



education
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Mr Bonakele Majuba
MEC for Education

2023/24 Policy and Budget Speech

08 June 2023
Provincial Legislature

Leave No One Behind
#Babize Bonke#Rhandza XiKolo Xa Wena Campaign



2023/24 Policy and Budget Speech to be delivered by the MEC for Education, Mr. Bonakele Majuba on 08 June 2023 at the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature in Mbombela

Honourable Speaker, **Ms. Makhosazane Masilela**

Honourable Deputy Speaker, **Ms Jennette Thabethe- Mofokeng**

Honourable Premier, **Mrs Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane**

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Education, Sports and Recreation, **Mr Gillion Mashego**

Hon. Members of the Provincial Legislature

Members of the Executive Council

Chairperson of the Departmental Risk Management Committee, **Ms Jane Masite**

Distinguished Guests

Representatives from the Media

Members of the Community in the gallery and a special greeting to all our citizens who are listening from various radio stations and social media platforms.

Sanibonani,

Madame Speaker, the transformation of our education system to meet the demands of the 21st century in line with the dispensation of free quality education, transfer of skills, knowledge and values remain paramount, our main pre-occupation and focal point.

We really are moving with the necessary impetus that puts our education delivery on a comparative success pedestal and comparable with the best in the world.

According to UNESCO, South Africa is rated the 4th best country in Africa in educational development with **58.45** percentage points and with **94%** literacy rate after the Seychelles, Tunisia and Mauritius.

This confirmation is informed largely by the investment that is being made by the current democratic dispensation, which shares a view, that education is the best and so far the only vehicle at our disposal to fight poverty, marginalisation and inequality.

The legendary writer, **Ayi Kwe Amah** once said:

“Alone, I am nothing, I have nothing. We have power, but we will never see it work, unless we come together to make it work.”

The Department cannot achieve maximum scores as a stand-alone.

We, in our nature, always rely on collectivity and partnership to execute programmes and projects to improve the delivery of learning and teaching in our communities.

We therefore like to extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who rallied side by side with the Department for the progress we have achieved thus far.

We continue to sound a call to all and sundry to continue to support all efforts of improving the delivery of learning and teaching in the Province.

It is for that reason that the Department has intensified all endeavours to make education a societal phenomenon through **the Rhandza XiKolo Xa Wena Campaign**.

Through this campaign the Department intends to mobilize stakeholders to play a meaningful role to protect schools, make them habitable for learning and teaching and free them from any form of social ills.

We are truly leaving no one behind in our quest to make education more enterprising and beneficial to all learners within the Place of the Rising Sun.



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EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Madame Speaker, from the 1st April 2022, we assumed an added responsibility of the Early Childhood Development education program.

This was a great achievement in keeping to the proclamation that was made by the President of the Republic of South Africa, **Mr Cyril Ramaphosa**.

We are putting this challenge to everyone who share our view that " Early Childhood Development" is investing in a generation that would lead with knowledge.

To this end, we have been criss- crossing the Province visiting Early Childhood Development Centres to take stock of the gains that are being recorded, challenges and to address the impediments.

I must say that the passion and visionary leadership displayed by the Early Childhood Development Centre Managers and their respective staff is really fascinating and encouraging.

In the gallery, there is **Mrs Cecilia Nkosi** from Mgwenya Circuit in Mbombela. She is a Centre Manager of Sikhulile Early Childhood Development Centre who prides herself with almost **30 years** at the helm of that centre, which has produced a number of high profile individuals which includes **Dr Thulani Ngwenya** who is the current Chief Medical Officer of our national football team Bafana Bafana. **I request that this august house salutes her.**

It is for this reason that the Department is prioritising and accelerating the training of Early Childhood Development Practitioners in NQF Level four and **261** ECD practitioners in NQF level 6.

The Department is further increasing the number of fully registered Early Childhood Development Centres to **1463** and will refurbish **29** ECD centres, construct 1 new ECD centre and complete the construction of **36** ECD (Grade R) specialized classrooms in this financial year.

As I was engaging with some ECD Centre managers, we agreed that the Department needs to be more efficient in processing subsidies to the centres and in communicating with them.

To support the Early Childhood Development programmes and to benefit children within this sector, for this financial year, the Department has budgeted a sum of **R 885 million**.

READ FOR MEANING

Madame Speaker, not only are we concerned that research outcomes suggest that the majority of our 10-year olds (i.e. grade 4 learners) are unable to read for meaning, but we are doing something about it.

To address this, the Department is implementing a Baseline Assessment of Learners reading levels in **880 primary schools**.

75% of Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase teachers will in this financial year be trained on Primary Schools Reading Improvement Project (PSRIP) and English First Additional Language programme .

23 Subject Advisors, School Departmental Heads and foundation phase teachers in **320** primary schools will be trained on Early Grade Reading.

These efforts will ensure that **84%** of learners in grade three within the Province achieve the required level of **50%** and above in the national assessment in literacy and numeracy.

To strengthen **the read for understanding**, the Department will implement **the Read to Lead Campaign** in **75%** of the primary schools and will mobilize parents to support reading at home.

Our target is to enable the majority of **Grade 4 learners** to read with understanding through building the capacity of Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase Subject Advisors, Departmental Heads and coaches on early identification of barriers to reading in English First Additional Language and African Languages using face to face and virtual modalities.

Learners will also be supported through reading camps and school competition programmes while **75 %** of schools will have access to lesson plans in all African languages in print and digital format.

Professional teacher development will also be provided for teaching reading while provision of Foundation Phase Readers to all primary schools will be dispensed.

A total of **1330** Reading Champions are being deployed to schools to promote and support the reading agenda.

The Department together with the National Education Collaboration Trust will launch the MEC Reading Club in Lekwa Local Municipality on **15 June 2023**. This intends to send a clarion call for all citizens of Mpumalanga to embrace reading.

The Department has allocated **R 10 million** towards the realization of the above mentioned goal.

The Department will further ensure that there is a textbook for every learner in all our schools. We do this acknowledging the fact that the Department has an obligation in this regard.

Equally, the Department will ensure a suitable pack for the 2024 Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) and that it will be distributed to schools by the end of November 2023.

To achieve this, the Department has set aside **R310 million**.



IMPROVE LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Madame Speaker, the greatest visible indicator for self-sustaining and competent schools is nothing else but improved learner performance.

The Department managed to overcome the devastating effects of COVID -19 by improving the 2022 examination results both qualitatively and quantitatively and in almost all grades.

As we improve the results, we intend to reduce the number of schools which will perform below 70% pass rate.

To achieve this, the Department will conduct mandatory winter classes from **26 June to 08 July 2023** and spring classes in **September 2023**. This intervention is for schools that performed below the provincial performance threshold and further conduct intense revision lessons for all FET subjects.

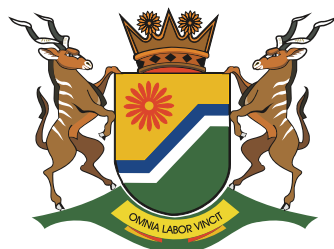
By doing so, the Department works to improve the Grade 12 results from the **76,8 %** pass rate obtained in 2022 to more than **83%** this year.

Equally, the Department will improve the number of learners who pass Mathematics, Physical Science and Technical Subjects as well as learners who will meet the requirements to further their studies in Institutions of Higher Learning.

We say this inspired by the achievement of the 2022 overall best learner **Bathobile Nkambule** from Highveld Secondary School who against all odds managed to be the overall best in the Province and overall best in the country within the category of quintile one schools. **Her mother has graced this occasion and we request the house to salute her.**

The Department provides support to learners through extra academic tuition, mentoring, blended learning support through the use of ICT as well as the writing of Provincial Common Assessments in Mathematics and Languages. This will assist in preparing learners and setting them up for better performance.

To enable this attainment, the Department has allocated **R 115 million** for this financial year.



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DIGITAL SCHOOL CONNECTIVITY

Madame Speaker, in bridging the digital divide while also delivering on the promise of rolling out the 4th Industrial Revolution mandate, the Hon. **Premier, Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane** led from the front by conceptualising and rolling out the Ubuhlebuzile e-Learning Project.

The Ubuhlebuzile e-Learning Project coincided with the distribution of **63 000** tablets for grade 12 learners and **6700** laptops for teachers.

These tablets are loaded with learner support material such as textbooks, previous question papers and connectivity data to enable easy communication between learners and teachers.

Andile Thwala, the 2022 President of the Representative Council of Learners at Ubuhlebuzile Secondary School in Mkhondo was the first grade 12 learner to receive a tablet last year. He managed to obtain five distinctions through that support and is now studying for his Bachelor of Administration Management at the University of Pretoria.

The Department has already distributed about **45 000** tablets to the Class of 2023.

There are **10 000** tablets which were badly damaged last year and are being fixed to be distributed to those learners who are yet to receive them. We anticipate that the distribution will be complete before the end of **June 2023**.

We have learnt that it will be imperative going forward that these tablets are distributed to all learners before the end of February each year to enable learners to take advantage of their resourcefulness.

This year, the Department is extending Ubuhlebuzile e-learning programme by piloting the full scale rollout of Ubuhlebuzile e-learning project in eight schools (08) schools, two from each District. All learners from these eight schools from grades 8 to 12 will receive tablets which are equally loaded with education material.

These tablets are part of the **7 500** donated to the Department by Statistics South Africa. We are truly grateful for the support which we received from Stats SA.

It is the view of the Department that having such technological gadgets at the hands of our learners does not only uplift their scholastic outcomes but prepare them for the digital world in tertiary institutions and beyond.

These tablets are found to be relevant for this time as mobile tools of teaching and learning that allows learners to be self-paced and learning at their own time, space and comfort.

The Department will continue with the connectivity of schools and maintenance of existing infrastructure to introduce Digital Skills curriculum from Grades R to 6 as well as Coding and Robotics curriculum within the subject Technology in Grades 7 to 9.

300 teachers from pilot schools are being trained on robotics and coding and technology driven learning and teaching strategy in line with the 4IR.

The Department provided resources for the coding and robotics pilot project to **110** secondary schools.

In partnership with the Department of Communication and Digital Technologies, the Department will connect **150** schools as part of the digital connectivity of schools.

The Department is also procuring **1700 laptops** for Principals and Circuit Managers with **20 gigabyte of monthly data** as part of Ubuhlebuzile e-learning.

In the 2023/24 financial year, **R150 million** is being used to implement the Provincial Ubuhlebuzile e-learning roll out and support.



TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Madame Speaker, the battalion of the **33 000** teachers remains the fundamental pillar for education delivery in the Province.

Teachers are the cornerstone for the existence of the Department for without them as well as their commitment and sacrifice learning and teaching will be non-existent.

The Department is very much grateful for the outstanding work done by teachers and for that we salute them.

We further acknowledge and salute **Mr. Mandla Delton Dhlamini** from Bohlabela District who was confirmed as the overall best teacher in the country in the category, **Excellence in Technology Enhanced Teaching and Learning** at the occasion of the National Teaching Awards which were hosted by the Minister for Basic Education last year.

He has graced this occasion and I humbly request that we recognize him for flying the flag of the Province high.

To ensure that teachers within the province remain on the success pedestal, the Department continues to provide them with ongoing support and training focusing on pedagogical practice in the classroom and theories of learning, mentoring, blended learning support through the use of ICT and provide schools with supplementary material.

For this programme, the Department has budgeted **R10 million**.



NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME AND OTHER PRO POOR POLICIES

Madame Speaker, the implementation of the social security programmes such as the National School Nutrition Programme is reaching out to **933 255** learners in **1 550** schools for **197** feeding days within the Province.

Currently, the contracts with service providers is on a month to month basis however the process to appoint new service providers is at an advanced stage.

These pro-poor programmes seek to foster redress of the past and present inequalities with an intent to keep learners in school while cushioning them from negative forces that may tempt or lead to them dropping out.

To this effect, the Department is piloting the **introduction of Breakfast** with Chicken livers as a newly introduced source of protein in all schools within five circuits.

These programmes also include the provision of scholar transport which currently benefits **69 725** learners in the Province.

The Department has allocated **R 886 million** for this programme.

Madame Speaker, we truly appreciate the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative as another progressive initiative and well thought measure to impact positively in addressing youth unemployment and providing relief in some and change to many households in the Province.

We are grateful to President Cyril Ramaphosa for initiating this great initiative that has seen **22 000** young men and women supporting schools within the province while getting a stipend to put food on the table.

This initiative helps to instil a sense of pride to the families and giving them some honour, by earning their money while effecting change in society as part of the education staff that teaches our children.



EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Madame Speaker, the delivery of quality learning and teaching rests on the quality provision, conducive and safe classroom environment.

With your support, we have scored some notable successes which inter alia include the official handing over of completed schools, eradicating pit toilets, providing mobile classrooms as a relief in some cases and renovating a number of our schools.

The Department has completed **969 projects** in the last five years.

In the year under review, there were **264** school infrastructure projects that were underway and of those **127** were completed while the rest are still under construction.

Last year, the Department had an allocation of an adjusted budget of **R874 million** for infrastructure improvement.

Of this budget **R896 million** was spent and the Department incurred accruals to the value of **R81 million**. This means that the programme overspent by **12%** (**R103 million**) which had to be sourced from equitable share funding.

Some of the school infrastructure projects which reach practical completion in this financial year include, **Msholozhi Primary School** – Ehlanzeni District; **Lingitjudu Primary School** – Nkangala District ; **Yinhle Lenfto Primary School** – Ehlanzeni District ; **Mkhondo Boarding School** – Gert Sibande District ; **Mpisi Jameyana Primary School** – Bohlabela District and **New Ermelo Primary School** – Gert Sibande District .

The following schools are in the final stages of the planning and design phase for the 2023/24 financial year, **Long Tom Secondary School** – Ehlanzeni District; **Rockdale Extension 24** – Nkangala District and **School for the Deaf and Blind** – Nkangala District

The Department will continue to provide improvements to school infrastructural facilities.

These include the provision of water, electricity, sanitation and additional classrooms in areas of need as guided by our implementation plan for 2023/24.

The security of schools has taken major priority in our school infrastructure development agenda.

The Department has radically reduced the number of schools which were solely relying on pit toilets.

Currently, there are only four such schools and I can confirm that there is construction earmarked for improving sanitation in those schools this year. In essence, by the end of this financial year, there will be no school that is still using pit toilets in the Province.

26 schools are targeted to benefit from secure **fencing programme**.

In this 2023/24 financial year, an amount of **R1.2 billion** will be spent on school infrastructure projects.

Madame Speaker, our long lasting partnership with the private sector is paying dividends and is a lasting legacy for our communities.

The Mpumalanga Education Development Trust is leading the charge in the development of infrastructure to bolster the construction of new school projects and renovations of schools as has been in the past years.

We are grateful as a Department to our social partners who continue to invest in education and thus providing hope, future prospects and a bright future for our children and citizenry.

*In our private public partnership with Barberton mines, **the construction of phase 2 of Kaapvallei Primary School** to the value of **R24 million** is complete.*

Bonginhlanhla Primary School in Kriel at Emalahleni Local Municipality has three phases of upgrading the school through the collaboration with Exarro, Seriti and Eskom completed .

The construction of additional **12** classrooms at **Clewer Primary School** in collaboration with Trans Alloys at Emalahleni Local Municipality is at an initiation stage

*The **Glencoe and Msimbithi Mine** partnership is leading the construction and relocation of **Morelig Combined School** to a new site in Wonderfontein at Emakhazeni Local Municipality. This is at an advanced stage to the value of **R39 million**.*

Thungela Goedehoop Mine has partnered with the Department in the provision of mobile boardroom, staffroom and kitchen at **KwaZamokuhle Secondary School**, Nkangala District at a cost of **R800 thousand**.

These partnerships are commendable as they add impetus in our quest to improve school infrastructure conditions for the delivery of learning and teaching environment.



SKILLS FOR A CHANGING WORLD

Madame Speaker, the world is changing so fast in terms of skills required and professions on offer.

The approach of skilling our youth as well as educating them should be in line with modern developments and trends. The need for digitization and essential skills need drives the nature and scale of skills offering.

The approach is to equip the youth to be agile, resilient, and self-reliant learners who can effectively engage diverse situations and navigate change and uncertainty.

In this regard, the implementation of the Provincial Skills Development Strategy is essential to respond to the economic needs of the province.

In line with the Provincial Skills Development Strategy, the Department will maintain its support to **1781** bursars at local Universities, **600** learner-ships and **100** interns.

The Department will continue to recruit the youth for enrolment in Higher Education Institutions studying for scarce and critical skills.

In technical skills, the recruitment and registration of learner apprenticeship through the artisan development programme carries on as the Department forms partnership with training authorities and industry for placement of learners.

580 out of school youth will be trained on skills development programmes, **60** candidates to be registered for RPL and trade testing and **50** students to be trained on SAQA registered training for culinary and hospitality studies.

200 students to be trained on technical learnership and apprenticeships towards 21st Century Artisan Development, **200** students to receive accredited or customized institutional training and **70** students coached and mentored in the workplace.

The Department has made notable strides in supporting the **209** students who are pursuing academic studies in Russia, as funded by the Provincial Government.

To date, the Department has successfully engaged all universities in Russia to submit invoices directly to the department. There is positive progress in this regard.

Monthly stipends for all the deserving students are processed with great success directly into student's bank accounts by the Department. Once off, payments have been made directly to the students to secure their medical health insurance in Russia.

In addition to the allocated stipends, the Department provides an amount directly to the student's bank accounts to enable them to directly pay for their accommodation.

Notwithstanding this achievement, the Department is exploring means to improve the process of paying monthly stipends to achieve a predictable and reliable system.

The Department is in constant engagement with the Department of Higher Education and Training to create favorable conditions to accommodate some of the students in South African Universities in the event that developments necessitates for relocation.

There are **27** students who requested extensions of their contracts by the Department.

These are students who for one or two valid reasons could not conclude their courses within the stipulated period. Of these, **25** students were successfully granted extensions and only two did not succeed due to poor academic performance.

The Department appreciates the support received from the Office of the Premier, South African Embassy in Russia, the Universities, the Department of Higher Education and Training and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation.

As a measure of accountability and consequence management, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) has been requested to conduct a forensic investigation on this matter to ensure that those who unduly benefited, are identified and held accountable in keeping with the laws of this country. The investigations are underway.

99 students will graduate in July 2023 from various Russian universities in various fields. In 2021, there were **41** students who graduated in Civil Engineering and they have been handed to the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport for possible placement opportunities and professional registration.

17 of these graduates have been placed on the internship program and are awaiting the next intake as per PWR&T report.

51 Medical Students graduated and these students have been paid to register on ECFMG in April 2023.

The Department of Health's Advisory Committee is in a process of working on a programme with Sefako Makgatho University.

The programme will orientate the graduates to the South African Medical Health Environment and further prepare them for the board exams as a required for all persons graduating in foreign universities.

34 VET graduates have been placed in various Vet clinics on an internship programme, and these have opted to write board exams in 2024 when they are fully prepared.

The Department is fully committed to ensure the smooth running of this Programme and is grateful for the support received from the South African Embassy in Russia, the Department of Higher Education and Training and the respective Universities in Russia.

R 50 million is budgeted for this programme.



ESTABLISHMENT OF FOCUS SCHOOLS

The Department has extended its career pathing opportunities for learners by establishing focus schools as directed by the National Development Plan Vision for 2030 and the Action Plan 2024: *Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*.

Core to this function is the focus on artisan occupation and increasing the number of learners studying Mathematics and Science.

There are four **(04)** schools identified to introduce technical subjects this time around. The intention is to ensure that there is at least one Technical High School in each of the **71** Circuits in the Province.

The Department is conceptualising the establishment of a mining school within the Province. We will work with the mining sector towards this achievement. This is in line with the three stream model that the department will be instituting for our schools.

SCHOOL SAFETY, HEALTH AND SOCIAL COHESION

Madame Speaker, the Department resolved to engage school communities to be part of the solution to alleviate vandalism, theft, robberies, bullying and other social ills affecting our schools.

To fight the scourge of crime and social ills, the Department will capacitate **400** school safety committees on their roles and responsibilities in partnership with lead Departments such as the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison.

The Social Crime prevention programmes to be implemented include crime and drug awareness campaigns, prison visits, symposiums, debates and scholar patrols amongst others.

In partnership with the South African Police Services, the Department will lead crime prevention activities to identified schools in the province including the Adopt a Cop, Search and Seizure, Crime Awareness Campaigns, Junior Cop Programme, Linking of Schools, Implementation of the Integrated School Safety Plan in line with the school safety framework.

The Rhandza Xikolo Xa Wena Campaign is also part of our endeavour to create safe, habitable schools and communities that take ownership and protect schools.

Madame Speaker, in this regard **10** schools will benefit from the procurement, installation and maintenance of alarm systems. **200** schools will procure drug-testing devices and metal detectors to fight the scourge of drug abuse and the carrying of dangerous weapons into the school.

In addition, schools will be capacitated on school safety programmes and **300** schools are targeted for search and seizure in collaboration with the South African Police Services and the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison.

3 262 school safety committee members will be capacitated on positive discipline and management of bullying while **600** schools will benefit from the social crime prevention campaign programmes that focus on substance abuse, bullying, violence prevention, sexual offences and cyber-related matters.

To deter learners from falling in the pit of temptation of committing crime, anti-crime campaigns will be conducted in **1500** schools featuring school debates and prison visits.

The Department will guide and assist schools to conduct bi - annual evaluation and assess progress periodically as determined by the School Safety Committees and cluster structures.

CONCLUSION

Madame Speaker, as I conclude, I wish to extend my gratitude the Honourable Premier, **Mrs. Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane** for her insightful leadership and undivided support to the Department.

I am equally grateful to my political home, the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress for granting me the privilege to hold this important portfolio of Education.

I extend my sincere appreciation to my colleagues in the Executive Council and to members of the Portfolio Committee under the stewardship of **Chairperson, Gillion Mashego** for always ensuring that we account to the people of the Place of the Rising Sun.

I am grateful to the leadership of the Head of Education, **Mrs. Lucy Moyane** and all officials of the Mpumalanga Department of Education for their support and dedication to the task.

Let me also appreciate all the SGBs, QLTC, principals, School Management Teams and teachers who are the driving force for this education Department and for their love and dedication to the interests and prized future of our children.

I am also thankful to all our social partners in the corporate space and stakeholders such as NGOs, CBOs, municipalities, provincial departments, universities, traditional leaders and religious organizations for the great needed support provided in promoting education.

I would like to thank my wife and my family for their support throughout my career.

Madame Speaker, we dare not fail in this major task entrusted to us through the people's electoral mandate.

Governing over a diverse social fabric as in our case in South Africa, is no simple and easy a mandate, but together we possess the aggregated strength to overcome this task.

That's the reason we, in the progressive forces for change, advance the maxim of " **unity in diversity** " in approaching governance as a collective assignment.

Selflessness in our view means finding common ground in fostering a vision and balance in the quest for bringing hope to every citizen, black or white, rich or poor, rural and urban dwellers as well as the elderly and younger generations of the ***Place of the Rising Sun***.

Madame Speaker, Honourable Members, ladies and gentlemen please allow me to table the vote for the passing of the 2023/24 budget of **R24 billion 920 million** towards an improved delivery of quality learning and teaching in the Province.

I Thank you.



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