



WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PROGRESS REPORT

**ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGULATIONS RELATING TO
MINIMUM UNIFORM**

NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

NOVEMBER 2020

Introduction

The Western Cape Education Department ("WCED") has a total of 1447 Public Ordinary school facilities across the Western Cape, with a total area of 5.2 million square metres and an estimated Capital Replacement Value (CRV) of more than R75 billion. Around 70% of these schools are primary schools, and as some of the schools in the province are the oldest in the country, they are a very valuable national asset.

The school infrastructure facilities are at various levels of compliance with respect to their current conditions, where some are:

- (a) Newly built and well-looked after;
- (b) Newly built but not well-looked after;
- (c) In good condition structurally, but not well maintained;
- (d) Built of appropriate materials, but not sound structurally, therefore not safe;
- (e) Inadequate because of insufficient functional spaces due to higher learner enrolment figures than their design capacity;
- (f) Incomplete because they do not have all the requisite functional spaces and/or outdoor amenities;
- (g) In a state of disrepair because of natural wear and tear; and/or
- (h) In a state of disrepair because of vandalism.

Five in every seven schools in the Western Cape were built more than 30 years ago and are reaching the end of their original design lives. Approximately 20% of schools in the total school portfolio (+300 schools) were constructed prior to 1960 and have an historic, heritage profile. In general, these facilities are built of appropriate materials, but are not sound structurally any longer, given its age, and therefore not safe. These schools are well past their design lives and are suffering severe deterioration of construction materials that were not designed or assembled to endure for lifecycles in excess of half a century. Approximately 53% of the total number of schools in the province (+750 schools) were built during the apartheid era between 1965 and 1994, and nearly all of these were built fully or partially of inappropriate materials or have sub-standard components – mainly wood, asbestos and precast concrete. The structural and safety conditions have worsened at these schools as a result of climate change and extreme weather patterns with wind and extreme heatwaves rendering many of these facilities unfit for its intended purpose.

The WCED remains steadfast in providing quality and purpose-built education facilities, eradicating those that do not meet the provisions of the Regulations relating to minimum uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure, promulgated in terms of the South African Schools Act, 1996, and also providing additional classrooms, basic services and furniture where these are inadequate.

In May 2014 the WCED developed a strategy and implementation plan for the elimination of public-school infrastructure backlogs. The strategy identified backlogs in all categories of norms and standards and the development of a plan to address the backlogs.

Category	2014 Backlog	2020 Backlog
Ablutions shortages	746 toilets at 96 schools	750 toilets at 106 schools ¹
Fencing	15 schools	0 schools
Laboratories	352 schools	304 Schools
Sports Fields	103 schools	103 Schools
Libraries	37 schools	9 Schools
Universal Access	499 schools	485 Schools
Inappropriate Structures	119	78 ²
Classrooms	149 classrooms at 53	589 classrooms at 190 ³

Table 1: Current nature of Infrastructure backlogs at schools in the Western Cape (2020)

¹ The ablutions backlog is a capacity backlog and not related to conditions or standards. Example : a school needs 10 toilets but only has 7. An internal audit of sanitation facilities in 2019 found that the conditions of toilets, largely impacted by vandalism and overcrowding, are routinely repaired by schools.

² The number of schools in the Western Cape built in full or in part of inappropriate materials to be replaced.

³ Aggregate of standards, capacity and condition backlog.

Western Cape progress

Within the financial constraints, the WCED has since 2014/15 directed funding towards eliminating backlogs and in doing so have replaced 53 schools constructed of inappropriate materials, and placed 40 mobile ablation facilities at 29 schools, placed 55 classrooms at 28 schools and provided 43 new school fences to replace vandalised or stolen fences at schools on the 2014 backlog lists. The WCED also contributed to the establishment of 15 laboratories and assisted 25 schools with funding to provide universal access.

What is apparent, however, is that, over and above the existing capacity backlogs, the condition of facilities and other demands keep changing with time. For the Province to be on track and ideally ahead of all these changes and to ensure that facilities continue to be conducive for the intended purpose ³ and meet the prescribed norms and standards, a significant **capital injection** is required.

The cost of eliminating backlogs in the Western Cape is estimated to be:

Category	Backlog	Approximate cost/item	Budget Required
Inappropriate Structures	78	R80 m	R6.2 billion
Ablutions shortages	750	R0,5m (4 toilets)	R94 million
Classrooms	589	R1 m	R589 million
Fencing	0	R1 m	R0
Laboratories	304	R 500 000	R152 million
Libraries	9	R 500 000	R4.5 million
Universal Access	485	R 200 000	R97 million
Sports Fields	103	R1 m	R103 million
Total funds needed			R 7.24 billion

Table 2: Cost to eliminate Infrastructure backlogs at schools in the Western Cape (2020)

School infrastructure is not being developed to evolve sustainably over the long term: The cost of eliminating schools built in full or in part of inappropriate materials *does not* include the costs to improve the condition of school infrastructure components that are in a state of disrepair at other schools as a result of overcrowding, lack of maintenance, vandalism or general wear and tear, which would additionally limit compliance with minimum norms and standards.

The increased demand for services against the backdrop of ever-diminishing budgets causes a dilemma in infrastructure planning: minimizing the cost of maintenance and asset lifecycle management.

The Western Cape Provincial Education Fixed Asset portfolio consists of buildings constructed with a variety of different designs and construction methods, ranging from conventional school buildings to prefabricated standardized buildings to once-off designs.

The Provincial Finance Management Act places a legal obligation on government to maintain all its assets and not doing so is negligent. Given the expanding nature of the provincial education system over the last 5 years, the priority allocation of Education infrastructure budget has necessarily been to capital projects, with only the balance to a minimum threshold retained for maintenance. The concept of life-cycle maintenance using government funding is therefore largely a theoretical one: no building has maintenance funding ringfenced for the duration of its lifecycle. This causes a trade-off between maintaining what we have versus new, which leads to a 'disconnect' between the maintenance budget and the actual

maintenance needs.. The magnitude of the deficit between the actual immovable asset maintenance budget allocations and the proposed generic lighthouse budget - recommended to be between 2 – 4% of the education asset portfolio's current replacement value (CRV) – is highlighted below.

Financial Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Grand Total
Actual Maintenance budget R '000	451,314	457,631	626,215	1,535,160
Preventative Maintenance budget required R '000	1,400,000	1,400,000	1,400,000	4,200,000
Maintenance budget deficit R '000	(948,686)	(942,369)	(773,785)	(2,664,840)

Table 3: Maintenance budget deficits across schools in the Western Cape (2020)

The annual maintenance budget deficit contributes to a separate maintenance backlog, which, based on the last 3 financial years, is in the order of R900 million a year. Maintenance is increasingly reactive rather than proactive. This widening gap is of great concern and requires the WCED to critically review its approach to the maintenance of its school infrastructure portfolio. But with the competing demands on the limited budget, the only affordable asset management approach is a "run-to-failure" maintenance strategy where maintenance is performed when the asset component fails.

Western Cape Education Department plans to address

1. SCHOOLS BUILT OF INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS INCLUDING WOOD, METAL AND ASBESTOS

Based on information gathered from the 2006 NEIMS assessment the WCED developed a list of schools built of inappropriate materials and has updated this list based on ongoing assessments and consultations. At time of the 2014 survey, there were 207 schools on the list. Schools already under construction or in planning and feasibility stage, as well as schools to be replaced under the ASIDI programme were excluded in the original calculation purposes.

The total number of schools that would be scoped as needing to be replaced fully or in part to meet the minimum uniform norms and standards is 149 of the 207 identified in the 2014 survey, which factors in school closures and the exclusion of schools that are leased by Government.

Against this baseline the following progress has been made since 2014:

- 53 school replacements have been completed since 2014/15;
- 9 school replacements are in construction phase scheduled to be completed by FY 2022/23;

District	2014 Backlog	Completed	Construction	Planning
CAPE WINELANDS	20	2	1	2
EDEN & CENTRAL KAROO	21	6	0	1
METRO CENTRAL	24	11	2	0
METRO EAST	8	7	0	0
METRO NORTH	19	10	1	0
METRO SOUTH	26	9	3	2
OVERBERG	11	4	1	1
WEST COAST	11	4	1	4
Grand Total	140	53	9	10

Table 4: Progress with replacing schools built of inappropriate materials in the W Cape since 2014/15 (2020)

- The delivery of the full or partial replacement of the remaining 78 schools are budget dependent. Budget has been allocated for 10 school replacements which are in the design and planning phases and are scheduled to be completed by end FY2024/25;

Due to funding shortfalls the focus for the remaining 68 schools will be to restore minimum functionality and undertake specific corrective maintenance and extended rehabilitation work to minimise the risk to the health and safety of all that use these school facilities. These measures include:

- Partial replacement of unsafe building sections built from inappropriate material or that show deterioration to the point of imminent failure;
- Renewals (Retaining of super structure);
- Replacement of sections with mobile classrooms as temporary measure in anticipation of the permanent replacement;
- Ringfenced corrective maintenance budget;

2. SHORTAGES OF ABLUTION FACILITIES AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

A special internal investigation into the state of water supply and services at schools in the Western Cape in 2019 found that schools in the Western Cape have more ablution facilities than is prescribed by the regulations. Unfortunately, the surpluses at relatively newer schools do not compensate for the under-supply of water and ablution facilities at other schools. The under-supply of ablution facilities thus needed to be addressed on a case by case basis.

Learner population growth in the province resulting in higher enrolment counts at schools and, in many cases overcrowding, puts pressure on the number of ablution facilities to be added. The shortage of sanitation facilities is shown by WCED District below.

District	Shortage of Toilets	Number of Schools
CAPE WINELANDS	210	25
EDEN AND CENTRAL		
KAROO	126	21
METRO CENTRAL	75	17
METRO EAST	69	7
METRO NORTH	69	6
METRO SOUTH	34	4
OVERBERG	56	8
WEST COAST	111	18
Grand Total	750	106

Table 3: Shortage of ablution facilities at schools in the Western Cape (2020)

The backlog calculation excludes all schools earmarked for replacement and all leased schools. Leased schools constitute a difficulty since the WCED does not invest public money on privately owned land yet basic N&S must be observed as far as possible. The approach that WCED has taken has been to approach leased school owners and ask them to bring schools up to standard and to re-negotiate the leases to take additional costs into account.

Schools in the Western Cape generally have more ablution facilities than is prescribed by the Regulations. Learner population growth in the province resulting in higher enrolment counts at schools and, in many cases overcrowding, puts pressure on the number of ablution facilities to be added. The WCED originally declared a backlog of ablutions at 96 schools. Since 2014 the WCED have addressed the ablution shortages at 29 schools.

The current backlog of 106 schools will be addressed as follows;

- 72 schools will be addressed in the 2020/21 Financial year and
- the balance of the 106 schools will be addressed over the MTEF 2021/22-2023/24.

3. SHORTAGES OF PERIMETER FENCING AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Information gathered from the 2014 survey indicated that less than 4% of schools in the Western Cape (54 schools) had no fence.

Schools on leased property are excluded as the property owner takes the necessary responsibility to ensure that the facility is properly secured and fenced. Furthermore, several of the schools without fences are on the replacement schools list, in which case fencing is incorporated as part of replacement. The result is that the fencing backlog was determined to be 15 schools.

All 15 schools' fences were delivered. However, as a result of theft and vandalism, schools require fences to be repaired or replaced as part of improving perimeter security and enhancing the safety of users. Regarding the latter, the technology used for fencing is reviewed annually and upgrades are planned for and delivered annually as part of preventative maintenance programmes.

The original survey in 2014 found that of the schools that have a perimeter fence, 400 schools described this fence as being in a bad condition. A further 519 schools described their fence as being in a fair condition and 482 described their fence as being in a good condition. As is the case with ablutions, improving fencing conditions are not considered to be part of the N&S backlog, but would need to receive appropriate attention as part of normal day-to-day maintenance arrangements.

4. SHORTAGES OF LABORATORIES AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

According to the 2014 survey approximately 625 schools reported to have access to a laboratory while 830 schools do not have access to a laboratory. These schools include both primary and secondary schools and include all schools regardless of enrolment size. When leased schools and schools to be replaced are excluded from consideration, the shortage is 304 labs.

The implementation of the 2014 strategy made for the provision of laboratories from 2018/19. To date 18 laboratories were provided to schools ahead of schedule. The WCED entered into a partnership with the Archway Foundation and University of Western Cape as well as the SAME Foundation to provide laboratories to schools. The programme focuses on upgrading of laboratories at high schools and not primary schools, however, which makes up 99.4% of the laboratory backlog.

5. SHORTAGES OF SPORTS FIELDS AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

In 2020 there has been no changes to the backlog of sports fields.

The 2014 survey found that 496 schools had no access to sports fields, approximately one third of all public ordinary schools in the Western Cape. However, when leased schools and replacement schools are excluded, the backlog is 103.

Most of the schools listed as not having sports fields, had been provided with a basic facility in the past but have seen it deteriorate to the point where the facility is not usable. Specific arrangements are being assessed on a school by school basis.

6. SHORTAGES OF LIBRARIES/MEDIA CENTRES AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

In 2020 there has been no changes to the backlog of libraries.

The 2014 survey found that approximately 1290 schools have access to a library, while 165 schools have no access to a library. Adjusting for leased and replacement schools, the current number of new libraries that do not have libraries is 9. As with labs consideration of the placement of mobile libraries at leased and other schools is being considered along with other options.

7. BACKLOGS IN RESPECT OF UNIVERSAL ACCESS AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

The survey conducted requested principals to indicate if their school facility had access to wheel chair friendly ramps, gates and doors as well as parking for the disabled. The survey found that approximately 844 schools had no disabled access in terms of ramps, gates and doors. Adjusting for leased schools etc. the total number of schools that would require disabled access is 499.

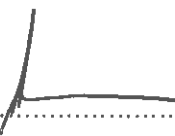
Since 2017/18 funds have been transferred to 25 schools to upgrade ablutions for disabled learners and build ramps for wheelchairs. 14 of the 25 schools that received funds appears on the 2014 backlog list and so the remaining backlog is 485 schools. Implementing this programme of work is challenging as the works involved are low rand value, widely spread and complex.

8. SHORTAGES OF CLASSROOMS AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Information regarding the availability of classrooms at schools was gathered from CEMIS and is based upon a learner to classroom ratio of 40 learners per classroom, using only classrooms and not specialist rooms such as libraries and laboratories. Based on these criteria, and for the schools assessed at baseline

survey, it is estimated that the Western Cape has a current classroom shortage of approximately 589 classrooms at 190 schools. At the time of the original survey, the calculated classroom shortage was 149 classrooms at 53 schools.

Since 2014/15, the WCED has built 156 Grade R classrooms, 233 expansion classrooms and provided 750 mobile classrooms to relieve service delivery pressure. This equates to 1139 classrooms built over the past 5 years. If averaged at 30 classrooms per school, these 1139 classrooms constructed equates to approximately 38 new schools.



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S ABRAHAMS


DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: PLANNING



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B SCHREUDER

HEAD OF EDUCATION



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D SCHAFER

MINISTER: OF EDUCATION

DATE: 19/1/2021