**Report of the Select Committee on Education and Technology, Sports, Arts and Culture on Budget Vote 16: Basic Education, dated 31 May 2022**

The Select Committee on Education and Technology, Sports, Arts and Culture, having considered Budget Vote 16: Basic Education, reports as follows:

**1. Introduction**

The Department of Basic Education (the Department) derives its mandate from Sustainable Development Goal Number Four, National Development Plan, Action Plan to 2024 for Schooling 2030, and the Medium Term Strategic Framework, to shape its plans such as the Strategic Plan and the Annual Performance Plans.

The Bill of Rights, states that all South Africans have the right to basic education, including adult basic education and access to further education. It further indicates that the state has an obligation, through reasonable measures, to progressively make education available and accessible.

The Select Committee on Education and Technology, Sports, Arts and Culture (the Committee) considered the Budget and the 2022/23 Annual Performance Plan (APP) of the Department of Basic Education (the Department) on Wednesday, 20 April 2022. The budget review briefing served to acquaint the 6th Parliament Select Committee with the mandate, programmes and priorities of the Department.

This report gives a brief summary of the presentation made by the Department to the Committee, focusing mainly on the 2022/23 Annual Performance Plan and the 2020 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) allocations. The report also provides the Committee’s key deliberations and recommendations relating to Vote 16.

**2. Summary of the 2022/23 Annual Performance Plan**

The Department, in the five years (2019 to 2024) had planned to implement the following set of priorities, which are expressed as Medium Term Strategic Framework Outcomes:

* **Outcome 1:** Improved school-readiness of children.
* **Outcome 2:** 10-year-old learners enrolled in publicly funded schools read for meaning.
* **Outcome 3:** Youths better prepared for further studies and the world of work beyond Grade 9.
* **Outcome 4:** Youths leaving the schooling system more prepared to contribute towards a prosperous and equitable South Africa.
* **Outcome 5:** School physical infrastructure and environment that inspires learners to learn and teachers to teach.

The 2022/23 Annual Performance Plan (APP) represents the third year towards the achievements of objectives contained in the Department’s 2019 – 2024 Strategic Plan. The presentation by the Department to the Committee outlined the Department's approach to the government-wide National Development Plan (NDP) and education sector priorities. The intention was to ensure programme activities in the sector were aligned with medium and long- term goals. The annual performance plan (APP) set out what the Department intended doing in the 2022/23 financial year and during the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) period, to implement its strategic plan. Table 1 below is the summary of Programme Performance Indicators for the 2022/23 financial year.

Table 1:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Programme** | **No. of indicators per programme** | **Annual Targets** | **Quarterly Targets** | **Bi-Annual Targets** | **Biennially/****Targets** |
| **Administration****- 1** | 6 | 2 | 4 | - | - |
| **Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring****- 2** | 31 | 29 | 1 | 1 | - |
| **Teachers, Education Human Resources and****Institutional Development****- 3** | 11 | 10 | 1 | - | - |
| **Planning, Information and Assessment****- 4** | 16 | 15 | - | - | 1 |
| **Educational Enrichment Services****- 5** | 6 | 2 | 4 | - | - |
| **Total distribution** | **70** | **58** | **10** | **1** | **1** |
| **Percentage distribution** | **100%** | **84%** | **12%** | **1%** | **1%** |

The sector plan for basic education had been reviewed and strengthened for the 2020-24 planning cycle. The action plan was based on 27 national goals intended to improve basic education. Thirteen of these goals were output goals, dealing with better school results and better enrolment of learners in schools. The remaining 14 goals dealt with initiatives that must be implemented to realise the output goals.

In the State of the Nation Address (SONA), the Presidential pronouncements had set the key government priorities and deliverables for the year, which, in turn, determined the priorities of the Department and the basic education sector as a whole. The pronouncements committed the Department in public to key activities and outcomes. Alignment of its current plans to those key areas had tangible implications for the Department and the sector as a whole. The Department became responsible for the Early Childhood Development (ECD) function as on 1 April 2022, through the proclamation signed by the President on 27 June 2021.

**3. Budget of the Department**

The budget of the Department is summarized as follows:

Table 2:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2022/23****R’000** | **2023/24****R’000** | **2024/25****R’000** |
| 2022 Indicative Allocation | 29 372 764 | 30 052792 | 31 402 447 |
| Departmental baseline | 6 532 266 | 6 227 774 | 6 507 461 |
| Conditional Grants to provinces | 22 840 498 | 23 825 018 | 24 894 986 |
| Learners with Profound Intellectual Disability Grant | 249 430 | 260 424 | 272 120 |
| Early Childhood Development | 1 191 918 | 1 242 487 | 1 298 286 |
| Maths, Science and Technology grant | 424 528 | 433 079 | 452 528 |
| Education Infrastructure Grant | 12 229 436 | 12 768 433 | 13 341 856 |
| National School Nutrition Programme grant | 8 504 132 | 8 878 942 | 9 277 690 |
| HIV and AIDS( life skills education) grant | 241 054 | 241 653 | 252 506 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **BASELINE INCREASES** |  |  |  |
| Compensation of employees | 11 185 | - | - |
| Departmental agencies and accounts(UMALUSI) | 20 000 | 20 000 | 20 000 |
| Foreign government and International organisations (ADEA) | 836 | 836 | 836 |
| Goods and Services | 32 745 | 32 745 | 32 745 |
| Ntataise (ECD function) | 1 083 | 1 083 | 1 132 |
| Presidential Employment Stimulus: Oversight | 5 000 | 5 400 | - |
| South African Congress for Early Childhood Development (ECD function) | 826 | 829 | 866 |
| Uhambo foundation (ECD function) | 2 130 | 2 143 | 2 239 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **BASELINE REDUCTION** | (53 581) | (53 581) | **(53** (53 581) |
| Departmental Agencies and Accounts | (3 000) | (3 000) | (3000) |
| Goods and Services (Departmental Operations) | (24 421) | (24 124) | (24 124) |
| Households (Funza Lushaka) | (26 160) | (26 160) | (26 160) |
|  |  |  |  |
| **ADJUSTMENTS TO CONDITIONAL GRANTS** |  |  |  |
| Conditional Grants to provinces | 167 179 | 325 762 | - |
| Learners with Profound Intellectual Disability Grant | 6 091 | **-**- | - |
| Early Childhood Development | 764 | - | - |
| Maths, Science and Technology grant | 265 | - | - |
| Education Infrastructure Grant | 154 649 | 325 762 | - |
| HIV and AIDS( life skills education) grant | 1 221 | - | - |
| National School Nutrition Programme grant | 4 189 | - | - |

**3.1. Programmes Allocations over the 2022 MTEF**

Table 3:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **BUDGETS** |
| **PROGRAMME** | **2022/23****R’000** | **2023/24****R’000** | **2024/25****R’000** |
| **Administration** | 535 184 | 538 464 | 562 869 |
| **Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring** | 3 280 768 | 3 337 074 | 3 486 938 |
| **Teachers, Education Human Resource and Institutional Development** | 1 501 105 | 1 505 673 | 1 567 649 |
| **Planning, Information and Assessment** | 15 416 997 | 15 810 760 | 16 180 197 |
| **Educational Enrichment Services** | 8 826 113 | 9 196 038 | 9 609 031 |
| **Total**  | 29 560 167 | 30 388 009 | 31 406 684 |

**3.2. Economic Classifications Allocations over the 2022 MTEF**

Table 4:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **BUDGETS** |
| **PROGRAMME** | **2022/23****R’000** | **2023/24****R’000** | **2024/25****R’000** |
| Compensation of Employees | 549 328 | 541 065 | 565 363 |
| Goods and services | 2 246 887 | 2 256 959 | 2 352 418 |
| Interest and Rent on Land | 40 553 | 40 709 | 42 537 |
| Transfers and subsidies | 24 662 313 | 25 812 492 | 26 631 697 |
| Payments of capital assets | 2 061 086 | 1 736 784 | 1 814 669 |
| Total | 29 560 167 | 30 388 009 | 31 406 684 |

**3.3. Details of Earmarked Allocations (R’000) over the 2022 MTEF**

Table 5:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Earmarked Funds** | **2022/23****R’000** | **2023/24****R’000** | **2024/25****R’000** |
| Learners with Profound Intellectual Disabilities Grant - Nat | 3 320 | 3 468 | 3 624 |
| Matric Second Chance | 58 162 | 58 057 | 60 665 |
| National School Nutrition Programme Grant-Nat | 19 655 | 19 643 | 20 526 |
| Oversight of Maths, Science and Technology Grant-Nat | 6 779 | 6 767 | 7 071 |
| Presidential Employment Stimulus: Oversight | 5 000 | 5 400 | - |
| Workbooks | 1 207 033 | 1 204 870 | 1 258 978 |
| Total | 1 299 949 | 1 298 205 | 1 350 864 |

**3.4. Details of Conditional Grants Allocations/Transfers (R’000) over the 2022 MTEF**

Table 6:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Conditional Grants** | **2022/23****R’000** | **2023/24****R’000** | **2024/25****R’000** |
| Learner with Profound Intellectual Disabilities | 255 521 | 260 424 | 272 120 |
| Early Childhood Development Grant | 1 192 682 | 1 242 487 | 1 298 286 |
| Maths, Science and Technology Grant | 424 793 | 433 079 | 452 528 |
| Education Infrastructure Grant | 12 384 085 | 13 094 195 | 13 341 856 |
| HIV and AIDS(life skill education) Grant | 242 275 | 241 653 | 252 506 |
| National School Nutrition Programme Grant | 8 508 321 | 8 878 942 | 9 277 690 |
| Total | 23 007 677 | 24 150 780 | 24 894 986 |

**3.5. Details of Other Transfers Allocations (R’000) over the 2022 MTEF**

Table 7:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Other Transfers** | **2022/23****R’000** | **2023/24****R’000** | **2024/25****R’000** |
| **UNESCO Membership Fees** | 17 773 | 1 7 841 |  18 642 |
| **ADEA** | 1 000 | 1 001 |  1 008 |
| **Guidance Counselling and Youth Development Centre: Malawi** | 204 | 205 | 214 |
| **Childline South Africa** | 82 | 86 | 90 |
| **National Education Collaboration Trust** | 120 738 | 121 515 | 126 972 |
| **Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality** | 3 816 | 3 831 | 4 003 |
| **NSFAS: Funza Lushaka** | 1 328 953 | 1 334 160 | 1 395 251 |
| **South African Congress for Early Childhood Development (ECD function)** | 826 | 829 | 866 |
| **Uhambo foundation (ECD function)** | 2 130 | 2 143 | 2 239 |
| **Ntataise (ECD function)** | 1 083 | 1 083 | 1 132 |
| **Total** | 1 476 605 | 1 482 694 | 1 550 417 |

**3.6. Details of Other Transfers Allocations (R’000) over the 2022 MTEF**

Table 8:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Other Transfers** | **2022/23****R’000** | **2023/24****R’000** | **2024/25****R’000** |
| Transfers to Public Entities | 178 031 | 179 010 | 186 294 |
| Umalusi | 162 031 | 162 945 | 169 365 |
| ETDP SETA | 472 | 474 | 495 |
| South African Council for Educators | 15 528 | 15 599 | 16 434 |
| Total Transfers | 1 654 636 | 1 661 704 | 1 736 711 |

**4. Committee Observations**

The Committee, having considered and deliberated on the Annual Performance Plans 2022/23 of the Department of Basic Education made the following key observations and findings:

* Members raised a concern regarding the impact of the KZN disaster on the affected schools and appreciated the amount of work that the Minister and the Department had done to deal with the situation. They commended the President for coming forward and declaring a state of disaster over the devastating floods.
* Members were much concerned that most of the schools affected were in the rural areas, where there was no infrastructure such as Wi-Fi and Technology. They, however, trusted that something positive would come out of this situation.
* They asked whether the Department had short and long-term plans that had been put in place to ensure a quick return of children to schools while the necessary steps were taken to remedy the situation.
* As per floods damage to more than 500 schools amounting to R400 million, a question was raised as to what were the immediate plans to assist the schools that were affected.
* Members requested the Department to provide the Committee with the exact percentages, per province, of teachers needed throughout the country and what had been done so far.
* With regard to teacher recruitment, Members enquired the subjects needed for placements.
* Members further asked whether the numbers of teachers were adequate for the implementation of ECDs.
* Members wanted to know the criteria used to identify the effectiveness of the SGBs for the targeted schools, the one used to elect the members and the training provided so that they were well capacitated.
* They also wanted to know how the schools were supported financially to assist with the payment of SGBs.
* Members noted with concern the shortage of mathematics and science teachers and enquired the subjects the Department was targeting for Funza Lushaka funding awarded to learners.
* Members also questioned the date set for the complete eradication of pit toilets.
* Members asked if it was true that Assistant Teachers were not allowed to do training or further their qualifications and what their long-term plan was.
* Members questioned challenges the Department was experiencing when replacing the previous Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) term with Early Career Teacher (ECT) in basic education.
* Members expressed their concern regarding parents who lived in townships and farms because they are far from the enrolment centres. They, therefore, pleaded with the Department to consider placing enrolment centres near communities.

**Responses from the Department**

The Department gave the following responses:

* On the issue of financial assistance for flood-affected schools, the situation was currently being assessed, with the Minister of Basic Education being in KZN to look at the situation. At the provincial and national level, the whole Department, as led by Mr Kwazi Mshengu, the MEC for Education in KZN, worked together to assess the situation for possible solutions. Only after this assessment was done would it be known what the needs were and the assistance that could be given to remedy the situation.
* The Department stood a good chance of recovery from lost time due to the lessons learnt through the Covid-19 pandemic, when the whole world had to cancel a full year of school and had later recovered from it. Covid-19 had affected the whole country, but this incident occurred in one province. Based on lessons learnt from the pandemic in 2020, the Department should manage to work through this situation and save the school year for the KZN Province.
* The Department noted the concern regarding Wi-fi and Technology and indicated that, on 28 January 2022, the Cabinet approved a plan to provide schools with connectivity and all the schools affected by floods in KZN and Eastern Cape would be prioritised. Furthermore, Statistics SA was in the process of donating +- 165 00 tablets that were used during Census 2022 to the Basic Education Sector.
* The Department mentioned that it would work with the EC and KZN provinces to provide the damaged schools with ICT resources. In the interim, the Department would engage with the KZN Education Department to provide temporary solution to the affected schools.
* The Department indicated that Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) declare post establishments for schools on an annual basis based on balancing the need and funds available. All PEDs allocated posts to schools for 2022 in September 2021. In terms of the post provisioning policy/norms, once a school is allocated posts, such posts are regarded as adequate for that school and such posts must be filled accordingly. However, due to natural attrition, posts become vacant for some period while the administrative process to fill such posts is undertaken. The Department continuously monitors the filling of posts in schools through receiving reports from PEDs and verifying such reports with PERSAL data on a quarterly basis. The report below shows the vacancy rate per province as at the end of March 2022:



* The Department mentioned that it has identified certain subjects/phases as scarce hence the establishment of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme as a targeted source of supply for educators qualified in identified areas. Mathematics, Science, Technology and African Languages at Foundation Phase have featured on the list since the inception of the scheme. Subjects such as Braille and South African Sign Language have been added to the list recently.
* The Department indicated that the results of the recent ECD Census the Department carried out indicated that there are about 3,9 ECD practitioners per ECD Centre, who support about 39 children in the centre. This number excludes other support staff members in the centre and it allows for meaningful implementation of ECD programmes.
* The Department said that it has a monitoring tool which is used to determine the effectiveness of SGBs. The tool comprises major aspects of the role expected of SGBs and evaluate how the SGB performs each of the role and allocate a score. The scores are interpreted to indicate the functionality of the governing body. There is no criteria used for electing members to the SGB as it is a democratic process used by parents of learners in a school to elect representatives. The Department provides provinces with guidelines which contain topics to be covered during the training of SGB and the provinces prioritise and customise the training of SGBs in terms of the need assessed.
* The Department provided that it planned to complete the eradication of pit toilets on the original list of schools which were identified at inception of the SAFE initiative during the 2022/2023 financial year.
* The Department said that there were 5 062 students for mathematics, 1 848 for physical sciences, 2 874 for technical subjects, and 2 804 for indigenous South African languages.
* The Department said that the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI), implemented as the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) sought to provide employment opportunities for unemployed youth, between the ages of 18 and 35. It further targeted youth who are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). This was meant to expand access to opportunities for this group of young people, who are the most affected by unemployment and lack of access to economic opportunities. The Initiative is part of the Presidential Employment Stimulus (PES). The PES is implemented by 15 Departments, others addressing the other categories of youth, categories such as graduates, youth studying, people interested in agriculture, etc. In phase I of the initiative, since many students were studying online due to COVID-19 restrictions, some principals appointed youth who were studying. Some would take leave of up to three weeks to complete portfolio of evidence, or write exams, and came on the fourth week to receive full stipends. Principals and SGBs complained that the assistant who were brought in to support teachers were now always absent from work. During the audit of 2020/21, the AGSA issued a finding that there was no value for money paying full stipends to youth that were on leave for long periods as they were studying. Reports from provinces have indicated that most of the youth that exited the initiative in February 2022 left due to them going for full time studies, others that exited the initiative found other employment or other opportunities. The Department would continue to encourage youth to further their studies and also to focus so that they may receive good results. A fact sheet produced by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) provides information on the NEET and their vulnerabilities.
* The Department indicated that the matter regarding the NQT and CET did not fall under them but rather resided with the DHET.
* The Department noted the concern regarding the placement of enrolment centres closure to communities and indicated that it has engaged provincial departments to plan how they would assist parents in ensuring that centres are accessible or brought closure to communities. The Western Cape, for an example has been using shopping malls over weekends as enrolment centres and some schools were identified as centres to assist parents in completing forms. The Gauteng Department of Education will create centres when the admission process starts in July.

**5. Committee recommendations**

The Committee, having considered Budget Vote 16: Basic Education, together with the Annual Performance Plan of the Department of Basic Education recommends the following:

* The Department should ensure that all provinces align its plans to the national priorities and capacity be provided to those that fall short.
* The Departments should ensure that the Provinces do report on the expenditure and progress related to the conditional grants and the Committee be provided with such information to enhance its oversight mandate.
* In light of the infrastructure grants, the Committee recommends that the Department and Provinces do assess whether the model of implementing agents is a better model and do a comparative analysis whether its value for money, cost effective and delivery is on time. This is based on the fact that infrastructure development and replacement of non-viable infrastructure is happening at a slow pace and some Provinces like the Eastern Cape return part of the grant due to slow expenditure back to the National Treasury while the number of inappropriate schools remains high.
* The Department should speed up the readiness for e-learning as the COVID pandemic showed that some learners were left behind while their counterparts in the affluent schools were progressing with curriculum. Even though the curriculum was adjusted but meant that learner development would suffer going forward.

**6. Conclusion**

Having satisfied itself in its engagement with the Department of Basic Education on their Annual Performance Plan and Budget, the Select Committee on Education and Technology, Sports, Arts and Culture recommends that Budget Vote 16: Basic Education be adopted and that the House approves Budget.

**Report to be considered**.