools and communities through the Rhandza Xikolo XA Wena (Love Your School) Programme to take pride in their schools and keep them beautiful and safe.

We must work together collaboratively to stop the vandalism of our schools.”

INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

Madam Speaker, our view is that the closer a school is to a child's home, the more likely it is to improve access, reduce absenteeism, improve completion rates and learning outcomes.

For this reason, the Department has set aside **R 935 million** and will be working together with the Department of Public Works Roads and Transport towards the delivery of education infrastructure. These will include the following key programmes:

- Completion of Thaba Chweu Boarding School.
- Monitoring the construction of the Mkhondo Boarding School.
- Addressing maintenance challenges in schools including storm damages.
- New and replacement schools towards addressing overcrowding and unsafe structures.
- Eradication of basic services infrastructure backlogs.

We are committed to restoring the dignity of our learners and teachers and in this regard we will eradicate all pit latrines in our schools.

Madam Speaker, in response to the current challenge of inadequate education facilities in the fast growing towns, the Department is putting up plans in the current financial year to prioritise infrastructure in the following fast growing towns:

In Mbombela, the Department will commence with the planning and design for a primary and secondary school to be constructed in the 2020/21 and the 2021/22 financial years respectively.

To further alleviate the admission pressures in schools within the city, the Department will in consultation with the School Governing Bodies provide additional classrooms in Laerskool Laeveld, Nelspruit Primary and Bergland Primary.

At Emalahleni, the Department will complete the construction of Mokgalithwa Primary school in September 2019 and is securing a site in the Siyanqoba area for a primary school.

In Steve Tshwete, the Department is constructing Aerorand Primary envisaged to be completed in December 2019 and a site has been acquired for the construction of a primary school in Rockdale extension 24. The construction of a primary school for New Doornkop is underway.

For Secunda, the Department has commenced with the planning and design for a new school to alleviate pressure at Shapeve Primary School. Further to this we will commence with the planning and design for the new Osizweni Primary and Secondary Schools.

In addition the construction of a replacement primary school in Trichardfontein, Secunda town is earmarked for the 2020/21 financial year.

In Ermelo, the Department has commenced with the planning and design of a new school, Lethukukhanya, and is earmarked for construction in the 2020/21 financial year.

In Lydenburg, the Department will in the current financial year commence with the planning and design for Longtom Secondary School. A site has already been acquired to accommodate both a primary and a secondary.

A site has been acquired in Mbombela for the School of the Deaf and the Blind. The Department has commenced with the planning and design and provision of bulk services. This will be a 3-Year Project and construction will commence in the 2020/21 financial year.

We will engage the school governing bodies to develop a model to ensure that the maintenance allocation to schools is used for the intended purpose.

We would like to impress on schools and communities through the **Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena** (Love Your School) Programme to take pride in their schools and keep them beautiful and safe at all times. We must work together collaboratively to stop the vandalism of our schools.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND EDUCATION SUPPORT

Madam Speaker, Early identification of barriers to learning and development through the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Strategy will still be the cornerstone of our actions going forward.

We will develop support structures to coordinate preventative measures and intervention strategies to ensure that all learners perform to their maximum potential.

All learners across all Grades, who experience barriers to learning and development, will be granted the required support.

Teachers will be capacitated on cooperative learning as a teaching strategy, curriculum differentiation and adaptation; reading, writing and numeracy programmes; alternative and augmentative communication; training on visual and hearing impairment; Braille; South African Sign Language and deaf culture.

Psycho-social programmes will be implemented to enhance maximum performance of learners



YEARS OF FREEDOM

PUBLIC SPECIAL SCHOOL EDUCATION

During the State of the Nation Address, the President echoed the following sentiments that we equally share.

“If we are to successfully address the challenge of poverty across society, we need to provide skills and create economic opportunities for persons with disabilities”.

To address this concern, the Department will provide the necessary support, resources and equipment to the identified 51 stimulation centres and 12 specials schools.

We will also improve access to quality basic education for children with disabilities to ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate active participation in the community.

Further to this the Department will train teachers, outreach teams and caregivers and conduct awareness campaigns on programmes for Learners with Severe and Profound Intellectual Disabilities to parents, communities and other stakeholders. The Department has set aside an amount of **R361 million** towards the implementation of special educational needs programme.



MPUMALANGA REGIONAL TRAINING TRUST

Madam Speaker, through the Mpumalanga Regional and Training Trust, we will continue to empower out of school youth, industry workers and government employees in disadvantaged communities, in order for them to participate in the broader economic sphere of the province.

We have commenced in developing a roll-out plan for fast-tracking the implementation of the Agriculture and Tractor Mechanics Programme.

We are going to intensify the implementation of a new three year artisan development programme that will be able to support and prepare qualifying learners to successfully complete the relevant trade tests.

We will do everything in our power to ensure that the Skills Hub in Emalahleni is operationalized in this administration.

Further to this, the Department will explore mechanisms to expand the reach and access to MRTT programmes across all our districts. MRTT will review its corporate strategy to align itself to the dictates of the 4th Industrial Revolution and the Skills Master Plan of the Province.

The Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust has been allocated **R 224 million** to fast-track all its programmes.

Madam Speaker, to achieve all of the above, the Department has set aside a total budget amounting to **21 Billion, 826 Million, 325 Thousand Rands**. I humbly request this august House to approve this allocation for us to move towards the Mpumalanga we envisage.

CONCLUSION

Madam Speaker, we are more than confident that only our actions, courage and foresight will usher us to the Mpumalanga we envisage.

I therefore wish to assure this August House, the Hon. Premier and Citizens of the Place of the Rising Sun that the prospects of this province are in our safe hands, we will not linger, for the journey ahead is still long.

Education remains a critical societal matter and central to the development agenda of our country. It is our responsibility as a collective to bring hope to our citizens and it is of utmost importance that we deliver on our promise.

We wish to encourage the people of Mpumalanga to embrace the education of their children, in the words of Fidel Castro when he said:

“You’ll see everyone in our country with a book under their arm because we all want to study, learn, and correctly interpret the world in which we live. We never tell anyone to believe; we tell everyone to think, study and decide”.

Together let us inspire the sons and daughters of the rising sun, to dream big, stand on mountain tops, fly like eagles and be more than what they can be.

Let us make education fashionable.

I would like to thank the **Honourable Premier Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane** for entrusting me with this patriotic responsibility, the African National Congress and the Alliance Partners for the mandate given to us for the 6th Administration. A Special thanks goes to the South African Communist Party for the support that is given to me as I discharge this mandate.

To the members of the Portfolio Committee, especially the Chairperson for her stewardship and commitment to the task at hand.

I also want to thank the **Acting HOD, Mr Jabulani Nkosi** and team education for the support given to me since my arrival in the department.

Dr Nelson Mandela once said *“I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended”*.

Together we shall reach the mountain top and our hearts will be fulfilled as we count the lives that we would have changed and given the opportunity to unleash their potential. Let's grow the Mpumalanga Province we want together.

Ngiyabonga



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