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*PROCEEDINGS OF MINI PLENARY – NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAMBER*

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Members of the mini-plenary session met in the National Assembly Chamber at 14:00.

House Chairperson Mr C T Frolick took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayers or meditation.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

Debate on Vote No 14 – Basic Education:

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Hon Chair, hon Members of Parliament, colleagues from provinces, MECs and heads of departments – I am excited that my colleagues are here – distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I also want to acknowledge the presence of some of our very top district directors that we have invited here and very top leading

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principals of leading schools. These are the best of the best. So, thank you very much for coming here. [Applause.]

Thank you for the 2018...

[Interjections.]

*IsiZulu:*

Uqala kabi wena.

*English:*

Chair, thank you for the 2018-19 Debate on Vote No 14 - Basic Education, which is delivered and debated on the year in which we are marking the centenary celebrations of President Nelson Mandela and umama Albertina Sisulu. A lot has already been said about these two struggle icons, but allow me Chair, to add my voice as well.

After President Nelson Mandela was released from prison 27 years ago, he pursued an agenda of peace and prosperity, truth and reconciliation, as well as reconstruction and development of our democratic country and its people. Madiba came to embody the struggle for justice in South Africa and the whole world. President Mandela was an embodiment of humility and he

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did not only teach us about the virtues of selflessness, but he exhibited such virtues in his everyday life. He demonstrated through words and deeds what it means to be a selfless and a true leader of the people.

This year, we also mark the centenary celebration of another giant of our struggle, umama Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu. Through her remarkable life and outstanding leadership, she defined what it means to be a freedom fighter, and a disciplined servant of the people. Through her diligent leadership, she embodied the fundamental link between national liberation and gender emancipation.

Chair, as President Cyril Ramaphosa said during his inaugural state of the nation address, we honour President Mandela and umama Sisulu "in a year of change, a year of renewal and a year of hope." Through the centenary celebrations of their lives, we are not merely honouring the past; but we are building the future – yes, a "new dawn" for South Africa.

Chair and hon members, during my 2017-18 Budget Vote, I did reminded this House that in 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Unesco, adopted the global education agenda, Education 2030, which is

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part of the 17th Unesco's Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, that make up the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. In particular, it calls for an inclusive, quality and equitable education and lifelong opportunities for all.

I also reminded this House that in our local governance, we have translated the Unesco SDGs into our Action Plan in 2019 which we call "Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030," which is designed to achieve the long-term vision of education as encapsulated in our renowned Constitution and the National Development Plan, NDP. Our Constitution declares basic education as inalienable basic right for all South Africans; while the NDP directs that by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes.

Therefore, the Constitution, the NDP, as well as the continental and international conventions, provide the moral imperative and a mandate to government to make access, redress, equity, efficiency, inclusivity and quality of educational opportunities, widely available to all.

As we approach the end of the fifth administration of our democratic government, in reflecting on the work we have done

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so far, guided by our vision, the following quintessential observations remain pertinent in the trajectory of our journey as a sector.

Sir, we can report that we have successfully created that single integrated basic education which the ruling party had committed itself in its Ready to Govern document which is based on the values and principles enshrined in our Constitution, as well as the regional, continental and international protocols.

We have accelerated the implementation of the principles of social justice, namely access, redress, equity and inclusivity, and have made progress in efficiency and quality and we can proudly say we have brought about stability in curriculum implementation, which has led to a sustained improvement of the teaching and learning outcomes, and we have strengthened our National Curriculum Statement through the introduction of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements, Caps, which is viewed as also the best and a good curriculum.

We have repositioned and strengthened the alignment of basic education sector, in preparation for providing young people with skills, competencies, and knowledge for the changing

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world. This we continue to do through the implementation of the Three Stream Curriculum Model, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Entrepreneurship, and the Unesco International Bureau of Education Framework for Future Skills and Competencies.

Again we can proudly say we have established a solid foundation for accountability and provided strategic leadership in provincial efforts to provide quality education through meeting regularly with our internal structures and created new ones, such as quarterly meetings with our district directors, informed by specific themes driving quality of education; and annual meetings with provinces, as well as monitoring and reporting on key activities and galvanised broad civil society, focusing on our core business of teaching and learning in the classroom.

We are indeed Chair, the first to acknowledge – coming from a ruling party with credibility and integrity – so, we are the first to acknowledge that, while we have made such good progress in our journey towards a democratic South Africa and its basic education system we desire and we are still striving for foundational skills of reading, writing and counting as well as having the basic necessities in place for quality

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teaching and learning to take place, especially in the early grades.

I do want to encourage this House to read our Medium-Term Strategic Framework, MTEF, plan because of time Chair, we will not be able to go through all the plans or the reports that we will want to share with the public.

So, let me go straight to the budget Chair and say I must state upfront that budgetary constraints in the sector have rightfully attracted a lot of attention over the last year, largely because of the weak economic growth; the basic education sector, like most other service delivery areas, has had to reduce what it purchases. This has occurred while enrolments in our schools have increased substantially, largely due to demographic factors.

I would like to assure this House that we are monitoring the situation very carefully, and we are engaging with the National Treasury on this matter. We are doing everything we can to ensure that we continue the trajectory of educational improvement that we have seen over most of the past 15 years or so.

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Chair, the pertinent question therefore, is what is the Department of Basic Education doing to address the budget and spending situation even though the Department of Basic Education is also experiencing budget pressures? The basic education sector 2018-19 total budget, represents 1% cut over the previous financial year's total allocation. In inflation-adjusted terms, this means that we are seeing a decline in the overall budget allocation for the basic education sector.

I was heartened by the measures put forward by His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa in his inaugural state of the nation address, to put the country back on track, as far as economic growth is concerned. This will ease the pressure on the education sector and create a better environment for educational improvement, which as we should all know, is a prerequisite for a healthy economy and society, and for our ongoing task of tackling the legacy of deep inequalities in South Africa.

Chair and hon members, allow me to highlight the following in relation to the Budget Vote No 14 – Basic Education for 2018 MTEF period.

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The overall 2018-19 MTEF budget allocation for the Department of Basic Education is just under R23 billion, which is as a result of the austerity measures, was decreased by 3% from the 2017 to 2018 allocation. The breakdown of the budget on the allocation is as follows: The amount allocated to administration this year has increased with 8,2% from last year's allocation to about R450 million.

For Curriculum Policy Support and Monitoring, we received less than R2 billion, which is the same allocation that we received in 2017-18. So, despite increases in other areas of expenditure, again here we are seeing a decline, because of the lack of increase means a decline on our part.

The allocation of Teacher Education Human Resource and Institutional Development, increased by 5,7% to R1,3 billion. Planning Information and Assessment is allocated R12 billion which is an increase of 9,1% from the 2017 allocation. The allocation for Educational Enrichment Services increased by 5,9% from last year's allocation to R7,1 billion.

On conditional grants over the 2018 MTEF period, the overall allocation for conditional grants is R17,5 billion – an increase of 2,1% from the total of 2018 and the specific

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allocations are as follows: For maths, science and technology, the grant is allocated R370,5 million which is an increase of 1,5%.

With regard to infrastructure which continues to be funded to be funded through what we call the Education Infrastructure Grant, EIG, and the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative, Asidi, is funded at R9,9 billion and R1,5 billion respectively, which means from the EIG Grant we see a decline or a decrease of R1,3 billion and from Asidi a whopping 43,5% decrease.

With regard to HIV and Aids, whose purpose is to support South Africa's HIV and TB prevention strategy, has been allocated R243,2 million which is a decrease of a percentage from last year's allocation.

The National School Nutrition Programme, has been allocated R6,8 billion, which is an increase of 5,8%.

Chair, I am quite excited to say on a programme where I feel as a sector have not being doing very well on children with special needs, learners with severe to profound intellectual

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disabilities; we were given a grant of R185,5 million which is three times of what we received last year of R72 million.

Chair, I wish to thank the National Treasury for also allocating R29,2 million as a general budget to support the allocation for Rural Education Access Project, Reap. This amount will increase to a total of R58,3 million in the outer two years of the 2018. We are in the process and have started identifying unemployed young matriculants to be appointed as educational assistants in curricular and co-curricular activities in six rural districts in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo.

The allocation for Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme has been increased by 5,5% from last year's allocation of R1,2 billion.

In 2018-19 the subsidy to Umalusi has increased by 5,6% from last year's contribution of R135,7 million.

The National Senior Certificate Learner Retention Programme, also known as the Second Chance Programme which we introduced in 2016 to respond to the NDP injunction that the retention rates should be improved and dropout rates should be reduced, provides support to learners who do not meet the pass

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requirements of the National Senior Certificate. During 2018-19, the programme has been allocated R65,7 million, which is an increase of 46%.

The National Education Collaboration Trust, which is a very important public private partnership is a prevalent theme of the NDP; and is also consistent with the call to make education a societal issue. To this end, the allocation for NECT has been allocated R117,2 million which is an increase of 5,6%.

On workbooks, including Braille workbooks for visually impaired learners, they have been allocated R1,1 billion, an increase of 5,7%.

With regard to the SA Council of Educators, Sace, has been allocated a subsidy of R16 million and the Early Grade Reading Assessment, has been allocated R28 million, up from R11 million.

With regard to Information Communications Technologies, ICTs, the Operation Phakisa in education which received R16 million in 2017, has been allocated R36 million in 2018.

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Chair, let me end the details of the budget by stating that in line with the Unesco Sustainable Development Goals, we are paying more attention than ever to the equality of service delivery. There are still vast inequalities, but we should not ignore the gains we have made.

A 2007 Unesco Report, namely, the Educational Equity and Public Policy: Comparing Results from 16 Countries, is an example to the world when it comes to ensuring that public spending is equitably distributed, and that we do not ignore our rural areas and poor communities. Credit must go to the ANC-led government for achieving this. We need to make sure that, in the current economic and fiscal climate; we continue to prioritise those programmes that need the funding. I can see how I make you wake up – ANC.

*Afrikaans:*

Hulle skrik hulle mal. [They all got a big fright.]

*English:*

When I mention the ANC. So, I know how to keep you interested and attentive. So, I will keep on mentioning the ANC just to get your attention. [Applause.]

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So, the first focus area is the review of our progression and promotion policies, especially in the lower grades. A number of education experts have opined on this matter, and the overwhelming message is that it does not make any educational sense to make young people aged six to 10, to repeat a grade.

According to the experts, children who repeat on the whole, gain absolutely nothing. On the contrary, for many affected children, repetition is a powerful early signal of failure - a signal that lasts through the individual's life. So, to improve the efficiency of the system, we are also focusing on Grades 9 to 11, as a repetition and dropout rates are also high in these grades.

Our second focus area is Early Childhood Development, ECD. One of the NDP directives states that "there should be a policy and programme shift to ensure that the Department of Basic Education takes the core responsibility for the provision of the ECD.

Sir, I can report that we have already initiated processes to ensure that the transitional arrangements between the two sister departments are smooth and seamless as directed by the ruling party the ANC. To ensure quality and efficient ECD

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delivery, we must address the inhibitors identified in the NDP, such as dealing with institutional arrangements and the legal lacuna on the effective and efficient delivery of the ECD.

The third focus area is the reality that we have repeatedly stated that the internal efficiency of the system and quality basic education outcomes can be achieved through specific and deliberate interventions in the early grades and we are doing a lot of work in that area.

Our fourth focus area is that of strengthening the curriculum content, quality and relevance in subject offerings, such as history, maths, science and technology, again Chair, through the portfolio committee, we would like to give and share information on the work that we are doing in this area.

The fifth focus area is also our response to the reality that the world is changing rapidly, what is now referred to as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. We have been part of the global fora, such as Unesco, African Union, Brookings Institution, Lego Foundation, and many other organisations.

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Research conducted by the Brookings Institution, one of leading think-tanks in the world, has found that all the requisite skills and competencies for the changing world, are encapsulated in our Caps, curriculum. We have been advised to focus on the training of teachers, to reflect on these skills and competencies in teaching and learning.

The sixth focus area again is that of improving the co-ordination and coherence of the sector.

The seventh one is focusing on the infrastructure, planning, co-ordination and delivery.

Chair, I have to say with embarrassment and sadness at the deficiencies found in this area, exacerbated by the inability of the sector to attract the build industry specialist required and the challenges related to financial disbursements, are getting a special focus. We are in constant engagement with the National Treasury, the Department of Public Works and our strategic partners in this area. The fact that we had to face two fatalities, related to Grade R children drowning in pit latrines is lamentable and very embarrassing and could have been prevented. We are mobilising

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all available resources, including the participation of the private sector and the build industry.

Last but not least Chair, we are also looking at the social transformation and cohesion in the sector.

As I conclude, I want to say Radical Economic Transformation, a progressive policy of the ANC the ruling party, we believe that it must be predicted on radical social transformation. We believe that basic education is a fundamental component of this essential premise for sustainable development for livelihood, peace and prosperity. Now that we have laid a solid foundation in achieving the implementation of social justice principles the next, and the most immediate task in the sector is to deal with these areas.

Before thanking my colleague, the Deputy Minister Enver Surty, the director-general, DG, the education portfolio, it has been very helpful in guiding us and we really appreciate the engagements that we enter with them. I really also want to say as a sector we have agreed that one of the key responsibilities is holistic development of our children and we will be launching an Memorandum of Understanding, MoU, with the Department of Sport and Recreation on educational sport.

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I have run out of time. [Time expired.] [Applause.]

Ms N GINA: Hon House Chairperson, the Minister of Basic Education, and the Deputy Minister, Deputy Ministers that are in here, hon members of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education, MECs from the provinces, hon members and the guests, good afternoon!

Today we are debating the 2018-19, Budget Vote 14 of R22, 7 billion. It is a lot of money indeed and it carries hopes to millions of our learners and teachers throughout the country; and this is an opportunity that I highly appreciate.

We debate on this budget comforted by the fact that our budgets over the years have improved access to education of our learners. We debate and approve the budget because we know that this budget continues to provide inclusive, equitable, quality, efficient education and accountability in the system.

We debate today, convinced that the department is equal to the task to deal with the remaining challenges that are there in the system. As we approve this budget, noting that the budget decreased from R23,4 billion in 2017-18 financial year to R22,7 billion in 2018-19 financial year, we are reassured that

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the budget will be prioritised and the interventions and programmes that continue to improve quality and accountability because our department is capable of doing that.

We debate believing that the budget will contribute in making education, as President Mandela said, "A great engine of personal development. It is a budget that injects hope that the lives of our children will be transformed, as Mandela once said:

It is through education that a daughter of a peasant, can become a doctor, the son of a mine worker, can become the head of the mine.

As the journey to achieve quality education and accountability continues, we call for maximum participation of all our stakeholders and the communities at large in contributing to solutions and making our education system work.

The 2017 54th National Conference of the ANC reaffirmed that: "Education remains an apex priority for the ANC and the ANC government." This therefore asks for us to approach the 2018 Budget Vote 14 as part of the solution in bringing quality education for all.

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The ANC further resolved in the following on Basic Education:

Having achieved commendable targets pertaining to access, redress and equity, the ANC must further ensure that there is strategic alignment and repositioning of the basic education sector by prioritising policies and strategies targeting the achievement of quality teaching and learning outcomes, enhancing the skills and competencies of educators, including the school management team comprising the school principal, deputy principal, and subject heads; and enhancing accountability systems to ensure the achievement of quality outcomes and the efficiency in the basic education sector.

It is these and other areas that the ANC has resolved on that we are making a call for the department to pay an immediate attention and focus, from here henceforth. Why are we convinced that the 2018-19, budget will make a difference?

It is a budget that we believe will be used to improve the basic levels of literacy and numeracy as the Minister has mentioned.

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We are convinced that the plan that the department is coming up with is to make sure that this is improved. Taking it from the various tests that South Africa has entered into is worth comparing the standards with other countries. There are so many lessons that have been learnt and the programmes that the department is coming up with surely convince us that this budget is going to achieve, and they are going to achieve on that.

We are convinced that the 2018-19, budget will make a difference? The committee has been raising concerns about targets and indicators in the Department of Basic Education and the Provincial education departments. The portfolio committee held interactions with the Department of Basic Education and the Provincial Education Departments with regards to programme indicators and targets for the 2018-19, financial year.

The meeting was held at the beginning of this year 2018 to look at this target and the Department of Basic Education and the provinces have strengthened planning and alignment with the sector by developing Provincial Performance Measures, PPMs in response to the Medium Term Strategic Framework, MTSF, and reporting through the Outcome 1 Programme of Action Report.

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We urge the department that in order to respond to the Medium Term Strategic Framework, the Department of Basic Education's role as a lead in the sector and a part of concurrent function is to guide the implementation of the sector priorities. Strong monitoring would be required.

This exercise convinces us that thorough planning has gone into the sector and that there would be a common and sector co-ordinated approach. So really that co-ordination between the Department of Basic Education and the Provincial education departments is what we are going to be looking at as the portfolio committee to make sure that we play our oversight role continuously when it comes to that.

Our oversight visits have been a catalyst to press for action and delivery in the provinces that we have visited. We thank the Minister, the Deputy Minister and the Director-General that each time we requested progress reports on the recommendations the department has been able to do that comprehensively.

There are instances where provinces were requested even to come to Parliament to provide their progress report and they were warmly welcomed on various issues that we have held with

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all our Provincial education departments. We highly recommend that as the portfolio committee. We hope and we say it is so true that together we can do more. Those meetings are bearing a lot of good fruits.

We are convinced that this budget will make a difference. The R1,9 million allocated for Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring should really bring the desired results. Curriculum is core to teaching and learning and our belief is that since this is one area that needs thorough monitoring and support, during our oversight we had schools that admitted to have not completed their syllabus.

We had principals and HODs who admitted that they cannot lead and monitor the written work. We are saying to the department since teaching and learning is the core, we hope this budget is going to empower them on monitoring, assisting of teachers and the school. That is one thing that is going to be on the top priority because we believe, what happens in the classroom is what will always bring the positive results into the whole system.

We commend the plans to accelerate the implementation of the African Languages, Incremental Introduction of African

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Languages, IIAL, to all schools as part of social cohesion. We were assured that IIAL will be implemented incrementally as targeted; but we want to register that we call upon all provinces to take this problem seriously and;

We further call upon the province of the Western Cape - because it is the one province that is lacking behind that has not taken up this issue of IIAL as part of the social cohesion - to make sure that they are part of this cohesion throughout the country. It is one initiative that we are so proud that the department has come up with.

The ANC has directed that the government must deal decisively with challenges of inequity between rural and urban education by ensuring that there is adequate resourcing of village and township schools through the provision of quality, efficient, innovative, and inclusive education and training programmes as solutions.

Incentives through which teachers can be attracted and retained in rural and farm schools, must be explored and sustainably implemented and monitored. This must be underpinned by emphasizing on teachers who are teaching scarce but critical subjects such as Mathematics, Science and

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Accounting who are in short supply in our rural side of schools.

Our rural learners deserve quality teachers of similar weight as in urban areas. We believe that the R21,1 million allocated for rural education unit will assist in bridging the gap. Minister, we really hope this is going to assist our learners.

Hon Chair, over this term of office our portfolio committee have been very much dedicated in assessing the implementation of the White Paper 6. We even had 10 meetings and four oversights specifically to receive updates on inclusive education.

We have noted a very steady progress but as the portfolio committee, we are saying much still needs to be done when it comes to this. But we are happy as the portfolio committee even to announce that for the first time in South Africa, in 2018 we are going to see our learners sitting for the Matric exams of the South African Sign language. Congratulations to the Minister for getting to that. [Applause.]

This shows that as the ANC, we are committed to the fact that no learners should be left out everyone must enjoy the benefit

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of being a South African. [Applause.] Hence we are seeing the introduction of the three-stream model where the department will not only be focusing on the academic stream but also making sure that every learner is taken aboard when it comes to the issues of education.

Hence we are talking of these three-stream model technical occupational and technical vocational. So that is the great stride that the department has sworn on. We are in full support of that. [Applause.] Indeed, the doors of learning are opening for all in South Africa. [Applause.]

Indeed, we are worried by the spate of violence in our school. We are calling upon all the stakeholders to make sure that we defend our schools; that is the assets that we have as a country. There is so much that has happened but with the involvement of the school governing bodies, and all the stakeholders we believe that it is a challenge that we can tackle.

As I end my input, thank you very much to the members of the portfolio committee for the continued vigorous discussions that we always have. Thank you very much, Minister and the

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Deputy Minister, the DG and the whole department and all the PEDs.

We know the warm relationship that we have with you; the unions and the National Education Collaboration Trust, NECT, not forgetting our entities that are always there. Thank you ever so much. The ANC supports this Budget Vote. [Applause.]

Mr I M OLLIS: Chairperson, Ministers, MECs, officials, colleagues and friends in the gallery, the Minister said we should talk about the ANC. So okay, Minister, let's talk about the ANC. I'm sad to say that the ANC government in South Africa, under them, mud schools are here to stay and pit toilets are here to stay. We are going to see more sexual assaults in schools; we are going to see more violence; we are going to see more drugs sold on school properties and also poor teaching by underqualified teachers ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Order hon members, order!

Mr I M OLLIS: Primary school learners will struggle to grasp Maths and Science, that's what the ANC is all about. We have policy failure, management failure, teaching failure and

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funding failure in our schools. I wish I could say I was exaggerating with these comments, but unfortunately, deep down, we all instinctively know that I am not.

The DA has been visiting schools over the past few months, like the Mbhekwana High School in Limpopo, where some pupils are part of gangs and one learner stabbed another at the school gate. We also know that the Departments of Basic Education and the Police in Limpopo are unaware of these gangs, even though parents warned them of the problem, and they are doing absolutely nothing about it.

Young Thabala Mashiane was stabbed to death in the Principal's office at Solomon Mhlangu High School in Modimolle. In March, a 14-year-old learner from Mbangezike High School was killed. On 23 February, an 18 year old high school pupil appeared in a Limpopo court for stabbing a fellow pupil who died on route to the hospital. The DA has also visited Isivivane Secondary School in the Eastern Cape. At that school last year, 100% of the matrics failed.

On the day I visited the school, Minister, all four teachers including the principal were not on site. One had taken the matriculants to a jobs expo, one was sick, one was at a

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departmental meeting and the fourth just took the day off and the learners were on their own. The DA also visited the Isisusa Secondary School in Durban. There, the pass rate under the ANC plummeted to 26%. We visited Bothithong High School in Kuruman, where 30 learners had fallen pregnant. Nobody knows why, must have been the birds and the bees.

We have learned on these visits is that most provincial education departments, the Department of Basic Education, the SA Police Service, Saps, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Justice, are completely unprepared to deal with the crisis in education faced by young learners every single day in South Africa. But just when you thought you had heard the worst, the ANC tables the 2018-19 Budget.

It shows a massive, listen to this, R7 billion budget cut to the Education Budget over the next three years. But that is not the first sign of cutting the Education Budget. Nic Spaull said in the Business Day on 16 April, to put it bluntly, "funding per child has declined with 8% in seven years, before the R7 billion budget cut."

So, where has the money gone? Well ANC, apart from your corruption, it has gone to plug the hole created at

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universities through the demand for free higher education. The ANC and her friends in the EFF have thrown your children's education under the bus, so that they can get free university education, which will be hard for incoming students to pass because they didn't get proper education in Maths and Science at primary school, because the ANC stole the budget from the schools.

In addition, the salaries of teachers while the budget has decreased by 8%, and that means that 80% of the education budget now goes to salaries, no money for anything else like libraries, science labs, computers and scholar transport. The matric pass mark is not going to go up, and if it does, you already know that it's going to be, because the teachers are holding back the struggling students all because, Umalusi just pushes the pass mark up.

So you ask me, with the failing teaching in the schools, what is the DA doing? Let me tell you: Firstly, we have met with the SA Council of Educators, Sace, to establish why they are not vetting teachers properly who may have committed sexual and violent crimes? They have agreed to a follow up meeting where they will give us feedback about their meetings with Departments of Justice and Social Development. But they have

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not accessed the sexual offences register in South Africa once, to vet the school teacher in the past two years, not once!

Secondly, we have visited the Western Cape Safe Schools call centre, and we are calling on all eight ANC provinces to run out a similar call centre in each province, to provide help to learners and parents in dangerous situations. Thirdly, we have met with the police, for example, in Eldorado Park calling for greater action on drugs in schools. The Eldorado Park police told us that in Eldorado Park there isn't one single street that is free of drugs, not one street!

Fourthly, we have submitted our application to the Essential Services committee to have certain positions in schools declared an essential service, I hope the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, Sadtu, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions, Cosatu, are listening. Fifthly, we have launched our safe schools petition, [protectourchildren.co.za](http://protectourchildren.co.za), calling President Ramaphosa to do more.

Sixthly, we have called for a meeting with the Director-General of Social Development and lastly, we have amended DA policy to push for computers in schools. But I guess, none of

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this will happen, while the ANC and their bedfellows, the EFF, cut the education budget even further.

Ms H O MKHALIPHI: Chairperson, unfortunately, Minister, we are not going to support this Budget Vote, because of the obvious reasons, you don't have an open door policy in your department. Unlike the Deputy Minister, you tried to listen, but the implementation, dololo!

The EFF rejects the Department of Basic Education Budget Vote, and we will share some of the basic principles needed to reform basic education because, we have recognised that there is an absence of ideas and innovation in the ruling party, and that we might have to wait until we are in government to implement these reforms as the EFF. You must listen, just listen because I'm giving you an education, Department of Basic Education.

In 2009, - just -listen; Minister if you want to improve, please! - Rwanda adopted a Nine Year Basic Education Fast Tracking Strategy; - you are saying suka, because you don't care about Africa. Let me repeat it to you. In 2009, Rwanda adopted a Nine Year Basic Education Fast Tracking Strategy, and at the core of the strategy was the role of local

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communities led by government who ensured construction of schools and adaptation of the school system to ensure quality education, which ANC is lacking.

A community-based approach to build, own and adapt education system and schools cost almost 50% less than what it would otherwise cost through the traditional approach and the government of Rwanda saved more than R600 million in one financial year. At least 10 private schools are closing down every year in Rwanda, 30 closed down at the beginning of 2017 and more are likely to fall.

The second country is Ethiopia, – I'm going to Africa, Minister – which has more than 25 million learners today, and in 2015 adopted the Education Sector Development Program. At the core of the program is prioritisation of early childhood care and education, and training of teachers to deliver syllabus in mother tongue, that's what you are failing to do in South Africa.

South Korea, in the 1960s, had high levels of illiteracy, but almost 50 years later it tops the international educational rankings. – You must listen! – At the core of South Korean education development, beside equal access to basic education

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for genders, was the clear link between education and economic development plans; I mention this because you don't have those plans, Minister. South Korea emphasised the growth of labour-intensive export industries, such as light manufacturing industries and the primary goal of education was to provide educated manpower to the economy.

In Cuba, when Comandante Fidel Castro led the revolutionary movement in 1959, one of the first things the new socialist order prioritised, was literacy, and again, 1961 after a yearlong massive national effort, more than 700 000 people became literate, and today Cuban literacy is over 99%. These four examples all over the world demonstrate four key principles needed to reform basic education, principles within the ANC government as well as the DA in the Western Cape, because they have ignored its concerns about the education of black and the poor children.

Firstly, education must be community-oriented led by government, to ensure quality public education. In KwaZulu-Natal, I've been speaking to the Deputy Minister about the issue of Phoenix Primary School. The MEC Mr Mdungwana in KwaZulu-Natal, does not care about poor kids. Also in Brooklyn

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Primary School, he expelled the 70 kids because they don't have birth certificates.

But as the EFF, though we are not in power, we managed to go and intervene in that situation. We read the policy of the department in order for the school to reinstate those kids. You are even failing to pay Grade R teachers in KwaZulu-Natal and you are even not giving them reasons why you are not paying them. So there are so many things you are doing, even the wrong quintile in KwaZulu-Natal.

Mr X NGWEZI: Hon House Chairperson, a quality basic education is fundamentally non-negotiable if we are to create the future South Africa we wish for ourselves and for our future generations. The stark reality is that one cannot be free if one is uneducated in our country. Yet this government continues upon a trajectory that consigns this essential portfolio to one of some but of no real importance and it would be by no stretch of the truth or imagination that one could state that South Africa has one of the world's worst and most of the unequal systems of education and this is despite a large portion of GDP being spent on education.

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Why is so little being achieved with so much? Such failure traverses the entire scope of basic education from infrastructure right through the quality of education and teaching. The sad fact is that unless parents of our learners can afford the prohibitively expensive school phase. They must accept that their kids have a strong likelihood that they receive inferior quality education and this is especially so in our rural areas. Government must take immediate and appropriate steps to firstly repair the dilapidated infrastructure that exists at many of our schools around the country. There are many infrastructure projects that are partly completed and here I speak primarily of the schools in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.

Why there are still children taught in schools that are made of mud? If the infrastructure challenge was not enough of a challenge to our learners then the quality of education delivered would strike the crippling blow. Teachers are in many instances teaching in subjects which they are not qualified. General literacy and mathematic literacy are at appalling levels; science and mathematics are being neglected and the country is failing further and further behind in competitiveness in these most important fields.

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With nearly R23 billion being allocated to the Department Basic Education for the 2018-19 financial year period, the IFP hopes that more attention would be paid to programmes dealing with early childhood development, hon Minister. In improving the quality of Grade Rs it and its pre-grades as well as the rolling out of the ICT programmes for more learners and teachers.

Basic education begins with early childhood development and as stated in the National Development Plan, NDP. Why then is the early childhood development being run by the failed Department of Social Development? But, in the interest of the learners of South Africa, the IFP will support the Budget Vote 13 debate. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Hon House Chair, hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers who are present here, esteemed members of this House, the principals, District Directors, beautiful learners, esteemed guests, and I have to recognise in order of achievement the MECs of Education from the Free State, Gauteng and Western Cape talking about quality education, thank you very much for your presence out here.

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I would certainly want to share with you the journey that we traversed. It is the one that has been difficult. It's an arduous journey but to assess our performance against our achievement. Not very long ago, we hardly had any children in preschool, Grade R. Today, we can celebrate the fact that almost 1 million children are in preschool. [Applause.] Not only that every single child, white and black receive delivered to him or her four books on time free of charge. [Applause.] We can look back and say there's many of our children learn under very difficult circumstances as they come from poor socioeconomic backgrounds. But today we can celebrate the fact that 9,2 million children and being fed everyday in our schools. [Applause.] It is indeed a wonderful achievement. [Applause.]

We can say that indeed we had challenges and continue to have challenges in terms of literacy and numeracy. Today we can celebrate the fact that more 60 million workbooks is delivered to every child from Grade R to Grade 9 on time and free of charge to enhance their performance. [Applause.]

We've had challenges and continue to do so in terms of achievement and quality but we had to recognise that in terms of the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational

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Quality, SACMEQ, report last year in which 15 countries participated from Southern Africa and Eastern Africa, South Africa has shown the most astounding, radical achievement and improvement. For the first time, all our learners across all provinces have performed above the minimum both in literacy and numeracy – that must be some form of achievement.

[Applause.]

Not very long ago, less than a decade ago, we had some 22 000 learners passing mathematics. Today we have more than 120 000 learners passing mathematics. From the approximately 40 000 learners who achieved above 50%, 75% are African and Coloured. Isn't that an achievement? [Applause.] Indeed, infrastructure is a huge challenge, but in the context of dealing with this matter here, we can celebrate the fact that we have already through the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative, ASIDI, programme the accelerated school infrastructure programme delivered 203 state-of-the-art schools. The Eastern Cape alone has been the recipient of more than 130 schools. The Western Cape, in areas that had hitherto not been provided with infrastructure, has received 25 state-of-the-art schools. Whether our child is in Limpopo, Western Cape or Eastern Cape, they are our children and we have to look at their best interest.

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One has to basically assess that what is it that we have to do and what is it that we have to do better? Certainly we have a challenge and we recognise the importance of early childhood development. A mere fact that we have almost a million children means the concomitant with the access that we provide to our learners. There is a responsibility of providing infrastructure. For example, when you look at sanitation, it is not only toilets for children who are above six; we now have to look at sanitation for children who are under six years old appropriate sanitation. It would mean that we have to employ thousands of practitioners who have the level of qualification to be able to stimulate and enhance the quality of achievement amongst those very young learners. It would mean that government has to do many things at the same time.

I think as a result of this collective effort, we have shown a steady trajectory of improvement. We must acknowledge that because if we are going to say to ourselves that the narrative is one of failure and of hopelessness then we are going to be disillusioned, we are going to do less for our children. The hon Mkhalihi will say the communities are not going to take ownership of this important public-interest task. The ANC had elevated education to a societal issue and indeed it is

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correct in doing so. Until such time as we take responsibility for the safety of our schools, we are not going to succeed.

Let me share with you some of what we done and then you make an assessment. We are able to say with confidence that 60 million books are delivered to every child, black and white on time in terms of enhancing literacy and numeracy. We are able to establish year after year, test after test, an improvement in the achievement of mathematics and science. We are able to say that the enrolment of mathematics has increased across the country. It is very unfortunate to talk about the Western Cape, Mr Ollis.

In terms of participation mathematics, KwaZulu-Natal has 57%, the Eastern Cape has 53% and the Western Cape, the best resourced province in terms of infrastructure, has only 32%. What are you doing about the remaining children? Is it because they are coloured or African, and you say you do mathematical literacy? You do not speak to equity and redress. You speak to the achievement and performance of those who are historically advantaged and affluent. Look at your schools and see which schools are performing well. I invite you to say check through the Western Cape, the lowest performance in terms of mathematics is the Western Cape. One should ask a question why

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it is so, that the country that doesn't have such a vast population would perform so poorly. [Interjections.]

Let us look at the phenomenon of no fee schools and I want you to assess this. In a short space of time, and notwithstanding the commitment of ANC to say that by now we should have achieved 80% we can celebrate the fact that 85% of our children attend no fee schools. It is remarkable. In other words what we are doing is to say we are providing free quality education to our children. But what is the reality in the Western Cape? Fifty seven percent of the schools are fee paying schools and the remaining are no fee schools. Go to Limpopo and you will find that 97% of the schools are no fee schools. Those are realities we must confront but in the context of poverty levels, in the context of disproportional development that we have acquired as a result of the apartheid past, how our children performing? This is a narrative. If you take the matric results of last year, you will find that the Quintals 1, 2 and 3 that is the very poorest schools, have contributed more distinctions than Quintals 4 and 5 schools, which means that the issues of acuity are being addressed and there is a consistent improvement in the achievement of our learners. [Applause.]

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Let us look at the pass rate for bachelors; it is important because quality passes are critical. Indeed again, Quintals 1, 2 and 3 have contributed more bachelors passes than Quintals 4 and 5. This was not the case 10 years ago or five years ago. [Applause.] What we are showing is as a result of the kind of collective energy that we are putting forward into this particularly important project we are making solid firm strides and we can indeed look forward to a better future.

I think what with established education and I've been with an MEC for Education of the Western Cape this year, she will confirm and affirm that on more than one occasion, either the Minister or the Deputy Minister, would use best practice and on more than one occasion we would look at practice in the Western Cape to say in this instance, perhaps one should look at this particular model. In other instances, for example, in terms of hostels we will say look at what the Free State has done in terms of providing hostels in the rural areas to enhance quality education. So, we look at best practices when we converse about education. It is not about competing political fiefdoms; it's about a unitary state in terms of whereof we look at the best interest of each learner. I think in doing so, we depoliticise an important reality that we face. The reality was that historically blacks in general had

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been deprived of opportunity; they were denied access to opportunity and denied better resourced schools. We have a collective responsibility in redressing those equalities.

This year is . . . yes indeed we can talk about the dropout rates because it is a matter of concern. The academics and scientists will tell you that in middle income countries if you achieve 55% as a retention rate, you are doing extremely well. We are saying that although we have achieved 55% it is not good enough. We are saying to you that we indeed. . .

[Interjections.] If the hon member would give me an opportunity. Let us look at progress learners, we can celebrate the fact that those learners as a result of a bold decision that the Minister of Basic Education has taken, have been given an opportunity to sit for the matric examination. Fifty-five percent of those who sat as progress learners had passed. Which is the worst performing province in terms of support to progress learners? It is the Western Cape. Again the reality is that those children are poor children, they are either African or coloured and you look only at those who are more affluent. The incidence of partiality in terms of education is unfortunately there. When you talk about crime Mr Ollis you spoke drugs. The highest incidents of drug abuse are in the schools within the Western Cape, the highest incidents

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of gangsterism are within the Western Cape, the highest level of insecurity is in the Western Cape. [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (MS Y N PHOSA): Hon Deputy Minister, there is a point of order. May you please take your seat.

Ms V VAN DYK (POINT OF ORDER): May I just ask the Deputy Minister not to refer to the member - it is you. I think it is not good to do that.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: The honourable, highly esteemed, very enlightened member would certainly agree that they have serious socioeconomic problems. If you go to Mitchells Plain, Gugulethu or Khayelitsha, these are places that you do not visit and you rather go as far as Limpopo. Go to the province that has these real problems. If we had not established these state-of-the-art schools in the Western Cape, then those historically disadvantaged communities would have to wait probably for another 50 years for state-of-the-art schools to be provided there. It is reality and it is the confirmation we received from principals.

What we are saying to you is that in total what we have to commit ourselves to is the following:

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Quality – We cannot compromise our target. We have to consistently look at Early Child Development, improve the quality of education; ensure that we provide teachers' support as best as we can.

Redress – We have to continue providing a learning environment to our learners to ensure that they too have the advantage of learning in an institution that is conducive to better performance.

Equity – We share an incredible story. Twenty years ago the performance of boy learners as compared to girl learners had huge disparity. Boy learners were performing at least 15% better than girl learners in all subjects. Today, girl learners are producing more distinctions; they stay longer in school and the true portrait is better. It means that the commitment that Nelson Mandela had made to the creation of non-sexist, non-racial society is becoming a reality.

[Applause.] Why is it today we candidly say that girl learners are performing better and have contributed more distinctions, do better in terms of the bachelors' passes than boy learners? We've done this in a very short space of time. That is what we should celebrate to say that now we've done that for the girl

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learners, how we enhance the performance of boy learners because that is indeed becoming a reality.

It also means that we have to look at another important factor. This factor here I am going to be concluding with this. We spoke about reduction of budgets. We have more than 372 titles that are owned by the Department of Basic Education, it's our intellectual property which has been digitised and it is made available to all learners.

Sixty percent of our textbooks and curriculum content has been digitised and it has cost us nothing. We did that through collaboration with the private sector in corporate entities. Our goal is to ensure that by the end of this academic year every textbook in every grade and every subject is digitised. Today we can say that, even those when we talk about inclusivity, who are blind, have the benefit of a Braille book from Grade R to Grade 9. Madam, you will confirm that.

[Applause.] Today we can celebrate that Sign Language is part of the curriculum and they are going to be tested. Today we can celebrate that our disabled learners who wrote matric, 78,1% of them have passed. Isn't that a wonderful achievement for South Africa, not the Western Cape, Eastern Cape not Gauteng but for South Africa. I think that is a vision that we

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have to look to, a vision of a better future, a narrative that we can cling to, to say to our children that indeed there are challenges. The road and the journey ahead are difficult and hard. However, if we put our shoulders to the wheel and work together united as Nelson Mandela wanted us to be, cohesive as he wanted to be, inclusive as he wanted to be, we indeed can create a better future for all our children because South Africa belongs to all who live in it, white and black. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Ms C N MAJEKE: Hon Chairperson and hon members, good afternoon. Education is the greatest investment for the success of the National Development Plan and the advancement of the South African socioeconomic status. Basic Education is the starting point.

Over time, the quality and output of the South African basic education system has changed. On the positive side, preschool enrolment has improved. The proportion of people aged 20 and above with no formal schooling has fallen significantly to 4,8%, in 2016, from 13%, in 1995. Matriculation candidates receiving a Bachelor's Pass have increased from 20,1%, in 2008, to 28,7%, in 2017. Many schools now have clean water and

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electricity, and the introduction of the Braille curriculum is highly commendable.

However, the negatives of this system are also overwhelming. Just under half of the children who enrol in Grade 1 make it to Grade 12. Roughly 20% of learners in Grades 9, 10 and 11 are repeaters, which suggests that they have been poorly prepared in the early grades. Fewer than 7% of matriculation candidates pass mathematics with a grade of 70%. In the poorest quintile schools, less than 1% of matriculation candidates receive a distinction in mathematics. Only one in three schools has a library and one in five has a science laboratory.

The poor quality of mathematics education in South African schools poses a great concern. Mathematics, in all probability, is the most important marker in determining whether a young person will enter the labour market or grow to become a professional. While this is a problem across the board, the quality is worse in the poorest quintile schools. This leaves no doubt that the inequalities in the schooling system are replicating the predemocratic trends of poverty and inequality in our society.

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Our economy is evolving in favour of high-skilled, tertiary industries. Yet, political pressure and policy are being used to drive up the cost of unskilled labour. This means that the majority of poor children are unlikely to ever find gainful employment.

The current school infrastructure remains an enemy of our basic education system. Schools built out of mud, wood, zinc, and asbestos should have been replaced by November 2016. Yet, by its own admission, the Department of Basic Education will only meet this expired deadline six years on. Furthermore, provinces like the Eastern Cape add to the educational challenges by being the culprits of underexpenditure, in this regard. The department must desist from its current practice of building schools which become white elephants because there was no proper understanding of the local demographics and no direct participation by the provincial stakeholders – which must include all sectors of the community.

While we support the report, we are doing so under protest, because our system represents the single, greatest obstacle to the socioeconomic advancement of our nation. It replicates patterns of unemployment, poverty, and inequality, and it denies the majority of young people the chance to make it in

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life. In addition, the failure of the department to replace inappropriate school infrastructure, such as pit latrines, has turned our schools into graveyards for learners.

Hon Minister, we support the Budget Vote, but put our learners first. I thank you.

Adv A De W ALBERTS: Chairperson, Minister, last year, I start off by saying that every year feels like déjà vu, and it seems this is the case, again. The more time changes, the more things stay the same, except that I may add that the entropy of the basic education system is increasing, unfortunately. In other words, things seem to be falling apart, but at a greater speed. When we notice these trends, it is with great trepidation for the future of the children of this country.

*Afrikaans:*

Dit is baie hartseer dat basiese onderwys eenvoudig net nie behoorlike begroning kan kry nie. Ten spyte van die dramatiese hoeveelheid van die jaarlikse begroting wat gespandeer word, is daar steeds nie werklike vordering nie. Inteendeel, daar word eerder gekyk hoe die slaagsyfer nog laer aangepas kan word, en daar word gekyk na die uitfasering van wiskunde en wetenskap bloot om die slaagsyfer beter te laat

lyk. Die gevolg is dat leerlinge eenvoudig deur die stelsel gefaal word en nie gereed uit die skool gaan om verder te studier op tersiêre vlak of die moderniserende ekonomie direkte kan betree na skool nie.

Ek moet eerlik wees. Hierdie situasie herinner 'n mens baie aan die MIV-skandaal waar die regering ontken het dat hulle hoof in te gryp in die ontvouende tragedie. Die verskil is egter dat dié tragedie 'n lang, uitgerekte ekonomiese siekte skeep wat die bevolking in die toekoms in armoede gaan hou.

*English:*

The problems of this department do not relate only to the curriculum and low pass rate aimed at ensuring high pass outcomes of unemployable learners, but also to the current trend of not building schools, and the concomitant pressures applied on existing schools. So, learners are forced into a system that provides inadequate infrastructure and allows the opportunity for race-baiters, like MEC Lesufi, to ensure that communities clash with each other about access to basic education. [Interjections.]

His mismanagement and his lack of building of schools have ensured that regular clashes between black and white and black

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and Coloured people take place, based on access. This is unfortunate and entirely unnecessary. The press has even referred to the Overvaal High School incident as “Lesufi’s War”. I have to ask, What type of MEC wages war on innocent school communities, irrespective of their race?

This has to end, by building more school infrastructure that ensures mother-tongue education is implemented. This, in turn, will ensure that mathematics and science education become world standard.

*Afrikaans:*

Dan sal ons kan deelneem aan die Vierde Industriële Revolusie wat op hande is en voor ons lê. Diegene wat nie behoorlike onderrig in wiskunde en wetenskap ontvang nie, sal nie kan deelneem in die moderne wêreld wat voor ons ontvou nie. Ons ontnem ons kinders van ’n toekoms as gevolg daarvan.

Meer skole met meer moedertaalonderrig sal verseker dat almal moeilike vakke, soos wiskunde en wetenskap, onder die knie kan kry, veral in die basis- en beginfasies van skool. Daarsonder gaan hulle vervang word as werkers wat nie behoorlike opleiding het nie en wat vervang gaan word deur robotte en masjiene in die toekoms. Ek moet u waarsku - daardie realiteit

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lê voor ons. U moet u oë oopmaak, anders gaan ons ons kinders faal.

Hierdie is nie 'n politieke toespraak nie. Dit is 'n toespraak wat gaan oor die toekoms van ons kinders. Ek dank u.

Mr H D KHOSA: Hon Chairperson, hon Minister of Basic Education and Deputy, members of the executive council, MECs, hon members and our guests, I greet you in the name of service delivery.

*Xitsonga:*

Ri perile.

*English:*

House Chair, I would like to open my speech by saying that the ANC supports this Budget Vote. We are saying this because a lot has been done by the ANC-led government from 1994 up to today. Free houses, free basic water, free electricity, provision of social grants to the vulnerable, and amongst others, some of these achievements of the current government in ensuring that dignity is restored to our people. Thus, since 1994, the ANC-led government committed itself through the task of social transformation now declared by His

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Excellency President Ramaphosa in his state of the nation address as in line with radical economic transformation, which we believe our people are yearning for. The social challenges experienced by millions of our people, who were deliberately excluded and their education made so inferior to the extent that of more than 360 years of colonial system. The aim of that system was to make sure that our people to be slaves from one generation to the other.

The social challenges that I'm talking about are amongst others: One, the poor education for a specific group was marked by: One, hungry learners expected to concentrate in class; school infrastructure that provides no decent sanitation facilities; learner dropping-out due to parents' inability to pay fees; lack of health support programmes; learners having to travel long distance without transport; the school curriculum that is not aligned to the mainstream economy; and denying the majority of learners the right to quality education. The other issues are with regard to the learners without learning and teaching support materials, LTSM, and schools without properly trained teachers.

The ANC-led government noted these things and put in place systems aimed at addressing and freeing our people socially

and economically. The reality is that these challenges are massive and need a lot of resources to address. Despite these enormous social challenges, much has been done. The ANC has always and will always work with and through the people of South Africa. That is why collaboration was sought with all affected stakeholders in determining relevant programmes that will address these social challenges. The following programmes were involved: One, National School Nutrition Programme, NSNP; two, scholar transport; three, free education for quintile 1, 2 and 3 schools; and four, inclusive education.

Today, children through NSNP are fed. There is scholar transport. More and more learners are retained and they are able to actively participate in the learning processes. They are screened against through basic health programmes, receive free workbooks, and they are not paying school fees while their parents and communities benefit either as suppliers of these basic services. The fact that parents and communities are meaningfully partaking in some of these projects and thus making them economically active is giving renewed hope for our people. These basic education projects are contributing in a small, but profound way, to the stimulation of the economic growth.

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The plans in addressing school challenges: One, Action Plan to 2019, goals number 10, 24, and 25 address specifically learner's wellbeing and how to ensure that the environment of learner inspires them to learn and remain in school. These goals are elaborated as follows: I will start with goal 10 that ensures learners remain effectively enrolled in school up to 15 years; goal 24, ensures that the environment of every school inspires learners to want to come to school and learn; and goal 25, use schools as vehicles for promoting access to a range of public services among learners in areas such as health, poverty alleviation, psychosocial support, sport and culture.

When coming to the allocation with the NSNP, the department's National School Nutrition Programme will continue to contribute to the National Development Plan, NDP's, priority of eliminating poverty and supporting food security. Over the medium-term, the department plans to provide to 19 800 schools, feeding about 9,7 million learners each in quintile 1 to 3, and including those learners that will be identified from quintiles 4 and 5 and even learners with special needs.

Scholar transport, we want also to appreciate the relationship between the Department of Basic and that of Transport in

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ensuring that this programme is running fairly well. No-fee paying schools in the 2014 manifesto, the ANC made a commitment that there must be a progressive realisation of free education for all. You know that is really happening. Thank you very much, Chairperson. We are saying that as ANC we support this government and we say to you, forward with the progressive budget forward. [Time expired.] [Applause.]

Hon MEMBERS: Forward!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Y N PHOSA): Hon members, before I call the next speaker, I wish to welcome Mr M Dumezweni who joined the parliamentary staff as the new Chamber assistant. He is seated at the back there. [Applause.] Mr Dumezweni, I trust that you will have wonderful days in the Chamber as you provide service to the hon members and that you will enjoy your time. The next speaker on the list is hon D Carter.

Ms D CARTER: Oh, where the Ministers are already going? Hon Chairperson, the national budget presented earlier this year and which informs the Budget Vote brought home the stark and tragic consequences of a decade of a betrayal of our nation. I hope the Minister gets that where she is right now. Basic education is a point in case. How the management of the

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department nationally and provincially was effectively captured, staffed at senior management level, and held to ransom by SA Democratic Teachers Union, Sadtu, is very well documented.

It remains unconscionable that the department still battles with control over the attendance of teachers in class, and that principals are still not subjected to performance management. A study by the University of Stellenbosch shockingly reveals that over the last decade teacher salaries increased by 57% compared to a 38% rise in inflation; funding per pupil declined by 10%; class sizes have increased to 45 pupils per class on average and to as much as 48 pupils per class in the poorest of our schools; and assessments show that 78% of Grade 4s cannot read for meaning and 66% of Grade 5s cannot do basic maths.

Now, then the then President of the ruling party and the state went rogue and unilaterally announced the implementation of free higher education to bolster support for his preferred presidential candidate. I use the words 'rogue' and 'unilateral' because, unless I'm advised otherwise, I do believe that the President had, at the time of making this pronouncement, not consulted with the Cabinet or obtained the

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agreement of the requisite Minister in writing as required by the Constitution. The consequence of this rogue decision is a significant increase in budgetary allocations to higher education at the expense in part to basic education.

When a child grows up, it starts with your early childhood development and then goes to primary, it then goes to high school and then only can we go to universities. Cope is of the view that we need to work to a position where we can as a nation ensure and afford that all public education is free. However, given the morass that we find ourselves in, Cope puts it that the decision was short-sighted and it is actually counterproductive to the poor and marginalised in our society.

We say so as statistics from the study mentioned earlier revealed that amongst the poorest 70% of our population, less than 5% will enter university. We say so as the failing standard of our basic education is a binding constraint to further education, decent employment, meaningful civic engagement and national economic growth. At present, we are condemning another generation, and our generation to further economic stagnation, poverty and joblessness. We do not

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support the Vote ... [Interjections.] ... We will hamba [go].  
Thank you, Madam. [Time expired.]

Ms C DUDLEY: Chair, like so many others, including yourselves I'm sure, the ACDP is horrified that the budget allocation for Basic Education is 2,9% less than last year and that further cuts of R7 billion are expected. It seems that the desperately-needed investment in Higher Education is going to be at the expense of Basic Education – a very dangerous trade-off in the opinion of the ACDP. While fees are seen to be a barrier to higher education, they are not the greatest barrier. Poor quality primary schooling is, as you all know.

President Ramaphosa stated during the state of the nation address that if we are to break the cycle of poverty we need to educate the children of the poor. Surely these cuts contradict this statement. So the ACDP strongly objects to cost-cutting measures affecting Basic Education.

The ACDP does however note the improvement in monitoring and evaluation that has assisted with more effectively targeting challenges related to performance, gaps and inefficiencies in the education system, and we commend the department on the

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digitalisation achievements and the improved bachelor pass trends.

What does not appear to have been taken seriously however, are practices like the irregular appointments taking place at far too many schools. Hon Minister, for the sake of quality education, can we afford not to investigate the allegations of mismanagement and irregular appointments? The ACDP is appealing to you and your department to give this matter your urgent attention, starting with appointments made under the ex-director of the Umlazi District. I have sent questions with regard to that.

The ACDP notes the committee's concern that there is a steady increase in learner enrolment while there is a decline in the number of educator posts in schools. Learner-teacher ratios, especially in schools with the greatest challenges, are very worrying as this will seriously and negatively impact on the quality of teaching and learner outcomes. The decreased budget will only worsen this situation and undermine efforts.

The ACDP calls on Parliament, government and especially the Treasury to ensure that budgets are adjusted to provide for

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adequate training and more teachers where they are most needed.

Challenges in the sector with regard to inclusive education and the needs of severely disabled children are also cause for concern. Budget cuts will seriously hamper progress in this area. The ring-fenced grant that you mentioned is of course a relief.

In the face of budget cuts the dire need for infrastructure, maintenance and the maintenance of infrastructure, and an environment conducive to learning could become worse and not better as we would have hoped.

Early childhood development, ECD, – thankfully a national priority partly in the hands of the budget of Social Development – has a significant impact on children and their ability to cope and succeed at the level of basic education. At the time of putting this down I wasn't aware that ECD will be transitioning to Social Development. So this makes an awful lot of sense.

However, the ACDP is concerned that the existing ECD maintenance grant is not able to deal with current realities

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where unregistered centres are unable to access it and it is inadequate for the maintenance needs of conditionally-registered centres. The many years when poor and underserved communities had to provide their own ECD services with very little help from the state have left these centres unable to meet the norms and standards required to be registered. Not being able to register means the ECD centres are unknown to the department and not part of the system. No oversight, no child protection services, no training for the governing body and staff, no access to state subsidies, no proper nutrition ...

I will leave whether we vote for you or not to another time. Thank you. [Time expired.]

Ms N I TARABELLA-MARCHESI: Chairperson, up to this day there are currently eight million learners who attend dysfunctional schools. So as I stand here one would ask, what do learners, parents and South Africans expect from this Basic Education Budget Vote?

Firstly, their expectations would be on sanitation – a priority needed to address and fulfil the promises made in 2014 to eradicate pit toilets, after the deaths of Michael

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Komape who fell into a pit toilet in Limpopo, and recently in this year of Lumka Mthethwa who also fell into a pit toilet that was supposed to be decommissioned, in the Eastern Cape.

Twenty four years into our democracy we are still grappling with pit toilets in our schools. It's not only embarrassing Minister, but shocking. The death of Lumka Mthethwa teaches us that if you don't learn from the past history has a way of repeating itself. Michael Komape's death should have been a wake-up call that such tragedies must not happen in our country again.

According to the latest statistics on sanitation in schools that have been commissioned by the President, sadly we have 4 000 pit latrines in South Africa; 3 533 pit toilets due to be decommissioned; 25 schools with no sanitation in the Eastern Cape; toilets with no water connection, like at Isisusa Secondary School in KwaZulu-Natal; and 30 000 age-appropriate Grade R toilets seats outstanding at primary schools.

It is going to cost us R7,8 billion to ensure that all schools have proper sanitation. It's almost the same amount that the

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National Treasury, astoundingly, has cut the school infrastructure budget by.

The poor performance of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative, Asidi, programme is not helping. They are unable to meet their targets. They were unable to meet them last year. Out of 59 schools that were supposed to be built, only 16 were achieved. For sanitation, 265 were targeted but they only achieved 10. For connecting water, 280 were targeted but they only achieved 10. When it comes to electricity, out of 620 they achieved zero.

Another challenge is how programmes are managed within the provinces. For instance, in the Eastern Cape they failed to spend the infrastructure budget. There's no doubt that that also had some bearing in the downsizing of the budget. That is not progress. It is incompetence!

To respond to what the Deputy Minister said, I want to clarify that when it comes to the Western Cape we have the highest percentage of bachelor passes at 39,1% [Applause.] A total of 41,9% of our learners in the Western Cape got 50% or more for Mathematics and you talk about participation. Participation

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means nothing if your learners are failing. [Applause.] The next highest was Gauteng at 33,4%.

You cannot say, like in Science, that other provinces have done well. We are sitting at 43,3% of our learners who achieved 50% or more. The next highest was the Free State that achieved 34,5%.

Then you want to tell us about the drugs. Yes, we have problems with drugs in the Western Cape but we have pleaded continuously with the national government for specialised SA Police Service, SAPS, drug units in the Western Cape. You have not assisted us in that. [Applause.] [Interjections.] So, I'm sorry to say, but it's no use coming up here with fake news. [Applause.] [Time expired.]

Mr L M NTSHAYISA: Hon Chairperson, Budget number 14 of education was considered the annual performance plans and statutory bodies that are Umalusi and the South African Council for Education, SACE, were also scrutinised. It is our feeling that adequate funds should be allocated for Basic Education so as to fight the challenges of infrastructure at our schools for teachers and principals to receive proper training in management. We also wish that the roll-out of

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information and communication technologies, ICT, for the purpose of teaching and training is intensified. Gauteng is a very good example in this regard. I wish other provinces like mine can also be also a good example.

The issue of safety in schools will never be addressed without proper structure and feeling of responsibility on the part of other role players, for example, the incidents where young learners fell into pit toilets should have been foreseen by the school authorities while still waiting for the department to build new toilets. There is no sound reason why those old pit toilets were not demolished while they were still waiting for new toilets. As it was the responsibility of the school authorities to demolish those toilets, this was a lack of sense of responsibility on the part of the school management.

The department should always try to improve quality of teaching and learning through development, supply and active utilisation of teachers. However, the issue of redeployment is always a challenge. Teachers that are not very diligent and lazy to teach at least must now quit the profession. Without the adequate and quality infrastructure, teaching and learning support materials our efforts will be a futile exercise. The Department of Basic Education must be hard on school

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authorities that are always in violation of education laws, the policies and regulations.

Some public schools are still currently charging school and building fees whereas now education from grade 12 is supposed to be free. This is what is happening in schools in Mount Frere, Thabankulu, example is Zwelakhe Secondary School which is charging building fees. That is not a very good thing and not correct. A follow up must be made into these culprits and they must be brought to book because they are not supposed to charge fees to parents. we wish that we have adequate funding to address the challenges of the lack of classrooms but ... [Interjections.] Okay. Thank you very much. [Time expired.]

Ms N R MOKOTO: Hon Chairperson, since 1994 far reaching reforms have taken place with the aim of breaking down the structures of apartheid and eradicating educational inequalities and setbacks. Through sweat and blood the ANC-led government had facilities, sustained and consistent move to a transformative, inclusive and developmental system of education which values all children as equal citizens deserving of equal opportunities and rights for growth and self actualisation.

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In 2009, further reinforced by the 2017 national conference the ANC-led government made education an apex priority in the country. Throughout this period we have seen a radical shift and a huge increase in budget allocations for education and education-related expenditure in government. Chairperson, as we move forward through this difficult journey of transformation we do so with confidence knowing that the ANC led government has opened many doors of learning and access to education for our young and some with special needs. A clarion call long made by the People's Assembly when it adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955. Unlike before more learners are now in schools receiving education which is responsive and inclusive to their needs and that of the country.

The South African schools Act adopted in 1996 practically makes it compulsory for all learners to attend school and this is reinforced by the charter for human rights in Basic Education of the SA Human Rights Commission which states that; basic education becomes constitutionally a protected right which unequivocally requires monitoring and support. Today more learners with disabilities are attending special schools and are receiving appropriate education on adapted curriculum based on their identified needs, requisite support and resources are allocated equitably like in mainstream schools.

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We commend the department for achieving this special milestone in our education, particularly the introduction of a financial grant to specially cater for profoundly disabled and intellectually impaired learners. As the ANC-led government when took power we boldly expressed that the end of days marked by injustice, inequality and humiliation are over.

The introduction of sign language is another milestone which we have to highlight and noting that this year will be for the first time that learners with disabilities would be writing senior certificate for the first. However we want to urge the department to do more work in terms of ensuring that those learners who are blind also get admission in schools and universities. Allow me to express my confidence to the work done by the department in strategically positioning itself to equip learners for the world of work and for positions of scarce skills. At the core of this programme is the issue of eradicating youth unemployment and creating sustainable jobs and build the economy

We would like to highlight that we are aware of the amount of work that has already been done and we would like to urge the department to work closely with other stakeholders to intensify the footprint of this work. Some of the targets set

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out for 2030 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, in its sustainable development goals, SDGs, particularly SDG4, obligate nations to ensure an inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all and increasing youth and adults who have appropriate skills including technical, vocational and work for decent jobs and entrepreneurship happens. Our own National Development Plan, NDP, in its vision 2030, instructs us to work together in allowing learners from different directions that provide superior quality learning advantages to them. One of the main objects of this programme is for the Department of Higher Education and Training to deliver about 30 000 graduates in artisanship by 2030. We know the critical role that Department of Basic Education, DBE, can play in ensuring that this materialises particularly achieving the visions as set out in SDG4 and the NDP. We are aware of the progress made with regard to changes in curriculum particularly the introduction of the Three Stream Curriculum Model, which provides learners with opportunities for different career pathways as choice to keep their individual interests, aptitudes and abilities.

In introducing this model I would like to indicate that the academic pathway largely prepares learners for higher

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education studies at the end of grade 12 schooling and vocational will mainly be 50% practical components and for artisanship and professions whereas as the occupational pathway will cater for 75% practical component and mainly prepares learners for the world of work. In that instance, I would like to highlight that this has confirmed the view of the portfolio committee that all learners are not cognitively equally gifted. In that case, learners will be treated according to their needs and capabilities.

The fourth industrial revolutions have provided a disruptive digital technology that will change the way we live, work and interact with the global markets. In dealing with that aspect, certain emerging unprecedented skills sets will be introduced to allow learners to engage with advanced technologies such as automation artificial intelligence, robotics, nanotechnology, 3D printing and autonomous vehicles will demand none routine interpersonal skills ... We support the Budget Vote. I thank you. [Time expired.]

Prof N M KHUBISA: House Chairperson, hon Ministers, Deputy Ministers, hon members, thank you very much. This department is entrusted with the responsibility of laying the foundation of the best quality education that will afford our learners'

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minds to be fit for the ensuing years in tertiary education and the world of work or as fully-fledged citizens.

Nelson Mandela once said:

Our children are the rock on which our future will be built, our greatest asset as a nation. They will be the leaders of our country, the creators of our national wealth, those who care for and protect our people.

Among its priorities this department has set for itself in 2014-2019 MTSF are: To improve the quality of teaching and learning through development and supply and effective utilisation of teachers; improve quality of teaching and learning through the provision of adequate, quality infrastructure and learning and support material; expanded access to early childhood development, ECD; and improvement of quality of Grade R, with support of pre-Grade R.

The Minister and Deputy Minister must be commended for the good results in 2017 but, as the NFP, we want to say that we need more bachelors' passes. As the NFP we want to make a few recommendations: 1) the department must improve on school security and learner transport. School infrastructure in many

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schools is still bad. There are still schools with no laboratories, libraries, toilets and classrooms. There is the use of mud classrooms especially in rural areas and children who sit under the trees. Incidents of children who have fallen and died in pit toilets are worrying as it recently happened in the Gauteng and other provinces too. Drug abuse in schools, the use of weapons and learners killing one another and teachers harassed, beaten or killed in schools are causes for concern.

The poor standard of our learners' in literacy, reading and mathematics nationally compared to their regional or international counterparts is a cause for great concern. Some teachers graduate and do not get employed for very a long time. Grade R teachers are poorly paid. There is generally a shortage of maths and science teachers in rural areas. In certain regional offices acts of corruption are reported. In some provinces norms and standards are not attended to properly. The development and distribution of digital content to schools annually to promote e-learning in schools is praiseworthy. However, as the NFP, we want to emphasise the fact that there is indeed a dire need to ensure that our schools in urban areas are also exposed to technological

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education.

The department is commended for setting the target of 13 500 young people for a Funza Lushaka Bursary annually for them to enrol for initial teacher education qualification. We need more teachers and that's why we advocate for the reopening of teacher education colleges. It is noted that in 2018-2019 there is a decrease of the budget for the Department of Education from 23,4 billion in 2017-2018 financial year to R22,7 billion in 2018-2019 financial year. The reduction amounting to R3,6 billion to education infrastructure is really worrying and is a cause for concern. The taking of away of R50,5 million from the maths, science and technology conditional grant is also worrying when it is well-known that we don't have maths and science teachers in rural areas. Having raised these concerns, we believe that the department still has to do better and, as the NFP, we support the budget. Thank you very much.

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Minister, the imagination of the country has been captured by the ongoing spate of violence and abuse within our schooling environment. The National School Safety Framework which should be implemented by all schools has to date not been workshopped by all, and close on 10 000 of the

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25 000 public schools still have to be trained on this framework. This is indicative of the lack of will by provinces as they will only finalise this process in the 2018-19 financial year.

To name but a few, there are reasons for the failure of schools and provinces in exercising their responsibilities, namely gross under-reporting of incidents due to poor and ineffective management systems; the lack of will to investigate these cases and the possible bribing of parents by the perpetrators; learners find it difficult to speak out for fear of retaliation and the stigma that may be attached to it; the fear of not being believed or of being blamed for this abuse; the power relation often intimidates learners into silence where the educator is the abuser; the lack of counselling and assistance; and the inability of most learners to talk about sexual matters with adults due to cultural or other reasons.

The SA Council of Educators, Sace, a statutory body within the Department of Basic Education dealing with the vetting and verification of educators, as well as the investigation of cases referred to them, have on numerous cases indicated to us that they cannot execute their mandate because they do not

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have the capacity to do so. What is of concern in this department is that the ethics department only has the services of three prosecutors and two investigators on a full-time basis. More full-time prosecutors and investigators must be appointed to assist with these cases and to ensure that the perpetrators face the might of the law. If they meet these conditions, those found guilty should be placed on the Child Protector Register and/or the Sexual Offenders Registers, and their Sace certificates must be withdrawn.

Our learners are on a trial of survival and unsafe schooling environments and invariably drop out due to the lack of support, and they become a statistical figure. The department must therefore admit that they have not adequately addressed their failures in creating safe schools.

The Western Cape Education Department that you keep on attacking, is the only provincial department with a safe schools hotline playing an important and dedicated role in addressing the relevant needs, where reporting on all school crime and abuse can be made with immediate assistance. It would bode well if all provinces followed suit. Thank you.

[Applause.]

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Mr A BOTES: House Chairperson, the leadership of basic education led by the Minister, hon Chief Whip of the ANC, ladies and gentlemen, today is exactly 52 years since the lifelong imprisonment of Bram Fischer by the apartheid regime. His conduct was regard as antithesis to what was then white normative and expected conduct.

The election of Nelson Mandela exactly 24 years ago on 9 May 1994 in this very Parliament undermined concretively and substantively the narrative of white supremacy and black inferiority.

Education is the incubator-centre for the production of a future of less joblessness, and rendering poverty poorer. It used as applied instrument to Social Justice.

Rosa Luxemburg was instructive when she reminded us that we must 'always loudly proclaim what is happening'. It is a favour, hon Chair, that in South Africa we spend three times more on education than a country like Kenya. It is a fact we perform better than Quardari, Indonisia, Peru, Morocco, and that is in terms of the World Economic Forum Global Information Technology report produced in 2015.

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In fact, our education spends 2% on average more than any other European country. Like Rosa Luxemburg said, we must always loudly proclaim what is happening. To tackle the pitfalls in education requires two common approaches; namely, the approach of increasing access and learning.

The important issue, House Chairperson, is that before we took over government in 1994 the total education expenditure was R231 billion. Now, can we remind our people that the contribution today is R57 billion towards just the component of free higher education. [Applause.] The democratic government today of our people spends R320 billion on educations.

So, there is no interstate conflict. What we contribute to basic education and what finds expression in higher education is a common goal to render poverty poorer. That is important to our people. I hear that there has been a concern raised about the question of teacher expenditure and at the same time we have been encouraged to develop content knowledge so that our teachers can apply better pedagogical practices.

The fact that 14 000 Funza Lushaka bursary was contributed with state money so that so that last year 2 600 new graduates

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managed to enter the educational field says something about the pro-poor agenda of the ANC government and its Minister in government.

Hon House Chair, let us speak true to power so that our people are not confused. In 2009 when Minister Motshekga took over this department the Matric pass rate was 60,6%. Today it stands at 75,1%. [Applause.] Now that is forward movement and there are no backward steps.

Let us address this question of the descendents of Hendrik Verwoerd on the question of mathematics. When Hendrik Verwoerd said: What is the use of teaching African child mathematics? We want to caution the Western Cape government that you cannot enrol a 32% of your entire learners for full mathematics and then you claim easy victories.

Where the ANC govern in provinces that are rural and more poorer such as KwaZulu-Natal where we have enrolment of 55,1% and in the Easter Cape 53,2%. So, to claim easy victories – we are just reminding the DA and their peers not to do so. This means that there can be no disclaimer in this House of Parliament about the performance of basic education as a function of carrying for pro-poor government.

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Let us move and ask a very simplified question: 23 new state-of-the-art brick-and-mortar schools have been built last year. Since the time that the Minister stood in Parliament the fact of the matter is that the descendants of apartheid engineered that constructed the mud schools are present in this House. But as Nelson Mandela has done we are saying forward ever and backward never. We forget the bad things that have been done by some among us wearing beautiful suits and dresses.

Hon Chairperson, let's address the questions to the Minister of Basic Education. We think that there is a problem of a balance sheet on the basic education. The fact of the matter is the poor and the working-class should be the primary recipients of our government's agenda.

We must therefore rather add on the side of the poor than the over cautious on the unfounded fears and anxiety of those who represent the richest in this Parliament. It therefore says change moves in spirals, not circles. The fact of the matter is that in South Africa today we have more than 12 million learners trained by over 1418 000 educators in 25 000 of our schools. That is significant for any government, worse a government that has been only 24 years in power.

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Simultaneously, what is important is that our no-fee-schools has produced an enormous amount of qualitative outcomes in areas where we have a no-fee-schools we have been able to see that 76 300 of learners in pro-poor schools that are being subsidised by our government has obtained bachelors passes. That oppose to the 67 000 learners the in fee-schools, and I think the balance sheet that we have been speaking about in the leadership of the Minister we are getting it right. We are creating equilibrium of the ones who has and the ones who don't have.

Importantly, ladies and gentlemen, today we are asking a very simply question: is this generation better educated than their parents? Our Statistics SA confirms that the majority of young people aged 20 to 34 in South Africa have a higher level of education than their parents.

More than 65 years later, after the promulgation of the Bantu Education Act 1953 we are saying we are moving forward as the ANC on the question of intergenerational mobility. That is whether or not our children realise higher education attainment better than those of their forebears.

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The question that we must address is the question of what we call the under education gap, where some of our families remain unskilled from one generation to the next. Therefore it must be an instruction to our Minister that there must be an input costs in terms of our human capital convergent more money must be dedicated to teacher development; and we are very happy, Minister that you have actually increased teacher development by allocating R1,3 billion. That is where the benefit of our money will make us proud. Thank you.

[Applause.]

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Chair, let me take this opportunity to thank all members for their inputs in the debate. I think it was a very constructive debate. We have noted the positive and constructive counsel that has come from various members of the committee, especially from parties that are clearly knowledgeable on matters of education and education transformation in our country, about the challenges facing our country. Those parties are undoubtedly driven by patriotism and not sheer populism informed by political opportunism. They know who they are. [Interjections.]

As a Minister, I'm never going to play the Western Cape off against the other provinces of our country because the kids in

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the Western Cape belong to us as South Africans. They are kids and we wish them well and we celebrate when they succeed.

It's quite clear that in the policy ...

I think South Africans have to note that if you don't vote the DA into majority, they will hate you, collect stories and wish ill for you, and even collect sordid stories of murder – who killed where, who was killed – just to portray you in a negative light.

But kids in the Western Cape should know that, as the ANC, and as their Minister, we care about them, and celebrate everything going well when it is going well for them. They are not in an enemy province, unlike others which I'm sure declared ... because, when, as much as they say "we" and "our children" they only mean the children of the Western Cape. The rest are enemies.

So, I'm also ... [Interjections.] ... I'm not, as some say, very willing to really get into debates about political parties that clearly have no vision about education, that have no policies on education, that bring gossip and street talk about who killed where, who died where ... There are no

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educational matters that they can put on the table for us to use as a sector. We are always very willing to learn from members.

So, these pedestrian debates of talking to people who just seem to have woken up today ... they've just discovered mud schools ... don't know how they came about ... I can assure them that the ruling party, on an ongoing basis, is eradicating those mud schools it inherited. [Applause.] So, we didn't bring mud schools, so we can't be held responsible. So as I said, I'm not keen on engaging with pedestrian debates.

But what I can say, member Mkaliphi, is that when you compare private schools with public schools in South Africa, you are comparing elephants with mice. Public schools constitute 96% of schooling in this country. So it means South Africans still have huge confidence in them. So, if you say schools are closing in Rwanda, then that belongs there. Here, South Africans have huge confidence in the public sector ...

[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon Minister, please take your seat. Yes, hon member? Why are you rising?

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Mr L G MOKOENA: I'm rising on a point of clarity, Chair.

[Interjections.] We just wanted to check which comparison the Minister is talking about, because the hon Mkaliphi never drew a comparison between private and public schools. Can we get clarity on that, please? Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): No. Continue, hon Minister. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Come again?

Chair, I really want to share with this House that 96% of South Africans still have confidence in the public sector, and only 4% prefer the private sector. The public sector provides for more than 13 million learners in this country, compared to fewer than 300 000 learners in private schools in this country. So, there's no comparison.

I really want to say to member Ollis, I wish you well. I think, go to school, my comrade. You need it! At this rate, you need it. I wish you well. You will become a better politician with your energy. So, good luck! Go to school!

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As I said ... because that's the last thing ... I forgot. I was unable to mention again that, through our programme to promote unity and pride as social transformation and cohesion which includes school sports and school choral and indigenous school events, we are also working very hard to make sure that we close this question of too many sports codes in the education sector. As I said earlier, we will be sending a memorandum to the Department of Sports and Culture.

As I close I also want to invite our partners and academics to join us on 31 May. We have received reports of a very exciting history project which I think all South Africans should participate in. I think it is going to be a festival of ideas in which all South Africans can engage outside of the glare of media glare to create the history we want, the national identity we want, and the national unity and patriotism we want. I think we should open it up and get every other South African to contribute towards this rewriting of history. I think it is going to be a very exciting exercise.

As I close I really want to thank our partners in civil society, the NGOs, the private sector, and the foundations that have been helping us. The academics in the country have also been extremely helpful in also guiding and supporting the

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work that we do. So thank you very much. I also thank the members for the debate. [Applause.]

Debate concluded.

The mini-plenary session rose at 16:10.

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