

BUDGET SPEECH, VOTE 3, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DELIVERED BY LIMPOPO MEC FOR EDUCATION MS. MAVHUNGU LERULE-RAMAKHANYA ON 13 AUGUST 2024 AT THE LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE, LEBOWAKGOMO PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

Honourable Speaker

Deputy Speaker

Honourable Premier

Honourable colleagues in the Executive Council

Members of the Provincial Legislature

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee

Chair of Chairs

Leadership of the African National Congress

Leaders of the Opposition Parties

Royal Leaders

Religious Leaders

Stakeholders in Education (SGB Associations and UNIONS)

LDoE Acting Head of Department and other Heads of Departments Present

Partners from the Education Sector

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ndi Matsheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela, Good Morning!!

Introduction

We come together here today, whereby the people of our province and diaspora have just commemorated the heroines of 1956, in the same vein today we should give recognition to all young and old women who continues to play a critical role in their various roles in our society.

Honorable members we again meeting here today whereby our learners and educators have just represented the people of our province on the national stage of school choir competitions.

I am thrilled to announce that our school choirs have made us proud in the recent competitions for which we obtained 6 positions as compared to last year with only 2 positions obtained by two schools.

The ABC Motsepe South African School Choral Eisteddfod (SASCE) national championships were held from the 7th-10th August 2024 in the Gauteng Province at Rhema Bible Church.

I want to announce that our learners and educators have made us proud as a province on the occasion of this Eisteddfod school choir championships.

Hon Speaker allow me to commend all the schools that participated in these competitions and took us to the national stage. I also want to convey my special congratulatory messages to the following schools which obtained variety of positions in different categories:

- Sepedi Primary School Position 1 in Folklore
- Rethabile Primary School Position 3 in Mixed Choirs
- Setotolwane Primary School Position 2 in Any Voice Combination
- Makgoka High School Position 3 in Tenor
- Tjetje Secondary School Position 1 in Folklore
- Modubatse Secondary School Position 3 in Septet

It is with my since gratitude to congratulate Team Education Limpopo for delivering us this overwhelming victory.

Reading with understanding

Honourable Speaker, in order to make reading enjoyable, we have created Reading Corners in all our primary schools in the Province. The Reading Corners are used as enrichment centres for learners who struggle to read with understanding. We also provided **45 431** Readers in English, Sepedi, Isizulu and IsiNdebele to primary schools. We have introduced digitisation (Reading Assistive Technologies) and e-Books to enhance reading capabilities to learners with reading problems.

2024 Mid year NSC Performance

Honourable Speaker, yesterday we had the privilege and honoured by the presence of our Premier on the occasion of a meet and greet session with all High School Principals, Circuit managers and District directors from across the length and breadth of Limpopo at the Ngoako Ramathlodi Sports Complex in Seshego. With the presentations made on learners' performance for both term 1 and term 2, the Premier can attest that we are moving in right direction for the 2024 academic year. We can confirm that we are no longer confined to "thinking outside the box but are kicking the box".

The school calendar year is at an advanced stage. I had an opportunity to interact with our district teams as well as the circuits so that we continue to interrogate our performance, and as I had indicated earlier on in the year, indeed there is light. Truly "no sunrise will find us where sunset has left us." The concerted effort by all our teachers, learners, parents and all progress loving people of our province will qualify the sentiments that "working together we can do more".

E- Learning

Honourable Speaker, we are invested in our quest towards a paperless strategy. This is observable in our aggressive roll-out of tablets for our grade 1 and 8 for the 2024 cohort of learners. For the 2024 budget, we must re-emphasise that we intend to procure tablets for the FET band especially for grades 10 and 11. We have witnessed the magnificent

developments of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and now into the Fifth Industrial Revolution which will require ardent commitment from us in ensuring that we ready our learners to compete with the best of the best of this world. The Mark Shuttleworth's as well as the Elon Musk's are not accidents of history but products of deliberate efforts that were imbedded in the systems of teaching they were privileged to enjoy. We remain ambitious in our requested **R300 million** for the e-learning strategy towards the procurement of tablets even though we will accept the **R100 million granted** as we hope for. The Hon Premier has announced the priorities for the province in the coming 5 years and the foundation of that will be the advanced technological pedagogical prowess built by the department.

Inclusive education

Honourable members, disability is not inability. With these words we want to implore on the continued support of our learners living with disabilities. For them to perform well we ought to continue providing them with resources that will aid them in their day-to-day activities towards an improved quality of life through learning. When we visited the various schools, we have seen how they gifted they are creating beautiful artefacts using their hands and minds. We must appreciate the passion and dedication of all our educators and administration in this space. The **R100 million** put aside in the intervention of this critical area will go a long way in paving an accessible environment for our learners and educators alike.

Accountability Sessions

Honourable speaker, as part of our ongoing efforts to bring stability to the system, we have accelerated our intervention in the schools that are underperforming as mandated by the South African School Act. This strategy has proven itself to be one of the most effective amongst the many that the Department employs towards improvement of the learning outcomes. I together with my team from the Head Office have started visiting our Districts to solidify the work we have began from the sixth administration. We have met with Waterberg District, Vhembe East, as well as Capricorn South. We are going to drive this program with the purpose of ensuring that we close all the gaps before our

learners commence with their trial examinations on the 19th August 2024 . The Department will continue to support all schools so that we can sustain the gains made in 2023 and the further sustenance of what we have attained in our Mid-term. **Honourable Speaker and distinguished guests**, The Limpopo Department of Education will continue to enhance the implementation of amongst others a Rapid Intervention plan.

Capacity Building of SMTs in underperforming schools.

Honourable Speaker, over the years we have invested in capacitating staff at all levels for better results. It is through capacity that we can realize our mandate of delivering quality education. We will continue to pay special attention to the Initial Teacher Education and graduate development programme for the unemployed youth who require work integrated learning to complete their studies.

Looking forward, in the 2024/25 Financial year, the **R23 million** will continue servicing the current cohort of **332** interns while beginning the processes of recruiting a new cohort for 2025/26 – 2026/2027 financial years; **R13,179 million** for training of Administrative support staff at all levels; **R42,9 million** appropriated for the training of the different categories of Educators, **R21,4 million** has been set aside for the Initial Teacher Education including investing in the Early Childhood Development sector and our ECD Practitioners.

Educator Post Basket and School – Based Promotion

Posts:

Honourable Speaker, the department has, despite the challenging and unfavourable economic conditions, retained the educator post basket of **51 752** posts for the past eight school/academic years. As per the commitment made to strengthen school management teams, it is worth noting that the Limpopo Provincial Treasury had approved the filling of **2 550** promotion posts in schools, **506** Principals, **400** Deputy Principals and **1 644** Departmental Heads.

It is my pleasure to announce to the house that as the department we have advertised these very important posts, what is most pleasing is that some of them are already at an advanced stage for appointment. As the Hon Premier continues to say, “Dilo Di Chenchitse” and I further wish to add that “Dithapelo Tsa Rona Di Lendile”. The high vacancy rate will be reduced and strengthening of the management of schools will be achieved sooner rather than later.

Honourable Speaker, the Department continues to build capability within the Infrastructure and Physical Resources unit by recruiting key professionals to the unit. The recruitment drive will continue in the 2024/25 financial year with the objective of reducing the high vacancy rate and countering the high turn-over rate in the area. We have recently advertised these posts which will further strengthen our capacity in ensuring that services are delivered effectively, economically and with the efficiency required.

Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign - Stakeholder Management

The province will be hosting the QLTC Inter-Provincial Meeting in the first week of September. This is a body that needs all our stakeholder to participate in so that we are able to create conducive environments for teaching and learning. We will only be able to make great strides working together than looking for individual glory working in silos.

Early Childhood Development Centres and Funding and Registration of ECD Centres

Honourable Speaker, Early Childhood Development remains a top education priority of the government for 2024. We continue to draw our attention on expanding access to early childhood development and improving the learning environment. The Limpopo Department of Education has increased the number of ECD Centers it is funding from both equitable share and Conditional grants. We will continue to place a huge focus on the integration of our *happy feet* because we appreciate the need to nurture them whilst still young.

Rationalisation of Small and Non-Viable Schools

Hon Speaker, it is worth noting that there is a continued resistance of rationalization in most parts of the province though we continue to affirm that the decision is meant to benefit our learners. We urge parents to be considerate of the future of their children and their interests above everything. Properly resourced schools are a recipe for positive results. We are not doing this to spite them but to ensure that quality teaching and learning is not compromised.

HIV AND AIDS LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME

Hon Members, the Prevention and reduction of learner pregnancy, prevention of bullying and substance abuse, prevention of GBV, HIV, STIs and TB remain critical. As such we continue to allocate resources to the programme to combat the ills our children find themselves entangle in. Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) and the prevention of learner suicide will help us to manage the rates undesirable as any one life lost is one too many.

Through our curricular activities Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has played a critical role in our fight against teenage pregnancy in our classrooms, we have beyond any reasonable doubt managed to control the scourge of teenage pregnancy, gangsterism and other related social ills through our curricular activities. The department has recently advertised Learner Support Agents (LSA) post which in the immediate are targeting schools that have prevalent challenges, this is one of the proactive efforts which show our commitment as a department towards the combating the high level of social ills in our schools and community.

NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME (NSNP)

The Department is continuing with the school nutrition programme for learners from quintiles 1-3 schools in the province. Since the implementation of NSNP, learner attendance and punctuality improvement has been recorded.

Honourable Speaker, part to the NSNP objective is to encourage schools to advance sustainable food production. This is done through the collaboration with the Department

of Agriculture. Schools that participate in this programme are encouraged to enter best school awards competition which is hosted from District to National level. As we would have already reported before in this August house, that the number of learners from our schools changes every year because of their movement and new entrants in Grade R and exits in Grade 12.

SCHOLAR TRANSPORT

Honourable Speaker, we have reported in the 2023/24 budget, that the department provided learner transport to a total of **59 905** learners across the Limpopo Province. The numbers have since increased from **59 905** to **70 000** learners in this academic year. The programme continues in assisting the minimization of absenteeism and late coming. The budget allocation of just over **R361,6 million** for 2024/2025 has been set aside for the provision of Learner Transport to qualifying learners to access their learning centers with ease.

Infrastructure Provisioning

I must indicate **honourable members** that infrastructure is very key to our mandate. It is worth emphasizing that the Hon Premier in her speech in this august house has indicated that the provision of infrastructure will enable us to focus more on teaching and learning. We continue to make huge progress in some of the schools that were provided with infrastructure.

Honourable members, The Education Infrastructure Grant (EIG) budget allocated for infrastructure development in this financial year is **R1,4 billion**. The Department has received an additional allocation of **R100 million** to attend to storm damaged schools. The Total Infrastructure Development budget amounts to **R 1.533 billion**. The infrastructure budget will be utilized towards new and replacement of aging infrastructure; upgrading of existing infrastructure; refurbishment, rehabilitation, and renovations of existing infrastructure (including storm damaged schools); as well as maintenance and repairs of existing infrastructure.

The Department has received an additional **R89 million** as part of the performance-based incentive system. The allocation will be used to provide the much-needed infrastructure upgrades at schools.

***Honorable Speaker**, it is my singular honor to present to you the 2024/25 Vote 3 Budget for the Limpopo Department of Education.*

*The Department received a total budget of R40.029 billion in 2024/25 financial year which is made up of Equitable share (**R35.654 billion**), Conditional Grant (**R3.614 billion**) and Own Revenue (**R760.498 million**). This represents an increase of **R992.603 million** or 2.5 percent from **R39.037 billion** Adjusted Appropriation in 2023/24.*

*The allocation has been broken down per Economic Classification item as follows: Compensation of Employees (CoE) (**R30.641 billion**); Goods and Services (R4.333 billion); Transfers and Subsidies (**R3.622 billion**), and Payments for Capital Assets (**R1.433 billion**) respectively. The Compensation of Employees item receives the biggest share at 76.5% of the total Departmental budget for both Equitable share and Conditional grants.*

*Equitable share CoE accounts for **R30.537 billion** which is 85.6% of total Equitable share allocation (**R35.654 billion**). And out of this amount, **R27.773 billion** or (90.9%) is meant for Educator's salaries.*

Let me take this opportunity once again to thank all the stakeholders in the sector who have been working tirelessly to support us to realize our mandate delivering quality basic education to all our children in the Province. The Sector Unions for your unwavering support and the journey we travelled together in the past two years. We are today walking tall because of your contributions and interest in what we do.