

THURSDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2010

***PROCEEDINGS OF THE
LEGISLATURE OF THE PROVINCE OF THE
EASTERN CAPE***

The House met at 10:00.

The Deputy Speaker took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayers or meditation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am told that we have guests in our midst who are from various schools. They want to be part of the debate. Let us therefore welcome them. Those people come from Gqubeni Senior Secondary school, the school that appeared in the Cutting Edge. [Applause.]

Siza kucela ke sibone ngezandla ngoba awabhalwanga amagama abo apha, sicela baphakame abasuka eGqubeni. Abakafiki? Abasuka eBhekisizwe bakhona bona? Abakafiki (*We would like them to indicate by show of hands as we were not furnished with their names. Can we see the people from Bhekisizwe? Have they arrived?*) Okay, we will acknowledge them as they come, but we should be mindful that the issues we are going to debate here are real issues, and they affect people.

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION ON SCHOOL VISITS**

Mr. M MRARA: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, the Executive Members of this legislature, members of the public, departmental officials and the staff of this Legislature, let me greet you this morning.

You are directed to a report that has been compiled by the Education Portfolio Committee. If I may guide; there supposed to be an annexure to the report, but I am informed that the documents are still in the making, so in due course the annexure will be or members will get it before they leave. It was a bulky document of this size and it was reduced into this report.

We adopted a different approach in our visits of schools that of targeting district offices first before we go to individual schools that we have identified. I must applaud the efforts of all members of the Legislature to actually dedicate themselves and ensuring that we fulfill that particular objective across constituency offices and the teams that were leading.

The method of work was contained in two questionnaires that were issued out and the content of those questionnaires were to focus on:

- Infrastructure,
- Scholars transport,
- Nutrition programmes,
- School furniture,
- Availability of learner support material,
- Rate of absenteeism,
- Adherence to school admission policies,
- Involvement of the school governing bodies,
- Analysis of results,
- HIV and learner pregnancy programme, and
- Quintile system.

I am not going to touch on individual schools in this report. We visited in all 83 schools during this round of visit and it will be a mammoth task to actually go through all of those schools. What I target are the districts that we visited. In fact we followed municipal boundaries. Within municipal boundaries there are a lot of departmental districts that are established.

To start No 1 Alfred Nzo:

We visited Mbiza, Lusikisiki, Mt Fletcher, Maluti, Mt Ayliff, Ntabankulu, Mt Frere and there are number of schools under those districts. I am saying the findings of each school are contained to the annexure to be presented or to be circulated.

Chris Hani, Cofimvaba district of education, Lady Frere, Molteno, Cradock, Queenstown and there are list of districts of the Department of Education underneath, and O.R Tambo districts. Those are the departmental district offices: Libode, Qumbu, Tsolo, Engcobo, Umthatha, Amathole Buffalo City District Municipality containing Willowvale. The Amathole Districts, followed by Idutywa, Willowvale, Butterworth, King William's Town, East London.

The Cacadu Metro combined Graaf Reinet, Uitenhage, Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown and the Ukhahlamba district. The reason why we reduced this report is because problems that are experienced by these schools cut across. They are common in nature and therefore we did the executive summary of what we have observed.

We will go straight to recommendations.

Teaching and learning materials:

At the estimated 20% of schools visited teaching and learning did not take place due to the fact that Learner Support Material did not arrive in

time. This was as a result of delays by service providers, a problem which has been recurring for years.

Some parents totally disregarded the admission policy of the department of education. That is what we have experienced; that parents are not registering a year before, they actually start registering on the day of the school opening and that has got a negative impact in terms of the tuition that has to take place.

Quintile System:

Quintile System is a venture across schools and I glad because we were informed that as a process of reviewing this particular system. All schools are having a problem; misallocation or wrongly allocated and that disadvantaged poor schools in terms of their financial allocations.

School Nutrition Programme:

There are challenges in this programme, but we must comment that almost all schools are getting nutrition this time around, but the problem is how you keep the food in those situations because there are no utensils to ensure that a cabbage that has to remain for a week or two is properly kept in a relevant or whatever room that is healthy.

Scholar Transport:

Scholar transport remains a challenge, particularly the area of routes, determination of routes.

Infrastructure:

There a great challenge on this one. The process of eradicating mud structures is very slow due to budget constraints.

There are constructions that are left incomplete due to non-payment of work done or incapacity of emerging contractors. A living example is Emvelo Junior Secondary School in Port St Johns, where a contractor simply came, and demolished randovels without notifying anybody, dig trenches a week later left. Now learners were left with no school and I am saying such situations must be attended to because we think disciplinary actions must be taken against such contractors. That is a living example that I am referring to – Emvelo Junior Secondary school.

Absenteeism:

Some schools are seriously challenged by a high rate of absenteeism on part of both learners and educators. Most learners do not attend schools during the days of getting social grants.

Abantwana bayayamkela indodla kula maxesha, “isondlo”. Bakhapha abazali ke ngoku ngezaa mini zokufumana kwabo indodla bangayi esikolweni. (*Children are getting the grant these days, the “child support grant”. They accompany their parents during pay days and do not attend school.*)

I am saying you do not know how to arrest the situation, but this is the fact of the matter.

The Learner Support Material was not okay.

The analysis of the Grade 12 Results:

It has just an analysis of the committee when we were discussing and I am sure it is misplaced here, but it also relevant because we are analyzing results across schools that we visited and we were comparing with the provincial performance of such results.

We discovered that there is potential for improvement and we must commend with Department of Education for this 0.4% improvement this year. At least Eastern Cape is not at the bottom of the ladder, we have improved compared to other provinces during this time around. We think there is room for improvement, in fact we do not belong there and I think with our collective effort we can improve.

The following matters need urgent attention:

90% of schools visited had an acute shortage of school furniture and Mathematics and Physical Science educators. This is a crisis particularly in rural areas. We are saying poaching is rife because these educators are employed today, once they become permanent they leave the rural areas and go to Mthatha. A school is left without a Maths and Science educator. It is a problem that is cutting across remote areas and therefore sustainability of Maths and Science teachers is a challenge;

- There is serious shortage of Subject Advisors across all districts;
- The Quintile System needs to be reviewed as a matter of urgency;
- There are child-headed families and the department must ensure that this issue is closely monitored;
- There is a serious high rate of pregnancy and substance abuse or drug abuse in schools;
- The tendering process must be closely monitored and the identification of routes for scholar transport must be reviewed;
- Displacement of educators and tension amongst educators;
- Schools are characterized by conflicts;
- The building of teacher colleges needs to be fast-tracked.

Straight to recommendations on page 10:

- (1) The first recommendation is the department must clearly indicate what causes the delay and I am not going to go to findings. Members on their own time will actually peruse;
- (2) The Department must clearly indicate what caused the delay of the LTSM and what actions have been or will be taken with time frame thereto;
- (3) The Department must engage the national Department with a view to having the schools' Quintile System reviewed. In the short term, they must ensure that all school disputes/contestations are processed within 30 days of the receipt or the adoption of this report;
- (4) Intergovernmental relations must be strengthened. We discovered that there is no relationship between the schools and the municipal wards and therefore schools are not making submissions of the IDPs to the wards of the municipalities. That is why we are saying intergovernmental relations has to be strengthened and be improved;
- (5) The department must encourage the schools to ensure that the transformation of the staff complement reflects the diversity of the school community it serves. In white schools you get 90% African learners and 100% white teachers. We are saying this cannot be accepted and that is we are saying there must be a form of a programme that intervene to that areas to ensure equity;
- (6) The Department must continuously engage other departments, professionals in various fields, universities and other government departments, to conduct career guidance at individual schools and districts and must target learners even at lower grades. The issue here is career guidance that is not taking place in our schools;
- (7) The department must monitor the provision of quality education even at lower grades and must develop intervention strategies to improve the quality of education at lower levels to ensure that when learners reach Grade 12 they are ready for that grade, instead of overburdening Grade 12 education with the work of lower grades. The issue here was and the complaints from the different schools was that they are overloaded because they have to focus on Grade 12 work, but also there are other grades that are lower, very lower grades to the level of their teaching. This matter remains a grey area. In the findings we are talking about old learners.

You know the incident of Elliot where a teacher was shot dead in January because he refused to accept the learners who are said to be old, I mean 25-27 learners wanted to go back to school to heed the call but, that teacher made comments to say no you are too old and later on he was shot and those learners even threatened other

teaches because they wanted to go back to school. The policy is not clear around this question of old learners because even in terms of allocation of funds, if you are having 1,000 learners and 500 learners are school-going age interms of compulsory nature, the other 500 learners who are said to be old are not budgeted for and we are saying there is a challenge at that level;

- (8) The school must retain its own failures. The department, in exceptional cases, must make provisions in this regard and the universities must be engaged. If the failure rate is 50%, 50% of learners who have failed must go back to school. The issue is there is no provision for that 50% that has failed; hence we are saying each school must retain its own failures so that we do not produce failures for other schools. You know, we debated this matter a lot.
- (9) The Department must put in place plans to ensure that educators, SGB members and principals are equipped with a knowledge of the legal prescripts relating to education;
- (10) The department must, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, develop a strategy that is aimed at ensuring that learners are continuously engaged in learning throughout the period of the Soccer World Cup. The Committee must be provided with a clear strategy on how it intends managing this period. This year is very short, particularly academically. It is very short.

If you cannot make it in the first term then forget because the second term and third terms would be caught by Fifa tournament and during the third term they must go for trial and examination and I am saying this is a very short year academically and that is why we are saying there must be clear plans that are provided to the committee as to how they are going to manage this particular period within 30 days;

- (11) The Department must capacitate the district offices to be able to handle and account for the appointment of temporary educators and other relevant functions. The power must be devolved – not “this power” – mistake. The power must be devolved to the districts for the sake of expediency. There is a delay in terms of appointment of temporary teachers or substitutes because everything is centralised at a provincial level and takes a long time to ensure that schools get teachers as a matter of urgency;
- (12) The Department must consider allocating the maintenance budget for schools as an intervention and leave it to the district to identify the schools that need to be prioritized for maintenance. Schools must even develop their own maintenance plans. The challenge that we are confronted with is that we are building new schools

very old schools the infrastructure is collapsing and how then do you balance without a maintenance budget and this is exactly the balance we want to strike good example – Free Mantle – a very old school. The infrastructure is giving up and we are saying whilst there is allocation of maintenance budget at the school level, there has to be a maintenance budget that is kept at district level to prioritise areas of interventions;

- (13) The Department must transfer the two tranches (May and August) an ideal situation is to give schools their allocation at one go, to enable them to plan properly. This money must be ring-fenced. We are detecting that because there are schools that are saying they are getting their second tranches in November/December and there is nothing that they can do during that time and we are saying therefore this money must be ring-fenced and must be allocated on time;
- (14) The Department must continue with advocacy campaigns, using community radios and all forms of populating this campaign to ensure that learners register on time;
- (15) The Department must develop strategies and advocacy campaigns that are aimed at encouraging parents to participate in the school activities of their children. The complaint is that the parents are pitching up during parent meetings;
- (16) The Department must ensure that language and numeracy are strengthened from the Foundation Phase throughout the system so that learners can articulate ideas well and understand the content better;
- (17) The Department must liaise with the relevant department so as to find mechanism to eradicate among other things learner pregnancy, drug abuse, child-headed families and taverns. Practical problem a tavern next to the school gate, particularly next to boarding schools and we are saying government must follow its policies with the Liquor Board on this matter;
- (18) The Department must examine the option resuscitating the SGB Association as per the policy;
- (19) No educator must move from one school to another without the approval of the District Director, to curb this spontaneous movement of educators after they got positions;
- (20) The process of rationalization of schools must be fast-tracked and properly monitored;

- (21) All relevant posts must be filled within the next financial year and the committee must be furnished with the progress report in this regard;
- (22) The department must devise strategy on how to manage internal audits in schools. The committee must be provided with a report in this regard within 30 days after the adoption of the report. If the bulk of the budget goes to schools and schools cannot account about the monies they are given then it means this Department of Education will never get a clean audit.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson, just a moment. Chairperson, you are operating on injury time, but I suggest that you stick on the text so that later when you explain you do all the expatiation.

Mr. M MRARA: Thanks, Madam Chair.

- (23) During the process rationalization the department must explore the option of building a boarding school in each distance as pilot project;
- (24) Within three months all districts must have counseling offices for HIV/Aids and other psychological problem facing learner and educators;
- (25) All schools to be built and renovated must be gazetted. This must be a policy of Government for each financial year. We are emphasizing on this one;
- (26) The Department must ensure that all the districts are provided with furniture as a matter urgency;
- (27) The Department must refrain from employing service providers who do not have the capacity to deliver within the stipulated time lines;
- (28) All contractors that violated their contractual obligation must be severely punished and blacklisted across all government departments in the province. The officials who are involved and have been proved negligent of their duties must be severely punished and be subjected to disciplinary action;
- (29) The Legislature, through Treasury, must determine a standardized price index of a classroom building, both of temporary and permanent structures and all other building materials, including consumables in the Department of Education. The case in point is Gqubeni Junior Secondary School where there were different pricing of building a temporary structure from Public Works, Department of Education;

Companies that have been found to be in violation of the government price index must be penalized and be blacklisted and I think that is the point. That is what we are raising hon Deputy Speaker and we table this report for the consideration and adoption by this House. Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson. You may join your committee members. Before I allow the House to ask questions to the committee, I just want to announce that hon Mhlathi has an injury on foot and therefore he is unable to wear his formal shoes. When you see him wearing flops you must not be surprised. He has got the permission for that.

I will now allow the House... Oh, before that let me acknowledge the class from eGqubeni Senior Secondary school. I would like to ask them to stand so that we can see them before we welcome them. We want to see where they are sited. Welcome madam. [Applause.] Hopefully you have heard that you have been mentioned in the speeches. People will continually talk about you in your presence. I will now allow the House to ask questions to the committee.

Mr. J PIENAAR: Deputy Speaker, on page of the report, No 13, I would like to know why are these obligatory last tranche transfers always late? What is the reason for these late transfers? I would like to have explanation from the committee.

Mr R S STEVENSON: Hon Deputy Speaker, my question relates to the late arrival of this LSM material and having been in this House for 11 years I have seen it for 11 years. My question to the committee is; did you ask the department as to whether they take steps to not use people whom mess up in the year before? In other words where any suppliers used this year that messed up the delivery in the previous year? Was there any enquiry made about that?

Mr J C CUPIDO: Hon Deputy Speaker, my question relates to Mbizana area, the transport contracts. Did the committee at all ask for clarity on why their budget was not sufficient for the transport contracts?

Nksz V MVENYA: Enkosi Sekela-Somlomo. Mna ndicela ingcaciso kwikomiti malunga nesa sindululo singuNombolo-4. Ingaba ithetha ukuthi le nto xa kuza kuqeshwa abasebenzi makuqalwe kujongwe ibala na kungajongwa ukuba umntu unazo iziqinisekiso. Ingxaki phaya ezikolweni kukuba sukuba kushokoxeka ititshala yesifundo esithile kungajongwanga nto yokuba lo mntu uzayo umi njani. Ndinexhala lokuba mhlawumbi umhlonipheki uMartin afune ukuyokufundisa ngaphaya eNgqamakwe abe phaya kungekho mntu unje ngaye. Ndifuna nje ingcaciso kule nto ukuba nizama ukuthini kwesa sindululo sikaNombolo-4. (*Translation of IsiXhosa paragraph follows.*)

[Ms V MVENYA: I would like to get clarity from the committee regarding recommendation No 4. Does that mean before staff members are employed in a particular job color must be considered and not look at whether the person has the required qualifications. The problem is that there is a shortage of subject specialists and we need not to look at who the person is. My concern is that Hon Martin may want to go and teach in Ngqamakhwe while we do not have people like him in that area. I just to get clarity as to what do you mean by recommendation No 4.]

Mr J P KORKIE: Thank you Deputy Speaker. Madam Deputy Speaker, I see that schools in East London, only one school in East London has been visited and only three in King William's Town. That is four in the entire Buffalo City. Being a big centre and quite a busy centre in terms of education with quite a number of offices even based there and one technical high school – one school being in the news during that time for quite a number of days – Greenpoint Secondary school. Any reason why that school has not been visited given the problems? Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. At this stage I think I will allow the committee to respond then we will take a second round. Can the Committee Members respond? Hon Martin, you will indicate which question you are responding to.

Mr C MARTIN: Yes, ma'am. I think the one on the transport contracts, hon Cupido's one. What happened there is, hon Cupido, when it comes to budget constraints on that one, what we must realize is this a dedicated budget every year for transport of learners. In a case like this what the department do with the MECs' policy speech would come every year again, like this year, and say these are new routes added onto the old routes. Now many a times people because of pressures and because of the 5km that the children must walk that they do qualify, they would apply to the department and that is causing the pressure when it comes to the budget, but as I say every year new routes and a new budget would just add on the old one.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you hon Martin. Would the committee respond to other questions?

Mr P E VAN VUUREN: Hon Deputy Speaker, I will respond to the first question as to why tranches are being made late. The reason given by the department is that at many schools there is no capacity to complete audited financial statements, with the result that tranches will only be made to schools if those ordered the financial statements are received in the district offices. There may be other reasons too, but that was the reason given to us.

Mr M MRARA: Deputy Speaker, the one on Ms Mvenya; on this there is policy of government that talks about equity, equality – it is enshrined in the transformation agenda of this government and there is no way that you, even in your appointment or recruitment policy, you will neglect

such a policy. This is what we are emphasizing; that recruitment policy must be in line with the constitutional obligation of the country that of ensuring there is equity across the institutions of government in this country. Therefore there is no way that you can get 100% African learners and 100% white teachers or any other race. I am saying that is an anomaly we are attempting to address, in line with the policy of government.

Mr S N KWELITA: Thank you very much Deputy Speaker. Just to add on what hon Martin said on transport; is to say that the department is working as well on an exercise to clean routes because it has been discovered that some of the routes that are currently operating are routes that were submitted by service providers. Working with the Department of Transport, they are working on that, to pin those routes, making sure that the learners that deserve to be supported are actually supported. We believe that before the new financial year that exercise will be completed and we are satisfied about the work that they are doing.

Secondly, in the process of planning for the visits it was difficult to plan the visit to all schools. Many schools that we would have wanted to visit we could not visit because of the timeframes and also the number of members that were involved.

Specifically on the Greenpoint situation, we must also remember that it only arise when the school opened and after the plan to visit schools was done, therefore it might have been difficult as you would know that the number of schools that have been visited and the district looking at the number, it was difficult to complete within that timeline, so not that the matter was ignored by the committee party in terms of the planning of our work and also in terms of the pressure that we have we could not visit all the schools. There are many schools that have problems as well.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The last response with regard to hon Stevenson's question – the late arrival of the LSM.

Ms B TUNYISWA-GQOBOKA: I just wanted hon Deputy Speaker, to add on the explanation by the hon Kwelita on the Greenpoint visit. As we were visiting these districts we also met the stakeholders in the districts and Buffalo City; we satisfied ourselves that the department is intervening at that time, so we did not see a need to visit at that time, but we committed ourselves that we will come back and make a follow-up on some of these schools that were seen as hot spots.

Mr M MRARA: Thanks, Madam Deputy Speaker. Around LTSM; the Department of Education came with the new approach in ensuring that the delivery of learner support material is fast-tracked and it must not be exaggerated. It is plus/minus 10% of schools in the province that could not get LTSM at the time of visit precisely because of delay through service providers – capacity of service providers that were there – and I

think I Department of Education and MEC may comment further on the matter, but that is our understanding.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will now allow the second round of questions.

Mr J PIENAAR: Hon Deputy Speaker on page 11, item 21, it states “all vacant posts must be filled within the next financial year”. I would like to know what is the vacancy rate at the moment and of cost to fill these, all the posts that as stated here. I would also like to know, the third point I would like to know; will additional money been given to the departments, if not, what programmes will be compromised?

Ms N GQIBA: Thank you, Deputy Chair. The question that I am going to ask short question but it is the most frustrating one in our schools. There are taverns that are closer to the schools and they impact in the school. I do not know; I am still disempowered because in the report it is clear that this challenge was not noticed in the schools that were visited. Then it disempowered me. My question therefore is a strategy of ensuring removal of those taverns that are close to schools.

Mr R S STEVENSON: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I am looking on page 6 of the report where it speaks of absenteeism and also that is something every member of this house knows that has been going on and on. I just wondered if the committee had asked the department what steps they are taking to root up this problem of absenteeism, particularly amongst them the educators?

Mr M M MHLATI: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. My question is on page item No 15 – the lack of parental involvement in the education of their children. What I want to know is clarity on the nature of this lack of involvement, taking into account that in most of the rural areas the parents are uneducated so they cannot assist in their homework; they can only clothe them and feed them and let them to go school, but they cannot assist them in the work of their schools because they do not have that capacity.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there are no other questions I will allow the Committee to respond.

Ms B TUNYISWA-GQOBOKA: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. On the questions of taverns, I think there is a report around that hon Gqiba. It is a problem. Those taverns are close to schools. As a committee we feel that this is an intergovernmental relations matter because when those people applied for taverns they have to consult that particular community. For instance, Sahluleka in Fort Beaufort is one of the schools that have been operating within, if not close to the tavern, but what is interesting Madam Deputy Speaker is the results. This time around they came with 73% in terms of results, but that does not mean that where they are located, that is right.

The second one Deputy Speaker is related to parental involvement. We were talking about the parental cooperation in terms of admissions. It seems as if educators are really struggling in that effect because parents' in most cases Deputy Speaker is that they need really to talk to their children so that they can return from holidays early or decide on time as where they are going to send their children for schooling.

Asiyonto ifuna ke ngoku ootitshala babekuxinzelelo ekuqaleni konyaka ukuba bathethe nabantwana sele kuhambe ixesha ngenxa yento yokuba abazali bayakhala kwaye kukho neli lungelo lokufunda. Yile besithetha ngayo le ntsebenziswano. Kucacile ukuba ela cala lomzali ekuncediseni isebe lisasilela. Ithethe ukuthi loo nto ukukhuthazwa kufuneka kuqiniswe. *(That does not need to put teachers under pressure in the beginning of the year for them to speak to the learners later, because parents are complaining while there is the right to learn. We have been talking about cooperation. It is clear that the parent contribution is lacking. That means MEC we need to strengthen mobilization.)*

Mr M MRARA: Madam Deputy Speaker, on vacant posts - we were just reiterating the solution of this House because in our last report we indicated that there is a high rate of vacancies both in schools and in district offices, so the MEC I think is relevant for this question and I am sure he will comment on it.

The other one relates to absenteeism. The Department of Education has given us an action plan to curb on this particular problem for both learners and teachers. There as a clear action plan now and we were satisfied as a committee that there is a booklet that has been developed through all schools to ensure this matter is taken serious in the province.

An addition to the question of taverns - we have closed one tavern near St Johns Senior Secondary school in Mthatha just opposite – St Johns is a boarding school and it was just opposite the gate. We followed up with the Liquor Board; we got cooperation from Mrs Gcilishana who is heading that area. The Liquor Board went to that school and closed that illegal tavern in that particular school, so the committee is doing something, but we are saying all institutions and stakeholders must comply with the prescripts of the law in terms of establishing sheebens or taverns. That was strongly raised by the stakeholders that we met during the run of our visits.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon chairperson. Hon Kwelita. Hopefully you are going to respond to other questions of hon Pienaar.

Mr S N KWELITA: Chair, just to finish the part on the vacancies. We have requested that a progress report be given to the committee because we also understand that it is not only about money; there are positions which will be difficult to fill at times even if you have money, but we are saying vacancies do not assist any workplace, therefore if there is a

problem, if there is a difficulty, at least stakeholders get a progress on what the difficulties are. Our wish is that those vacancies that are there should be filled.

On the question again, I think hon Mvenya it is not just a question of sending people this side, it is just a question of taking into account also the learners in those schools and making sure that we transform the education system. We have people in those areas and who are able to teach.

Umzekelo mhlawumbi kwezinye izikolo ungafumana nento enzima ukuba isiXhosa sifundiswe ngumntu ongasazi kakuhle (*For example, at some schools one might find IsiXhosa being taught by somebody who does not clearly understand it.*).

So we are saying at least we must take into account transformation and deal with issues of education as well. Meetings are called and parents do not go there.

Again on the issues of discipline in schools when they notice that a child is misbehaving them usually call the parent. Even in that case you will find that it is difficult for the parents to assist the school in disciplining children. We are saying there are areas of involvement where parents should be encouraged to assist.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Perhaps at this stage let us thank the committee members and I will now allow the House to ask questions, including those questions of hon Pienaar to the MEC. [Applause.]

Mr J PIENAAR: Hon Deputy Speaker, the finding was that the vacancy rate is very high in all districts and the recommendation says all vacant post must be filled. Now that is a finding and a recommendation, so I take it this would be done. I would like to know what is the vacancy rate? There must be some research been done to come to the conclusion that there is a high vacancy rate. I want the MEC to tell me what is the percentage vacancy rate? What will be the costs to fill this and will it compromise other programmes with in the budget or will be new money coming into the budget?

Ms F NKOMONYE: Thank you hon Deputy Speaker. Mibini imibuzo endiza kuyibuza kuMphathiswa. Mifutshane ke kodwa. Kule nto inolwakhiwo ndicela ukuqonda ukuba kwiSebe lezeMfundo ikhona na into eyenzayo ngezikolo ezihlaselwe yinkanyamba, ingakumbi kwela cala lakuNtabankulu. Umcimbi ophambili ngowesikolo kukhona isikolo esiyiRwantsana. Kulo nyaka uphelileyo wonke bekufundelwa phandle. Ingaba zikhona izicwangciso zesebe ezingokubonelela ngezindlu kwaba bantwana?

Okwesibini, umaluga nokusetyenziswa kwezinyobisi ezikolweni. EDumse abantwana bakhona batshaya intsangu bonke kwaye loo nto inempembelelo embi kwiziphumo nokhuseleko ngokubanzi. Ingaba isebe linazo iinkqubo elizenzayo ukukhuthaza abantwana okanye yenze loo nto inokuyenza ukuzama ukuthoba izinga okanye ukuwuphelisa kweza zikolo? (*Translation of IisiXhosa paragraphs follows*)

[There are two questions to the MEC. They are short. With regard to infrastructure I want to get clarity from the Department of Education as to whether is there anything done about the schools that are affected by a tornado, particularly in Ntabankulu? The case in point is Rwantana School. For the whole of last year they were without classrooms. Are there any plans from the department to provide shelter for these children?

Secondly it is about the substance abuse in schools. In Dumse, children smoke dagga and that has a bad impact in results and safety in general. Does the department have any programme in place to motivate learners or take whatever measures to mitigate the rate or to uproot this behavior in those schools?]

Mr M M PETER: Hon Deputy Speaker, just one question. Given the high pregnancy rate which has been reported in our schools; is it not possible for the Department of Education to come into partnership with the Department of Health so that the Department of Health can periodically visit some of our schools to raise awareness on dangers of STDs (Sexually Transmitted Disease) HIV/Aids awareness and the issue of substance abuse, engaging learners at a school level because I think this exercise worked very well in some of the provinces, like Western Cape. The report confirms that most of the learners are engaging in unsafe sex and this poses a threat to their health.

Ms V MVENYA: Thank you hon Deputy Speaker. Mna ndicela ukubuza kuMphathiswa ukuba inkqubo yokutyiswa kwabantwana ihlolwa njani na lisebe? Umzekelo umntu ofanele ukuthutha isonka esikolweni uyakufumanisa ukuba usisa ngoMvulo elungiselela iveki yonke. Abantwana ngoLwesihlanu batye isonka sangoMvulo abe esayinile ukuba uya yonke imihla. Ingaba ihlolwa njani na loo nto? Ufumanise ukuba kwezinye indawo abaniki zinkonzo ababhatalwa. Abanye babhatalwa bengasisanga isonka ezikolweni.

Umbuzo wesibini Sekela Somlomo ukulo mba wokungahanjwa sikolo. Ingaba uMphathiswa lo mba wokungahanjwa kwesikolo uyawujonga na? Kukho la ncwadi yokubhalisa ixesha esikolweni. Ititshala iyaziveza phaya ukuba ibingekho mhlawumbi iiveki zibentathu kodwa akukho nto ilandelayo. Ukuba mhlawumbi le ncwadi isiwe phaya e-ofisini kunokulandelwa ukuba le titshala kutheni ingasihambi isikolo.

Kukho lo mcimbi weentlanganiso zikaSADTU ezibakho phakathi evekini. Ufumanise ukuba ootitshala bonke mhlawumbi abayanga

esikolweni phakathi evekini baye kwintlanganiso kaSADTU.
(*Translation of IsiXhosa paragraphs follows*)

[I want to ask the MEC how the department monitors school nutrition. For example, a person who collects bread for the feeding scheme collects the bread on Monday - preparing for the whole week. On Friday children get bread that was delivered on Monday while the service provider signed that he delivers the bread every day. How that is monitored? You will find that in other areas service providers are not paid. Others are paid although they did not do deliveries of bread to schools.

The second question Deputy Speaker is in relation to school absenteeism. Does the MEC consider the issue of absenteeism? Schools have a time register. A teacher indicates that he was absent maybe for three weeks but nobody monitors that. If that register can be submitted to the office a follow-up will be made to determine reasons for non-attendance.

There is also the issue of SADTU meetings that are held mid week. You will find that all teachers did not go to school mid week and attend a SADTU meeting.]

Mr J C CUPIDO: Hon Deputy Speaker, my question builds on the response that hon Martin gave me regarding the transport, but it is for the MEC, is that it mentions here that there is continuous extension of contracts for scholar transport. My question to the MEC is; why are the contracts continuously extended to the same service providers instead of giving an opportunity for other service providers to tender for those contracts?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The last person before I take the second round. I can see there are a lot of hands on the right. Hon Makupula.

Mr M MAKUPULA: Thank you very hon Deputy Speaker. The first I would want to raise hon Deputy Speaker is a constituency matter. It might sound narrow hon Deputy Speaker. Willowvale does not have an office of education hon Deputy Speaker, whilst Dutywa as the centre of the Mbashe area has more than one office. That is the only magisterial district in those three districts that does not have an office. A principal travels 70km from those districts to Dutywa just to submit a mark schedule, so it is quite a serious thing.

The second one hon Deputy Speaker revolves around the decision or commitment of the department which was saying by year 2010 all schools will have infrastructure for the Preparatory phase but the decision was saying by 2010 all schools are supposed to have a crèche or Grade R or whatever for the young children. I just want to check the year is now and how far are we on that?

The other one Chairperson is just a question which I think through you the MEC could take note and deal with it. The time for reading Deputy Speaker, is fast disappearing. It is being overwhelmed by television; it is being overwhelmed by taverns and other activities that keep busy the youth. It is worrying Deputy Speaker how children are missing the pleasure of reading. You know, reading a book without getting into its content, just by mere reading, you are missing a lot of pleasure as a human being. I just want to check what happened in our curricular with those aspects of reading and writing at the elementary levels, which we thought would be laying a basis for proficiency in English, not only in English, but in language.

The last one, Deputy Speaker, is the point I have been raising several times. For as long as the department, hon members, keeps on budgeting this meagre amount, last year there was a budget R8.5 million for about plus/minus 6,000 school governing bodies. Now I do not know in this financial year which we are to start, but the fact of the matter is that for as long as we fail to take the responsibility of capacitating SGBs we will always complain about these problems.

It is just a way of saying, a call to the MEC to say can a department seriously take the matter of capacitating SGBs. I know for a fact it is difficult to capacitate your police because SGBs are meant to be tutors of principals or teachers. SGBs are meant to monitor proceedings at school and ask why the school does not start at an appropriate time. If we let our people face the conditions they find themselves just because they are illiterate, no, we are going to miss it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. Hon MEC let me allow you to respond and then expect more questions. Make sure that you do not over-elaborate.

The MEC RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION: Yes. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

On the vacancy rate - I may not be able to give the hon member the exact vacancy rate, but we do, especially at the level of the management, both at head office and also at the level of the districts, in terms of the critical management areas we also do have those vacancies, for instance in directors, but we are working on that now in terms of the appointments and interviews are continuing for the district directors in PE, Butterworth, Dutywa and Matatiele. The only one is just Lusikisiki because there is also a dispute with respect to that one that is why we have a delay in terms of dealing with that. There are also interviews that are taking place with respect to managers at a provincial level – your chief director: supply chain and other critical ones, like chief director on finance. The appointment processes are underway at that level.

The filing of all vacancies will surely have an impact on the budget, given the cost pressures that the department has and projected over-

expenditure. In the current financial year we have put a moratorium on the further appointments, with a view to manage the budget especially for compensation of employees which was getting out of hand because of the shortfalls in the OSD and also with respect to the improvement of conditions of services. That had an impact in terms of the budget, especially in terms of the compensation of the employee, so we had to have that moratorium. It had an impact on the filling of vacancies, so because of that problem it is likely to have an impact even in the following year, given the projected over-expenditure in the current financial year which is likely to spill over to the next financial year. It will have an impact hon member.

Hon Nkomonye, the schools that were affected by tornadoes - in this area we are in a serious challenge as a department because the budget that is there for infrastructure is not adequate to deal with the emergencies because whilst we are dealing with issues of Rwantana issues of Nomkholokoto and the number of others, Ngqushwa just last week was affected and we need to move in quickly whilst we are already over-spending on the infrastructure budget. So these are some of the challenges that we are faced with.

With respect to Rwantana, in three weeks time we will be allocating a contractor there. We are working closely with Eskom with respect to the issue of Rwantana. In Nomkholokoto for instance, we sent tents on Saturday because they complained that the tents there are blown by wind while others have bright colors. We organized tents. They phoned yesterday to say all those tents were blown over by wind because the location of the whole village is in the routes of the tornado; already they are blown away, but we are working on a permanent structure there. We need a different approach with these areas that are having tornados. We need a different structure altogether which will stand the effect of that. Prefabs will be blown away easily because Rwantana had prefabs, so hence we need a different approach in those areas.

With respect to drug abuse, we do have programmes that are focusing on schools affected by crime and also schools experiencing substance abuse. We have identified those schools, put together a programme of motivators to go and motivate them. In a number of schools where we have done that there has been a significant change, but that programme is unable to move with the pace that we wish to see because there are a number of schools that are affected by this thing.

Hon Peter, it is possible; we do have partnership with Health but at the same time they have got their own challenges because of human resource challenges and their clinics that are not next to each and every school. So they do have their own challenges in terms of availing the health workers, but we do have a programme with Department of Health. We have programme internally which requires that each and every school must have a health committee which is also composed of the parents and also the educators. We do have those and also

programmes of HIV/Aids, but the fact of the matter, the issue is societal in nature because they are not protected at schools and are staying in squatter areas. The community does not care about the fact that these children stay in squatter areas. They are neglected. So, it is societal in nature this problem. It requires to be looked at all angles.

Hon Mvenya, we agree that there are problems in terms of some in certain areas because of the capacity at the level of the districts because we have fewer people at the district level that are monitoring the school nutrition, which also requires some support also from the community and also from the schools because if schools have principals that are serious and serious educators that will collaborate with the service providers, they are going to be able to pick up those matters and report to the district that the service provider is mismanaging. We also have those educators and principals which are weak and collaborate with those service providers who are mismanaging. We do have indeed that weakness in terms of monitoring, but we are working on it.

The poor management of time book is also true. What we have done is to call, especially the poorly performing school principals and also EDOs because they are the ones who are supposed to monitor that thing, so the workshop with EDOs ended yesterday because we were picking all these things because it is them who are supposed to monitor what is happening in the schools and deal with these minor things that we have picked all the time we visit schools – the problem of time book.

Look at some of the schools; you will find that there is an average of four, sometimes five or six on average of educators that are absent per day. That thing is supposed to be monitored closely even by the EDOs when they visit them, but they also have that lack of monitoring on their part. It is one area that we are also focusing; the accountability of the EDOs in dealing with this thing and monitoring what is happening in schools.

Absenteeism due to union meetings is not found at all schools. And it also has to do with also poor leadership in the schools. This problem is not encountered where there is strong leadership in the schools. In a meeting and to a memorial service a school sends representatives while the school runs normally but in certain schools because of poor leadership they just neglect those learners, but it is an issue that we are attending to and we are raising very sharply in the mobilization that we are conducting through quality teaching and learning campaign in various districts. We are emphasizing in this matter because in the launch of quality teaching and learning, we are inviting all the principals and SGB chairpersons and we are emphasizing on these issues.

Hon Cupido, the continuous extension of scholar transport - we had a long extension of contracts here because we did not have a long contract of scholar transport and we are working on that now. We have issued a tender which closed in January which is supposed to start in April,

where we will be having longer contracts and we are working closely with the Department of Transport in terms of defining very clearly the routes to avoid the issues raised by the members of the portfolio committee that some of the routes were submitted by suppliers themselves to our district officials not being defined by us and we are transporting learners that are not supposed to be transported for instance.

We are taking learners from Zwelitsha to Bhisho and taking learners from Bisho to Zwelitsha while there are schools in Bhisho, while there are schools in Zwelitsha and leaving out the learners that are deserving to be ferried. We are working on that contract now and we are hopeful that the issuing of that tender will address a number of these problems of scholar transport and it will stop these extensions. We agreed with the service providers that this is the last extension to allow us to process the tender of scholar transport.

Hon Makupula, we are working on the issue of the circuits, strengthening the circuits, such that educators do not have to travel long distance from Elliotdale crossing Mbashe to Dutywa and those from Willowvale to Dutywa time and again. We want to create circuits that are closer to the people so that they can be serviced. We are working on that in the review of the organogram that we are working on.

On Grade R - the 2010 was the final year for the integration of Grade R in the public schools – that is in the primary schools. It was not linked to the issue of infrastructure, but in the process of integrating Grade R to public schools it was clear that it is creating a crisis in terms of infrastructure. We need to put up infrastructure that will be able to accommodate those learners because they need different classrooms than an ordinary classroom used by old learners. It is creating a lot of pressures on the infrastructure budget, but we are having some targets per annum, but it will take a very long time to ensure that we have proper Grade R facilities in each and every school, but we are meeting the target of integration but the problem is with the infrastructure now that is suitable for those Grade Rs.

The reading time - I agree it has been overtaken by TV, but what we have done as department as from March 2008 we launched the campaign called Foundations for Learning Campaign, which is bringing back the culture of reading which has been lost in the process when we introduced OBE; also writing and mental etc. which affects the numeracy levels. So through the Foundations for Learning Campaign, we are bringing back that thing, so we are working on that. We have been working on that in the past two years. We want to intensify that programme to address the problem raised by hon Makupula.

Lastly, we are looking at increasing this budget. We agree that the budget is very minimal to address the challenges at the level of the SGB. Some of the SGBs has a complaint that they want the whole parent component to be trained, not only the treasurer and chairperson only two

people but they want the whole parent component to be trained, not only the treasurer and the chairperson or the secretary – only two people, but they want the whole parent component to be properly trained on the roles of the SGB, which means it will broaden the scope of costs in terms of training, but we are looking on that hon Makupula.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. I am aware that hon Pienaar is not satisfied, but I would suggest that you submit written questions to his office because this question of yours, you have been asking over and over. Is it the same question?

Mr J PIENAAR: Yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, please do write because he responded to the question saying that he does not know that the vacancy rate or even the percentage, so therefore he may not even know the cost. If you communicate with him through his office...

Mr J PIENAAR: On a point of order, Deputy Speaker: the recommendation must then be withdrawn because you cannot put the recommendation where the department cannot adhere to this recommendation. So the word “must” must be changed to ‘maybe’, otherwise we cannot put “must” to the MEC where there is no capacity.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, this is a committee report, not the MECs report; when they were interacting with the department, so your recommendation is out of order. I will now allow questions this side. Hon Fihlani, hon Dimaza, hon... Why are you seated there? Hon Gqoboka, your hand is it still up? Okay. Hon Fihlani.

Nksz K C FIHLANI: Sekela Somlomo, bendicela ukubuza kule nto inokudweliswa kwezinto emazijongwe kuqala mna. Sesiphi mhlawumbi isikhokelo sokulinganisa esisetyenziswayo phaya esebeni? Kukho izikolo phaya kwezi ndawo sisuka kuzo ezakhiwa ngowama- 1940 uluntu luzakhele. Akukho nto ekhoyo emalunga nazo. Umzekelo yiMali le iphaya ngaseFlagstaff.

Uluntu luzakhele kodwa zonke izikolo ezingqungileyo zakhiwe. Aba bantu baloo ndawo ngoku baxakiwe ukuba kutheni kubo kungakhiwa. Ndithi masiyifumane mhlawumbi le nto yolu luhlu lweziya kujongwa kuqala ukuba zeziphi kuba kuthiwa into ekuthiwa iyatshintshwa iba nentetha yokuba lumane lutshintshwa olu luhlu lweziya kujongwa kuqala. Xa bevumelene abanomdla kwinyewe ukhona na umntu ogqitha bona amane ezimela ayokufaka ezinye izikolo. Okulandelayo ke kunesikolo pha Sekela Somlomo ekuthiwa yiLingelethu phaya eLusikisiki. Naso simkelwe ngamagumbi amahlanu kodwa ndizama ukoyama kula mbuzo.

Besendimvile kodwa ke uMphathiswa kumbuzo kamama uNkomonye. Le nto inolawulo lwentlekele kuba izithili zithi uhlahlo-mali abanalo abakwazi kwa ukuthenga intente. Ingumsebenzi okumhlaba wephondo. Mhlawumbi ke xa sewuphindile Mphathiswa phaya esebeni nikwazi ukuyikhangela loo nto ukuba anikwazi na ukuthumela ezithilini kuba ziyazazi izinto emazijongwe kuqala ukuze kuqwalaselwe ulawulo lwentlekele.

Owokugqibela yile nto yobudlelwane bangaphakathi bamasebe Sekela Somlomo. Kwisikolo saseJiba esingaphaya eMakhwalini apho kukho ingxaki yendlela engu-T153, ukuba andiphazami. Ikhona nalapha kwingxelo into enezeeNdlela. Sithi mazilungiswe nendlela ingakumbi ezingoo-T. Ndicinga ukuba ibalulekile Mphathiswa kuba ayijongananga nawe wedwa. Kufuneka udibane nabantu bakwaMasipala noMphathiswa woRhulumente bamaKhaya kuba zingumsebenzi kaMasipala. Iindlela ezi zingena ezikolweni azihambeki xa kunethayo. Kubanzima ukungena ngeenyawo nangezithuthi. Kubalulekile ukuba uyise kwela candela ingakumbi sinolonyulo lorhulumente woomasipala. Sifuna ukubabeka kuqala abantu bakuthi abasekuhlaleni.*(Translation of IsiXhosa paragraphs follows.)*

[Ms K C FIHLANI: Deputy Speaker, I would like to get clarity regarding priority listing that is what criteria are used in the department? In the areas where we come from there are schools that were built by the community in 1940. Nothing is said about them. I have taken Mali in Flagstaff as an example.

The community built the school while all the surrounding schools are well built. People have questions as to why they are not considered. We need to get the priority list so that we can see which schools will be considered. There is an allegation that it is changed time and again. When stakeholders agree on the approach to be followed who has the powers to bypass them and send other schools. Again Deputy Speaker there is another school called Lingelethu in Lusikisiki. Five classrooms have been blown away but I want to focus on that question.

I am covered by the MEC when he responded to the question by Mrs Nkomonye. This has something to do with disaster management because districts do not have budget even to buy tents. It is at a provincial level. Maybe when you go back to the department MEC you will look at the matter and consider delegating to districts because they know the priorities when focusing on disaster issues.

The last one is related to intergovernmental relations Deputy Speaker. At Jiba school in Makhwilini there is a problem of road T153 if I am not mistaken. The issue about Roads appears in the report. We are saying roads must be maintained especially the T roads. It is important and is not your own competency alone. You must meet with people from Municipality and the MEC for Local Government because those are the competency of Municipalities. Entry roads to schools are bad when it is

raining and it is difficult to enter. You bring it to that department more especially that we will be having municipal elections. We want to prioritize the people of our community.]

Ms B TUNYISWA-GQOBOKA: Hon Deputy Speaker, ndicela nje uMphathiswa acacise le nto umama Mvenye ebethetha ngayo yenkqubo yokutyiswa. Sisathetha ngenkqubo yokutyiswa thina. Yintoni umahluko phakathi kwenkqubo yokutyiswa kunye notyiso lwezikolo? Sifuna ukwenzela ukuba ngaba siyaphazama asilungise Sekela Somlomo. (...I would like to ask the MEC to give clarity on what hon Mvenya has mentioned, the feeding scheme. We still call it the feeding scheme. What is the difference between feeding scheme and school nutrition? We will be very happy to know so that he can correct us if we are mistaken, Deputy Speaker.)

Mnu M M DIMAZA: Enkosi, Sekela Somlomo. Umbuzo wam wokuqala kuMphathiswa ngowokuba ikomiti pha kwiphepha le-10 kwisivakalisi esikunombolo 8 ithi isikolo kufuneka sigcine abafundi abatshonileyo. Umbuzo ngulo, kulo nyaka uphelileyo icacile kwizikolo ezininzi abantwana benza isiGaba se-8 baye bangabantwana noko abangaphumeleliyo kwaye batshona kakhulu kweza zikolo yayizezasedolophini ngaphambili. Ungaya kwisikolo ekuthiwa yiSelborne, iDale neGrey inkoliso yazo khange zibavumele abantwana abatshone isiGaba se-8 ukuba babuye. Ndifuna ukuqonda ke ngoku kuMphathiswa kuba kaloku ezi zikolo zinemigaqo-nkqubo ethi isiGaba se-8 lisango lokungena kwimfundo ephakamileyo ngako oko azikwazi ukumthatha umntwana otshone isiGaba se-8 kwesinye isikolo. Ingaba isebe likwazile ukuhlola kwezi zikolo zicinga ukuba azinakuchikwa ekubeni ziphinde zibathathe abantwana?

Okwesibini ndifuna ukubuza kuMphathiswa, ndibuhlungu ukuba ephumile amanye amalungu kweli cala lam kuba ibiza kubancedisa le nto. Phaya kwiphepha le-8 lale ngxelo yekomoti kukho umhlathi we-9 othetha ingakumbi ngento yokungahanjwa kwesikolo ngootitshala ezikolweni. Ingaba uMphathiswa nesebe banawo na amacebo okanye izicwangciso zokuhlala phantsi kwakunye nemibutho kuboniswane ngendlela yokusebenzisa le nto kuthiwa xa ibizwa lixesha lokukhululelwa ukwenza umsebenzi wemanyano yabasebenzi? Akufunekanga siyipalamente sithethe ngokuthe gabalala ngathi asiyazi imithetho ibiyenziwe kwayipalamente. Yenziwe yipalamente into yexesha lokukhululelwa ukwenza umsebenzi wemanyano yabasebenzi. Kufuneka ke le nto ibenendlela yokuhlolwa ijongwe kuba yenzeka njani. Masingamane sisithi ootitshala abekho esikolweni.

Kufuneka siqiniseke ukuba banalo ilungelo lokungabikho ngamaxesha athile. Loo nto ibizwa ngokuba kukukhululelwa ukuba uyokwenza imisebenzi yemanyano yabasebenzi. Ndicela ukubuza kuMphathiswa malunga nale ndima yaba titshala kuthiwa ngootitshala abangxongxileyo kuthethwe ngabo apha. Kukho aba tisthala bahlala bengxongxile kodwa ufumannise ukuba abaniziqinisekiso zipheleleyo. Ndinqwenela ukwazi

kuMphathiswa ukuba bangaphi aba titshala baneziqinisekiso ezingaphelanga apha ephondweni naba bangenazo iziqinisekiso zobutitshala? Babeqeshwe ngeyiphi iminyaka apha ephondweni? (*Translation of IsiXhosa paragraph follows.*)

[Mr M M DIMAZA: Thank you Deputy Speaker. My first question to the MEC is arising from committee report on page 10 in sentence number 8 where it says that schools must retain its failures. The question is, last year it is clear that in most schools learners who do Grade 8 are the failures and have failed dismally from those that are former model C schools. You can go to Selborne, Dale and Grey, most of them did not allow Grade 8 repeaters. I want to get clarity MEC because these schools have a policy that says Grade 8 is the entry point to secondary school therefore they cannot admit a learner who failed in another school. Did the department monitor the activities of the so called untouchable schools in readmitting the learners?

Secondly, I want to ask the MEC but I am worried that other members have gone out on my side, because it was going to assist them. In page 8 of the committee report there is paragraph 9 that talks to school absenteeism by teachers in schools. Do the MEC and the department have a plan or strategy of meeting the organizations in order to debate the use of time off for union work? As parliament we must not generalize as if we do not know the legislation passed by parliament. Time off for union work was crafted by parliament. There must be a way of monitoring how it is used. We must not always say teachers are not attending school.

We need to be sure that they have a right to be absent at times. That is called time off for union work. I want to ask a question to the MEC about temporal teachers that were referred above. There are those who remain temporal but are under qualified. I just know how many under qualified teachers do we have in the province? In which years were they employed in the province?]

Ms T WANA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I have got one question, Hlubi, here is an issue of special school in Tsolo in my constituency where it has been reported that there is problem of sewerage and secondly there is problem of Roman school in Ikhwezi.

I will request to see the contract as what does it say because those nuns when they feel they chase those learners away and become helpless. They are worse in making them to be helpless. In my own analysis Hlubi the issue of scholar transport its where your budget has been exhausted. What if you can try a pilot project where the people who are going to make a tender can come with the a transport attached with a techograph so that the kilometers can be noted and maybe where a passenger is going to say the driver have taken so many scholars at such and such a time to such and such a time, so that you do not pay people who are not doing their job.

Okokugqibela Hlubi ngula mcimbi waseNorwood. Esa sikolo sipasa kakuhle kodwa sesakudala. Awukho umgangatho kwaye abantwana bayonzakala kuba isikolo sigqobokile. Bathi kudala bethumela ukuba baqwalaselwe ngokukhawuleza ngenxa yeengozi ezenzeka ebantwaneni

Kulo mba wokugqibela Hlubi wale nto yokuthuthwa kwabantwana kufuneka kubekho ingcaciso ecacileyo ngolu thutho. Ukuba besinenkampani esebenza norhulumente ibiza kuyenza ibenento enokubhenela kuyo yothutho. Ishedyuli yesikolo Ibiza kuxelela ukuba uthutho beluhamba kakuhle ngexesha elithile kwaye noluntu beluya kuyiqonda loo nto. Akukho mthetho ucacileyo omalunga nombamba wezothutho ingakumbi phaka kuluntu. *(Lastly, the issue Hlubi of Norwood. That school has a good pass rate but is old. There is no floor so children get injured because there are holes. They say that they have been sending requests for the urgent attention because of accidents affecting learners.*

With regard to the last issue of scholar transport Hlubi, there must be a clear explanation about it. Parastatals will be able to have a backup transport. They will be able to state that the schedule of scholar transport was smooth at a particular time and the community will understand that. There is no clear legislation around the issue of transport and the community in particular.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member, except that it is not parliamentary to refer to a member by his/her clan name. So next time refrain. He is hon Qwase. Thank you. Are there any other questions? Hon Gqiba, hon Stevenson.

Ms N GQIBA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I think first of all it is important for us to acknowledge the fact that whilst we have embarked on these visits some schools are better off, yes, others are worse off. There are three cases that I would like to refer to. First of all you will find that Deputy Speaker, a school has electrified cabling whatsoever but there is no electricity and that impact in the performance of the school.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the question?

Ms N GQIBA: What is the question? Why some schools are electrified, but there is no electricity? Secondly I have a case that I would like to draw your attention to, the one of Zanewonga Senior Secondary school, one of the schools that has deteriorated in Centane. There are no blackboards. This is a senior secondary school. There are no blackboards; the classrooms are clean; children bring chairs from home to sit. That is one of the schools in terms of the statistics, they gained 16%.

Bendinesicelo ukuthi xa kujongwa izikolo zekhe sijongwe naso kakhulu.
(*I would like to request that when schools are assisted that one must not be left out.*)

The case of curriculum head sections at district level; they do not play their role ensuring continuous visit to schools, in advising the educators in ensuring that they are on course in terms of teaching and learning. I suggest that there must be a plan in place to ensure that the curriculum section is visible to the schools for 2010 financial year?

Lastly; the case of rural allowance – there is exodus of teachers. Once a teacher is good in rural areas down there and gain symbols of A or B, simply the urban school will take it down to the urban area because there is no rural allowance. My question is Deputy Speaker, regarding the programme of rural allowance, when is it going to operate or start?

Mr R S STEVENSON: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. We won't be objecting if people referred to hon Dubulirhamba. [Laughter.]

My question to the hon MEC also touches on the issue of absenteeism and he correctly pointed out that this hits to the heart of accountability. We heard the answer about the time book, but can we get an assurance in view of the President's commitment to "in class teaching, on time" that the department this year will really clamp down hard on absenteeism and take strong disciplinary action to ensure that the number of teaching hours improves.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon members. MEC, you will realize the mixture of advices and instructions. Please respond to the questions and we will deal later with instructions.

The MEC RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION: Madam Deputy Speaker, on the prioritization of infrastructure - we have left it to the districts to set up some committees to deal with the infrastructure and prioritization with all stakeholders, but the problem is that even after we have broaden the scope there, there are still weaknesses in terms of the proper prioritization of the needy schools. As you are busy building in one school a serious situation appears on television or in newspapers which worse than those under construction, but you have given that leeway to identify schools for themselves. We still have a problem, but we have given this thing to the districts and we do not temper now to manage the issue of changing the list all the time. We do not want to temper as the province with the list that has been finalized at a district level.

On Lingelethu - we have a problem at that level as I have indicated earlier on that we have a challenge regarding the budget, especially to deal with the emergency cases; we do give districts some budget but their budget is exhausted because of this intervention they have been doing in schools that are affected by tornados.

I agree with the need to strengthen an intergovernmental collaboration with regard to roads. It is not only the areas in Lusikisiki; there are areas in Tsolo as well; we have got the serious problems where the schools are not accessible on rainy days. For instance the school, I am not sure whether it is Gqubeni, if it raining you cannot access, as a result we have delayed in terms of intervention because of that problem. Otherwise the contract was about to deliver prefabs but they have delayed because of the conditions of the roads leading to that area. We agree that we need to strengthen this area also with Department of Transport as well and not only Local Government.

Hon Gqoboka, feeding scheme versus school nutrition programme:

Ndiye ndayekelela apha kumhlonipheki uMvenya, kuba ibiseyiqhelekile le nto yokuba sithi yinkqubo yesondlo kanti yinkqubo yotyiso ezikolweni nangona ingaseyiyo la nkqubo yesondlo yakudala. (*I turned a blind eye by not correcting hon Mvenya, because we are used to calling it the feeding scheme, whereas in reality it is the school nutrition scheme; not the feeding scheme of the old order.*)

We have a cooked menu that is guided by the dieticians from the Department of Health with a nutritious value that is supposed to be part of that menu, so there is a difference. It is not that of the old regime.

Hon Dimaza, indeed we still have problems with regard to this retention of learners, especially in the former Model C schools. It is a matter that we are working on; there is also a report from other schools. Even yesterday I have sent Prof to deal with one of the schools in Middleburg where these same problems are being experienced, where you find that there are a number of learners even from the Northern Cape that are in that school, whereas those are from the Eastern Cape do not have access to that school. So we sent the Head of Department who is dealing with some of these schools of this nature, but we need more comprehensive plan to address this matter. I agree there is still a serious problem here.

On engaging with the unions - No, no, we accept the proposal that maybe we need to engage around this thing, to manage the issue of time offs properly. It must be a scape goat because at times they are not adhered to. So we need to engage. No, I fully agree with that.

On temporary educators - the underqualified educators are about 2,210 of the unqualified – I cannot break as it seems as if they also included there. We have a plan to ensure that they are put in these universities, especially in Eastern Cape, to complete their qualifications; some need the NPDE depending on the levels. We are working on this aspect, but I can provide information, detailed information to the hon member later.

Hon Wana, the issue of the special schools is noted.

We will be focusing on that aspect. We will follow up on the two schools, as well as the issue of the scholar transport.

On the issue of the scholar transport, as I have indicated earlier, we are working with Transport that have got a knowhow in terms of the routes, in terms of the monitoring of the vehicles that are used, so it is them who are dealing with those aspects. We have an MOU with Department of Transport around this matter.

On Norwood Primary - we have noted that. We will make a follow up with the infrastructure section within the department.

Hon Gqiba, some of the schools are cabled, but without electricity because in some of the villages there is no electricity, so that is another major problem that we sometimes experience. In some cases there are computers, but there is no electricity in that particular village and that affects even the school. We have cases of that nature.

No blackboards: We will make a follow up on the issue of Zanewonga. We are working on this thing of the curriculum section heads, people who are subject advisors. Indeed the majority of them do not visit schools. As part of master plan for learner performance we have factored in the issue of accountability of these people – your EDOs and your curriculum advisors.

The rural allowance has a lot of engagements in the Bargaining Chamber; whether we should give Maths and Science the rural allowance and the complaint was that what about others who are teaching in the same schools who are staying in town with these Maths and Science educators, all of them are staying in town, teaching in the same area why do you identify Maths and Science only. There were such arguments that have tended to delay the finalization and the conclusion of this issue of rural allowance. That one is being attended to but it is being finalized at the level of the Bargaining Chamber.

Hon Stevenson, the absenteeism: We are really committed in this thing and even unions themselves. Through the Quality Teaching and Learning Campaign”; they are signatories in this campaign, so we are emphasizing that it should be everybody’s business, not only the department only to press on the need to adhere to the non-negotiables as outlined in that quality Teaching and Learning Campaign – “that teachers must be at school in time” – same applies to the learners as well.

We are saying the union themselves they must also emphasize that effect as signatories of the Quality Teaching and Learning Campaign. We have seen some improvement on this matter, but there are still schools because of the poor leadership that I have indicated and also the infighting in some areas. It has caused this thing, the problem of

absenteeism, but we are closely monitoring it and we are committed to monitoring this issue sharply.

Ms A S WOODHALL: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier. We will address all the madammes as madammes, okay. Hon MECs, hon members, special visitors and guests and other colleagues, officials from the department; it is always good to be with you.

School visits made in 2010 made available as one can find out firsthand the readiness of the schools for the beginning of the current schools year. We were thanked many times the listening to the problems of the educators and officials face. Sometimes it is a humbling experience. However, there was a school at which we were told they have been visited each year, given the same report and yet nothing changed. I want to return next year and find that something has changed for the better.

Cope believes that education is the key to progress in the formal education at all levels, from Grade R to tertiary level, should be innovative progressive and teach the basis schools. We support the recommendation but would like more debate on some issues such as failing learners and provincial literacy rate.

The recommendations of the department that it fills all vacant posts in the next financial year is important and needs to be put into action as far as possible. In theory the posts have been budgeted for and yet the departments overspend. The budget needs to be a realistic one and the money allocated and kept for these posts.

We look forward to the half-yearly report to 2010 to find out how far this target has got, assuming that the department adopts it.

The filling of Science and Mathematics educator posts should actually apply to all grades. We tend to focus on Grade 12.

The monitoring of quality education in the lower grades will impact on higher grades and many schools are complaining they are taking in Grade 8 learners from the primary schools, but they are still not literate or numerate.

There is also a complaint that subject advisors are not going to the primary schools; and this needs to change.

Some of the schools and districts have identified people to fill vacant educator posts, even on a temporary basis, yet they cannot act quickly as everything has to refer to head office; and that can take months.

We support the decentralization of appointing temporary educators to the district offices. However, in a written reply to one of our questions on this subject, in November the MEC did confirm that decentralization of this function was in effect. Clearly the fact that we are reiterating this

recommendation from the committee highlights there is an effective communication which the districts are complaining about and there is no clear line management from head office districts; and this must change for the better.

The learners who disappear from the system are individuals who matter. They represent lost opportunities for themselves and the province in terms of potential talent; and we support the recommendation and urge the department to make a plan with deadlines for the tracking system to be in place.

Large classes are an issue that needs to be addressed. There is a recommended class and room size and yet schools are overcrowded, suggesting that there is a problem that is not being addressed right at the heart of it.

The socio-economic situation of learners, with absentee or diseased parents, exacerbates the behavior of the learners and on reflection it could be that recommendation 23 referring to boarding facilities should be more than just a pilot project.

The issue over-age learners is very serious and needs to be debated further. Recommendations 5, 6, 7 and are interrelated and all of these issues that lead to serious social issues, they come out in our findings and they are interrelated.

Several schools I visited had very demotivated educators. They were way down with very large classes, ill-disciplined learners and the lack of parental or community support. With the help of the district managers I believe that in some cases the situation can improve. There are schools that, in difficult circumstances, have been successful and being a well managed school, providing good education. One common factor in those is good support and involvement of parents and the community. Another is good management at school and district level.

With take issue with the Greenpoint School situation in East London. This is an example of a school which has been successful and popular with the community, but in 2010 it is not functioning well. The community has been upset by the department and as a result is not supportive of departmental decisions. We in Cope call upon the department to not just listen to the community, but to give fair consideration to what is being said; otherwise this will turn into another failing school.

Problems around scholar transport and the nutrition programme relate to the tendering process. Local businesses and individuals in the area of the school should be given the opportunity to become service providers, instead of head office keeping it centralized. At one school we asked why the food had to travel so far, as there were successful chicken farming, vegetable gardens and bread-baking projects nearby which

could supply food and yet they are not benefiting from the tender; and those projects were initiated from this Legislature.

There is another example of a need to decentralize to districts. Head office needs to learn to delegate basic principle of good management. We also welcome the recommendation of a standardized pricing index for infrastructure and materials. In fact, there is a need to review the service provider policies in order to save money and utilize the little that we do have, effectively.

Cope upholds the constitutional right of every individual to have a quality education. We hold the department responsible for delivering this with clearly defined terms and frameworks and we look forward to hearing how and when each recommendation will be adopted and acted on. There must be timeframes with realistic targets. There must be regular monitoring by the committee and the department held accountable.

We look forward to hearing from the department before the end of this financial year and we must believe that the situation can change and bring hope to the people. [Applause.]

Mr P E VAN VUUREN: Hon Deputy Speaker, Members of the Executive, Members in the House, officials of the department.

In this House other day our leader, the hon Stevenson said that the Democratic Alliance is a gender for accountability, This is an exceptional important issue when it comes to education and I wish to compare later on, on the 2008 report on school visits with the total of 2009 report to illustrate this point because very little has changed in these years.

Accountability is a core issue when it comes to improve in education in the province. Earlier this year when the dismal matric results were announced, the MEC stated that he would action against principals who are not performing. There are high schools that have performed dismally in the last Grade 12 examinations, obtaining a mere pass percentage of less than 30%. My challenge to you today MEC is; what action has been taken thus far. I am almost certain none has been taken.

SADTU, home to most our teachers in the province, should be applauded for the zest they display in trying to improve teachers working conditions of which some of those educators are also members and supporters of Democratic Alliance. [Interjections.]

However, the worrying factor is the union involvement during school time. Learners are being robbed of the learning time because union matters take a precedent at schools, especially in our disadvantage areas. [Interjections.] The DA, hon MEC, is appealing to you to seriously pursue and address this issue by putting the emergency means in place

so that all learners have access to education, not some of the times but all of the times.

Let us to look at the comparative analysis of Grade 12 results obtained in three clearly defined segregated areas within the Port Elizabeth District. Let us look at that. In 2008 the former Model C schools achieved a pass percentage of 95.9, in the Northern areas where hon Martin stays 73.1 and in the township areas 49.9, resulting in the overall pass percentage of 68.6. [Interjections.] In 2009, hon members, in the order, the pass percentages were 94.4, 71.04 and 45.8, with the overall pass percentage of 65.3%. The number of under-performing schools in the township areas has drastically increased, with only two schools in the underperforming band in the northern areas. These are actually the same two schools that under-performed in 2008.

Now, hon members, giving the historical reasons, hon Dimaza, for example the fact that the previously advantage schools are still at an advantage in terms of resources and overall structure, the question begs to be asked. What are the reasons for the discrepancies in the results obtained within the groups alluded to?

We know it is the fact that schooling has been interrupted by union meetings and learners left unattended within school in the work performing areas. We know that is the fact. In some of these schools, senior educators specialists are not allowed into classrooms to assess the quality of subjects that had given to learners. At our visit now we were informed that the district, schools are chasing subject advisors away.

The MEC for Education must clearly state how and what measures are going to be invoked to obtain and sustain a uniform quality education within all our schools in the province.

The portfolio committee has been conducting school visits across the province for more than a decade and each year a report is submitted to the legislature that lists most of the same challenges. This in fact amounts an exercise in futility in that the report is debated, adopted and then added to the pile of others and gathering dust in Bhisho, with the same exercise repeat at 12 months later and none or very few of these House resolutions implemented. That is the fact.

This indeed is a very sad indictment of the department not meeting the challenges in education as emphasized in the adopted school visit reports. Most of the challenges listed over the years are of the similar nature and are not adequately addressed, such as the high rate of furniture shortages in schools – it is still there, the late deposits of allocation of funds in schools, shortage of learner teacher support due to lack of the appropriate school funding, scholar transport which was alluded to and school nutrition are not properly monitored and there are learners who qualifies but are not benefiting.

The above findings are only but the few of a repetitive nature and every year general recommendations are made in order for these challenges to be addressed, but for reasons only known to the department themselves, these challenges were remain challenges and opportunity provided through quality education is lost to divulge majority of our learners striving for a better future.

Hon MEC, there are some issues of concern that I would like to bring to your attention. In 2006 the DA councilor of Ward 41 in Port Elizabeth, Heather Forsythe, alerted the district office in Port Elizabeth of a need of the high school to be built in Booyens Park. Unfortunately only when the community took to the streets three years later then only intervention took place.

We also have situation in the Willowmore area, hon MEC, which is known to your office as well as to the district under which Willowmore falls, but nothing has been done yet. Is your department once again waiting for the community to take to the streets first before this matter is resolved?

The MEC needs to state unequivocally in his response today whether he is going to allow resources to be wasted or whether these schools are going to be rationalized for the benefit of community. The process of rationalization of schools must be fast tracked and properly monitored. This is also a recommendation by the Portfolio Committee on Education.

The Greenpoint School was alluded to by the hon member. I will... Yes. Hon Deputy Speaker, the Democratic Alliance wishes to state categorically "society gets in an open-opportunity society where abilities and capabilities are foremost. All officials and principals must sign a performance contract, with clearly defined targets for improving learner performance.

In conclusion, quality education is the cornerstone of an open opportunity society. Look at me! Expanding access to quality education for all is the best affirmative action there is. [Interjections.]

The DA supports the schools visit report unreservedly. [Time expired.] [Applause.]

Nksk Z HLEKISO-THABANENG: Enkosi Somlomo, iUDM iza kuyixhasa le ngxelo yoyelelo ezikolweni. Xa sijonga kwizinto ezifunyenweyo kukho izinto esirhalela ukuba singathi sibonise isebe ukuba lingazithini na.

Malunga nokusebenza kweetitshala iUDM icinga ukuba mayingajongwa ukuba iitisthala ezi zisebenza ngendlela efanelekileyo, makukhe kujongwe kuqala izizathu zokuba kutheni bengakwazi ukusebenza ngale ndlela ifanelekileyo.

Okokuqala, mhlawumbi ndiza kuthetha nje ngetitshala. Utitshala uyahamba aye kwisikolo soqeqesho kangangeminyaka emithathu okanye kwisikolo semfundo ephakamileyo kangangeminyaka emithathu nangaphezulu andule ukubuyela esikolweni. Okokuqala indawo le yokuhlala uyinikwayo inento eyenzayo apha kuwe. Uze kweli banga uza kulifundisa, nalo linento eliyenzayo kulo msebenzi uzokuwenza. Ithethe ukuthi ke okukungqungileyo makujongwe ukuba akunalo na igalelo elibangela ukuba lo msebenzi uzokuwenza ungawenzi ngale ndlela ubucinge ukuba wena uza kuwenza ngayo nangale ndlela ufunde yona.

Kwezo zinto ke izinto ezongezayo ziindlela kuba ukusuka kule ndawo usuka kuyo ukuya esikolweni ngakumbi kootitshala abafundisa ezilalini. Ufumanise ukuba akukho kwa indlela le sowufika esikolweni. Awusekho kulo mdla ubuzixelele ngayo ukuba uzakwenza ngohlobo oluthile. Zikhona ke izinto ezibanegalelo emntwini esithi ke isebe maliziqwalasele lincedisane namasebe athi abe nalo igalelo elo mhlawumbi kwezendlela. Nezitulo nedesika ezi uza kufika kwesi sikolo kukukho zifestile namnyango. Akukho netafule nesitulo esi uza kuhlala kuso kuqala. Akukho zibhodi zakubhala njengoko bekutshiwo apha. Nazo ezo zinto zinegalelo kumsebenzi wetitshala.

Ezo zinto singathanda siyiUDM ukuba isebe malizijonge phambi kokuba lithi utitshala akasebenzi ngendlela efanelekileyo. Izixhobo zokufundisa nazo zinento yokwenza ngakumbi kweza zikolo ufumanise ukuba akukho nto uyenzayo. Abantwana abanayo nomfanekiso wayo yonke le nto ubenzela umfanekiso ngqondweni wokuba le nto yinto enje ngale. Abazange bayibona okanye asoze bayibone bade bayokufika mhlawumbi kwisiGaba se-9 umntwana engazange wayibona le nto kuthethwa ngayo kanye kanye ukuba yintoni na. Isebe malizame ukuncedisana neetitshala.

Size nalapha kwii-SGB. Liyinene elokuba nazo mazifundiswe indlela okanye ziwazi umsebenzi ezizokuwenza esikolweni ukuncedisana nootitshala.

Abanye ke abazali phaya banalo ulwazi. Banokusebenzisa olo lwazi lwabo. Ufumanise ukuba ngelinye ixesha luyagilana nolwazi lootitshala malunga nokuba bebefanele ukusebenza kanjani na. Kuphele kubengathi kukho ingxaki esikolweni kanti kukungaqondani indlela okanye omnye indima afanele ukuba uyayenza. Le ndaba ke yokuba kubekho iititshala ezingekaqeshwa ndicinga Somlomo, ngemvume yakho ndimke kwisikolo endandifundisa kuso ngeyoKwindla kowama-2004. Esa sithuba asikavalwa mntu nanamhlanje.

Ndicinga ukuba mhlonipheki uThunyiswa zikhona izinto ngexesha lokwakha kwakhiwe. Likhona ixesha lokuba kugxijwane. Ukuba ndenze umzekelo ngesi sikolo ndisuka kuso asinokuhamba sinike ingxelo ngazo zonke ezi zikolo. Ixesha lokwakha lelokwakha. Ukuba kukho into ethi esiXhoseni ukufa kwebhokhwe isezwa iyeza ayizunceda bani loo nto.

Ukuba ndenze umzekelo ngesikolo endisuka kuso andizokwenza umzekelo ngazo zonke ezi zikolo zeli phondo. Umba wothutho lwabafundi nawo unegalelo. Ukuba bekukho umgaqo-nkqubo ukuqala kwakulwamkelo lwabafundi kujongwe ukuba umntwana ngowayiphi na indawo. Abantwana bashiya izikolo apha zikule lali yabo bafune ukuyokufunda kwesiya sikolo. Bafune ke ngoku ukuba mabakhweliswe.

Mayiqale le nto yezothutho idityaniswe nolwamkelo xa isenziwa. Ukuba kwamkelwa abathile kwesi sikolo ngabaphi abantwana abanokuthathwa. Siphinde siyiUDM sithi mawujongwe lo mcimbi wesiGaba se-12. Lo mcimbi wokuba bangaliniwa ithuba lesibini lokuphinda eli banga mawujongwe. Abantwana bethu bangamaxhoba okuba amaxesha amaninzi bazibulale kukungaphumeleli ngelinye ixesha. Omnye umntwana ebenethemba lokuba uza kuphumelela. Mayikhe ijongwe ihlalelwe phantsi ukuba abantwana mabalinikwe ithuba lesibini. Mabasiphinde isiGaba se-12 kungathiwa mabahambe bazibonele. Ufumanise ukuba akukho neso sikolo urhulumente abonelela ngaso esisesoluntu.

Kukho nalo mba wezikolo zabucala nezi zizimeleyo. Makubekho umda. Apha nguvula zibhuqe. Umntu ukuba ufuna ukwenza ushishino uvula isikolo enze imali. Mawubekhona umda owenziwa ngurhulumente, singafumanisi sinezikolo ezininzi ezingaziwayo nangurhulumente ukuba zisebenza njani.

Ngako ke iUDM iyayixhasa ingxelo. Enkosi. [Kuhwatywe.]
(*Translation of IsiXhosa speech follows*)

[Ms Z HLEKISO-THABANENG: Thank you Speaker. The UDM will support the report on school visits. When we look at the findings there are advices that we wish to put forward for consideration. Regarding the performance of teachers, the UDM would like to propose that we must not look at how teachers perform but we need to first to look at the reasons for the nature of their performance.

Firstly, I will express myself as a teacher. A teacher goes to the training school for three years or to an institution of higher education for three years and over before starting to teach. The accommodation that you are given has a contribution to your well-being. Coming to the grade you be teaching, it also has an effect in the performance of your work. We need to look at the surroundings and check whether they do not have any negative impact in discharging your functions leading to not to perform as one wished.

Other factors that contribute are roads because they are a problem from where you live more especially to teachers in rural areas. You will find that even you arrive at the school, there is no access road. You end up not in the mood to present lessons in a particular approach. There are factors that we ask the department to consider to work with other departments that contribute like in road construction. There is no table

and chair to sit in the first place. There are no black boards to write as it has been alluded to. These factors have an impact in the performance of teachers.

The UDM would like to propose that they must be considered by the department before allegations that teachers are not performing appropriately. Teaching aids also have a contribution more especially in schools that are really struggling. Learners do not have a picture of what you are demonstrating in order to have an imagery of how it looks like. They have never seen it or they will never see it up until they are in Grade 9. A child has never seen what is taught and how it looks like. The department must try to assist teachers.

Let us come to SGBs. I concur with the suggestion that they must also be trained so that they discharge their responsibilities in schools to assist teachers.

Other parents are well informed. They can utilize their expertise. At times you will find that they are in conflict with teachers regarding the manner in which they are supposed to function. That will end up creating a crisis in the school while it is the misunderstanding of roles of each component. The problem of not filling vacant teaching posts through you Speaker, let me refer to the school where I was teaching which I left in 2004. That vacancy has not been filled up to now.

I think hon Thunyiswa there is time for building. There is also time to criticize. If I take the school where I was teaching as an example, we cannot visit all of them and give a report. Time for building is for building. There is an IsiXhosa phrase that says we cannot lose hope on our failure after we have tried everything. If I take my former school as an example I cannot use all the schools of the province as examples. Scholar transport also has a contribution. The problem starts with the policy on admissions where schools need not admit learners from any area. Children leave schools in their villages and go to other schools. They demand to be transported to those schools.

Scholar transport must combine with admissions. If a school admits learners it must be clear as what will be the threshold of the school. The UDM proposes that Grade 12 must also be considered. The issue of not affording them a second chance to do this grade. Our children are victims of suicide for failing their examinations. Another child hoped to pass. The issue of giving them a second chance must be debated. They must repeat Grade 12 and not be left wanting. You will find that there is no government finishing school.

There is also the issue of private and independent schools MEC. There must be a limit. It is a free for all. If a person wants to do business he opens a school and makes money. The government must come up with limitations so that we do not have fly by night schools.

The UDM supports the report. Thank you. [Applause.]]

Mr M P GALO: Hon Deputy Speaker, protocol observed. The African Independence Congress is of the view that the portfolio committee has done a commendable work thus far, taking into account the number of schools they managed to visit.

However, we would want to register a concern about some of the schools which were not visited as yet because we believe such schools are having great challenges. I will cite an example about one of the primary school, Chibikamureng Village in Mparane administrative area under Maluti district, where the community of that village was promised that the school will be upgraded to a JJS before the end of 2009. In January this year the community was shocked to be told that Grade 4 in that school has been closed, so the parents must send their children to other schools.

This cannot be correct, hon Deputy Speaker, when we are saying that our children should be at school, but on the other hand some of the schools are being closed instead of being upgraded. We view this anomaly as a serious matter which needs the attention of the MEC as soon as possible.

On non-accountability of the schools about monies allocated to them, the AIC suspects that the school governing bodies are not capacitated enough on financial management skills; therefore the corrupt principals in those schools will take the advantage of the situation. Otherwise, the AIC supports the report. Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr M MRARA: Hon Deputy Speaker, the hon Premier in absentia, the Executive, Members of this Legislature, members of the public particularly our invitees - the principal of Egqubeni, the principal of Bhekisizwe, staff members and departmental officials - let me extend our fraternal greetings to all of you this afternoon. On behalf of the African National Congress, we want to share with you our historic mission in this revolution and the evolution of the education system at different epochs in our struggle.

The watershed of 1994 under a democratic rule created by the poor masses of this country through their sacrifice - death was their ultimate price paid by millions of our people for us to live. Formation of a non-racial, non-sexiest democratic and unitary South Africa remains our principle position as enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

After fighting wars of resistance against our colonial masters, the ANC had to be formed in 1912 primarily to unite Africans in particular, blacks in general, against their common enemy, the white colonialist, who were hell-bent on advancing the imperialist agenda in our own soil.

Eastern Cape was outstanding in defending her own people. Over a period of 100 years, we fought 10 wars in this province. Settlers identified this province as the most sophisticated and dangerous province against them, hence the National Party Government during 1970s decided to disinvest in this province due to high political activism. They decided to run down the infrastructure of this province and isolated this province because of its high activism.

Sasisilwe ke thina kweli phondo. (*We were fighting in this province.*)

That would be echoed by the words of our stalwart, Sol Plaatje, and I want to quote him as follows:

Awakening on a Friday morning, 20 June 1913, the South African native found himself not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth.

The Native Land Act of 1913 decreed in the name of His Majesty, the King that pending the adoption of a report by a certain commission somewhere in the dim and unknown future, it shall be unlawful for natives to buy or lease land, except in the scheduled native areas, and under severe pain and penalties they are deprived of their birth human rights of living on their land, except as servants in the employ of whites.

This was Sol Plaatje in 1916 in his book *Native Life in South Africa*. In 1950 a rush of apartheid laws were passed and the first law to be passed was the Group Areas Act, which pushed all of us to the periphery, pushed all of us to townships, to bantustans, to the areas where we find ourselves in today. The land was stolen from us.

Umthetho uthi umhlaba wakwaMrara wemka, umhlaba wakwa Van Vuuren wemka, umhlaba wakwa mhlonipheki uKwelita wemka, umhlaba wakwamhlonipheki uMvenya wathathwa ngabelungu. [Kuhlekwe.] (*The law states that the Mrara family has been taken, the land of Van Vuuren family has been taken, the land of Kwelita family has been taken. The land of hon Mvenya family has been taken by the white people. [Laughter.]*)

The Population Registration Act – and I am raising this for a particular purpose – the Population Registration Act, which was intended to control influx control so that our people do not have access to industrialization that was emerging at the time; the Immorality Act, you not allowed to marry a white man. In 1953 the Bantu Education Act was passed. The Creation of Separate Amenities Act was passed concurrently and therefore separate development was the cornerstone of the White minority in oppressing and exploiting the Black majority in this country. Some philosophers are saying society is constituted by two classes – the haves and the have not's; the working class and the capitalist class.

I heard one hon talking of an open society, a need in a highly divided society. You will never realize that. That is why we are saying the ruling class led by the conservative white minority political parties still hold two critical national natural resources – the land and property. It is so unfortunate because those are enshrined in the Constitution and I think the legislation must begin to discuss that particular matter.

Ndisawulindele mna ke umbutho oza kuthi njengokuba sisilela ngemihlaba nje apha uthi kwezi fama zakho zilishumi uthi ndiyanikezela ngeefama ezintlanu kulo rhulumente usenzela ukuba abantu bethu baphile. (*I am still waiting for the organization that will say as we lament for the loss of land, in your ten farms you are donating five farms to the government so that our people can benefit.*) The land was gone until today.

People's education for people's power should be seen in this context that it was a cry, a national cry by the youth of this country, by the people of this country, to ensure that they gain access to education in all respect from foundation phase to tertiary. Education is a societal matter. It is the transfer of knowledge from the dead to the living. Education belongs to all. Each individual has a capacity to learn. Prior learning comes from a family, a basic unit in society. Formal education is just a structural thinking of an individual, but the principle is: education is a right in this country.

The South African Constitution under the section “provinces of provinces” does indicate that the Eastern Cape has a population of 6.9 million – Xhosa-speaking - 83.4%, Afrikaans-speaking - 9.3%, English-speaking 3.6%. The GDP of the country stands at 8.1%. We are raising this because language has a direct link to the performance of learners. If 83.4% constitute Xhosa-speaking learners and the syllabi that we are following are contrary to that then it is a challenge in as far as that is concerned. Our education system in the province suffers from that anomaly. Textbooks on major learning areas or subjects are only available in English and Afrikaans. We solely depend as Blacks on the analysis of conservative white academics from these well resourced former White institutions.

Organic intellectuals that used to be produced by the working class (the poor) are highly suppressed by both electronic and print media in our country.

Sinazo nathi iingcinga nengqondi kodwa ingxaki ekhoyo yeyokuba siphila kwintlalo yobungxowa. Asilinkwa ithuba lokuzibonakalisa kwezi zixhobo sifanele ukunxibelelana ngazo nabantu bakuthi. (*We do have ideas and thoughts but the problem is that we are living in a capitalist society. We are not given a chance to understand the tools of communication so that we can express ourselves to our people.*)

South Africa is a capitalist State. Capitalism in its nature is inherently a corrupt system and that is why you will continue crying about corruption, crime and violence in society. Look at statistics from the United States schools. Take statistics from the south of England and you check the level of corruption and crime in those particular areas. I am just citing a few of the major powers in the world. It is the survival of the fittest where dog eats dog. We want to change this system for the better.

Despite all these constraints, our liberation movement has succeeded to establish people's organs in schools – SGBs and SRCs, legislate recognition of all South African languages, establishing a single Department of Education with a common curriculum.

We have managed to fight poverty in schools by providing nutrition, child support grant, scholar transport, as components of this intervention. No-fee schools - 60% at this point through our financial year. ABET to get rid of illiteracy, building schools and infrastructure, budgets for each school in the province. That never happened in the previous governments.

We are facing challenges, of course. The opening of teacher colleges for teacher development is a challenge that is confronting all of us, where teacher development relates to pre-service and in-service of educators. Child-headed families which are a crisis that we are beginning to face, that results to high rate of learner pregnancy, it needs society to ensure that we deal with this particular matter.

Boarding schools must be explored. We acknowledge the fact that learners in farm areas – we do not have farms but there are in our homes which are denied their basic human rights of learning. Child abuse, child labor is rampant in those particular areas, negating the law of the country. We are saying that boarding school might be a solution to mobilize all these small schools under one roof and ensure that they gain and they get the actual education that we need; also to get rid of the multi-grade teaching system.

We are confronted with corruption - and we have taken a decision that there must be zero tolerance across the board. We have adopted that stance as a liberation movement – zero tolerance – and that is why we are following up on each case as far as this matter is concerned.

We are also following up the question of infrastructural development, procurement processes that are followed. These are the challenges that confront all of us and I have said education is a societal matter. It is one man's project but for the country.

Uza kufa apha uyolala kobandayo ushiye umntwana wakho entengantenga ejonge iinkonzo kurhulumente kulawulo lwe-African National Congress. *(You will die and be buried, leaving your child*

roaming around looking for services from the government of the African National Congress.)

That is the reason why we need to be conscious of our responsibility when we are in this institution. This institution is intended to service the interests of the ordinary people who do not have the opportunity to stand at this podium and express themselves. The African National Congress has been championing that particular area for a long time. [Interjections.]

The ownership and control of the means of production by the poor is a requirement at this stage. It is a requirement at this stage. Education remains a pillar of all developing nations. We seek to use our state to actively intervene on behalf of the poor the black majority particularly in education.

The Freedom Charter has guided us through difficult times to realize in part the following objectives:

- Education shall be free and compulsory;
- The doors of learning shall be open to all;
- Teachers shall enjoy all the rights enjoyed by other citizens, including labor rights;

I must conclude by quoting Moses Kotane, our martyr. With conviction during difficult times he has this to say:

What appears now is bound to disappear. All evils, the ills in society that we are confronted with today, all are bound to disappear. All those who represent interests contrary to material conditions on the ground experienced our own ordinary people the majority in this country are bound to perish.

That is the message we are conveying in this House as the ANC. [Applause.]

The MEC RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, Members of the Executive Council, hon Members, ladies and gentleman, our visitors from Bhekisizwe and Gqubeni. I greet you.

I want to welcome the report of the portfolio committee and thank the chairperson and the portfolio committee for the continued support to the department and in line with the requirements of this House, the department will respond to the findings and recommendations within 30 days as stipulated.

The enthusiasm at which the school visits were conducted by all stakeholders is an indication that society is realizing that stability in education is critical in dealing with a number of societal challenges confronting the nation. This has also been reflected by the

overwhelming support even in the launches of the quality teaching and learning campaign that we have conducted in various districts, also in the launches of the district education forum in the various districts which are meant to mobilize all the stakeholders behind the education transformation and agenda to improve the quality of education in the country.

All the stakeholders have embraced the master plan that we have developed in the department to change and improve quality of learner performance and also of improving management in our schools. This master plan Deputy Speaker was launched in December 2009 because we want to ensure that when we present the Grade 12 results we have a clear plan stating how we are going to turn around the situation to improve our results. We also have to look at the amount of improvement we target that is why we can up with this master plan.

The master plan shows there are areas where we have shortfalls which are:

- The weak management by school principals and SMTs;
- Deficiency in terms of curriculum implementation – especially in the new curriculum in schools;
- Inadequate learner teacher support material resourcing;
- The high vacancy rate, especially in critical subjects like Maths, Science and Accounting;

Also, the content gap amongst the educators that they have been complaining about. We were not taught the new subjects and the new curriculum.

Poor institutional leadership is also a problem, as well as ineffective subject advisory services, this concerning issue which non-availability of subject advisors in schools more especially in the GET primary and secondary.

Ukungasebenzi kwezikolo yenye yezinto esiziqapheleyo eyenziwa ngamanye amaxesha kukukruthakruthana kootitshala ngakumbi ke kule nto inokwenza nezi zithuba zeenqununu, oosekela nqununu kunye neentloko zamasebe. Eza zithuba zokunyuselwa zimbalwa babe abantu bebaninzi. Inomkhuba wokusenza isikolo singasebenzi kakuhle ngakumbi xa kukho nobunkokheli obuqhwalelayo ekumanyeni ezi titshala nasekuzigcineni ziqwalasele kumsebenzi ophambili wesikolo.

Sikuqaphele ukungabinantsenzo kolawulo lwesekethi okukungakwazi kuphendula kwabalawuli besekethi. Abaphenduli kakuhle ngento eyenzeka ezikolweni.

Zezinye zeendawo esizibonileyo esithi kufuneka siqinise kuzo kwesi sicwangciso siphambili. Isicwangciso sethu esiphambili ke sizama ukusabela kwezi zinto.

Ezi zinto ndizichazayo apha zisisishwankathelo semiba ephakanyiswe yikomiti nesizibonileyo nathi sisisigqeba solawulo ngeli xesha besijikeleza ezikolweni.

Sicinga ukuba siza kusincedisa kakhulu isicwangciso esiphambili ekutshintsheni isimo. Siyaxhaswa kakhulu ngabanomdla kwinyewe phaya ezantsi xa sizama ukusicacisa ukuba nantsi into esifuna ukuyenza. *(Translation of IsiXhosa paragraphs follows)*

[Dysfunctional schools are another area we have noticed in most cases caused by the tussle between teachers on posts of principals, deputy principals and head of department posts. Promotion posts are few while there are many candidates. That has a tendency of making a school to be dysfunctional more especially when the leadership is lacking in keeping teachers focused on the core business of a school.

We have noticed the ineffectiveness in the circuit administration where the management is unable to account.

These are some of the areas we have identified where we need to strengthen in our master plan. Our master plan is trying to respond to these areas.

The areas I have mentioned are a summary of issues raised by the committee and they have been noticed by the executive council during the school visits.

We think that it is going to help us in our master plan in order to turn the tide. It is supporting the stakeholders on the ground when we try to explain the findings that need to be addressed.]

As a response to these challenges we targeted school leadership especially in schools that have performed very badly and we are also targeting the content gap especially on the killer subjects in the teachers. The training of principals is being finalized today. We have started it last week. This might be the third week of action. We have targeted schools that have performed below 40%. We have workshoped them vigorously so that the situation in those schools can change.

IiEDO sizibizile nazo kuba sifuna ukuhlangabezana nale nto yokuphendula ngomsebenzi. Olwazo ucweyo beluphela izolo. Ibilelokuzama ukuqinisekisa ukuba siza kuqinisa le nto yokubekwa kweliso ekusebenzeni kwabo kunye nokuphendula ngomsebenzi wabo.

Ititshala ezi zinomxholo wazo esifuna ukungena kuzo ngomhla we-09 kweyoKwindla le nkqubo. Mhlawumbi siza kuyiqala kancinci okwakaloku nje ngeentsuku ezimbini kodwa ethubeni siza kumana siyenza rhoqo ukwenzela ukuba bade baqine noko baxhathisile ngakumbi kwiZibalo, kwezeNzululwazi, Accounting, ezingoBume

belizwe, ezoLimo nesiNgesi. Ezi zezona zizizifundo ezibabulalayo esiqhwalela kuzo.

Ndichulumancile ke Sekela Somlomo naluhlobo eye yathathwa ngalo le nto yeli khwelo silihlabileyo ezikolweni, ebantwaneni nasezitimshaleni. Leli lokuba masibenethuba lokufunda elongeziweyo izifundo zasekuseni, emva kwemini nangemiGqibelo. Xa bendihamba apha ndiwela apha ndisiya ngapha eNgqeleni kwezi veki ziphelileyo kungoMgqibelo. Ndiqale ukubona isinxibo sesikolo ngoMgqibelo ukusuka eGcuwa ndade ndayokungena eNgqeleni ukubonakalisa into yokuba ela khwelo lisatyelwe ngabantu bethu, ngootitshala bethu zizikolo zethu kunye nabafundi bethu. Likhwelo lokuba kufundiswe nangoMgqibelo ukuphucula imeko yethu apha kweli phondo. [Kuhwatywe.] (*Translation of IsiXhosa paragraphs follows.*)

[We have met with the EDOs because we want to address the issue of accountability. Their workshop ended yesterday. We were trying to strengthen monitoring and their accountability.

Teachers have their own content. We will deal with them. On the 9th of March we have started their programme. Maybe we will conduct it in portions. For now we will take two days but as time goes on we will conduct them regularly so that they can be strong and fully capacitated more especially in Maths, Science, Accounting, Geography, Agriculture and English. These are the most killer subjects that we have a challenge to deal with.

I was also excited, Deputy Speaker, by the nature of the response after we have made the call to teachers and children. The call was that we must have extra classes in the morning, afternoon and Saturday classes. When I was passing through Ngqeleni in the previous weeks on Saturday. I saw school uniforms starting from Butterworth up to Ngqeleni which shows that our call has been heeded by most of our schools, our teachers and children. The call is about having Saturday classes to improve our situation in the province. [Applause.]]

The challenges raised by the portfolio committee are both institutional and societal in nature. The high teenage pregnancy, the crime that affects our morning classes and evening classes in certain areas in St Batholomus in Qumbu and areas of Ngangelizwe where crime has made morning and evening classes to be ineffective. As the committee has alluded, there is buglaring of learners' rooms when they are in the evening studies. These are some of the problems that are societal in nature which are beyond our control at schools and we need to deal with them.

Ukungathathi nxaxheba kwabazali noluntu kwiintlanganiso ababizelwe kuzo nasekuncediseni abantwana babo ekufundeni yingxaki ekhoyo ekufuneka sijongene nayo. Siyayiqonda abanye abafundanga, kodwa ibalulekile le nto ithi xa kuza kulalwa wonke umntwana ofundayo

ukusuka kwisiGaba R makathathe iincwadi zakhe azibeke apha nokuba mna andifundanga makafunde le ebeyifundisiwe ukwenzela into yokuba iititshala ingabingathi zithwele inyanda phaya esikolweni zithi zisemva zibe ziphambili (*The non-participation of parents and the community in meetings that are held and in assisting children in education is a challenge that we need to deal with. We understand that others are illiterate, it is important to look at the books of children from Grade R before going to bed. Children must read what they have been taught at school on that particular day even if I am illiterate so that the heavy load is not on teachers at school which makes them to move forward and backwards.*)

In dealing with these societal matters hon Deputy Speaker, we will be engaging the traditional leaders. We have engaged with the House of Traditional Leaders, with a view to engage all the traditional leaders in the province around the education programme so that they can assist in the societal issues we were talking about. They must be able to mobilize communities as traditional leaders to address these problems of teenage pregnancy, crime rate escalating in the schools and non-attendance of meetings by parents when they are invited to school.

Ukuqinisekisa into yokuba iinqununu neeEDO zethu nazo zikhe zibizelwe ukuphendula kufuneka bamana ukubabiza kiintlanganiso zabo beziinkokheli zemveli inyanga nenyanga. Kufuneka bathi lo mcimbi wezemfundo mawuqhutyelwe phambili kunikwe ingxelo ngawo. (*To ensure that our principals and EDOs are called to account they must from time and again be called by traditional leaders to their meetings on a monthly basis. They must ensure that matters related to education must move forward and be able to give a report on them.*)

We have also engaged the Council of Churches. It has got roadshows throughout the province. We will be joining their roadshows programme and also to brief them on the plans that we have around education so that they can play a role in promoting the high moral values, community values and also the improvement of parent participation in school related matters.

On the institutional challenges, the quality of learners from feeder schools especially primary and junior secondary schools is of great concern to us as a department.

Kulo mcimbi ke Sekela Somlomo, iAfrican National Congress ithathe isigqibo sokuba makubekho ezi mviwo zifanayo kwisiGaba sesi- 3, 6 nese-9 eziza kufana elizweni lonke ukwenzela into yokuba siqiniseke ukuba wonke umntwana waseMzantsi Afrika uba kumgangatho olinganayo kwisiGaba sesi-3 ukuze siqiniseke ukuba bakumgangatho ophezulu nakwisiGaba se-12. Kufuneka bakwazi ukuya kugqibezela bekumgangatho ophezulu nakwisiGaba se-12. Sifuna ukuziphucula kulo mgangatho. (*With regard to this issue, Deputy Speaker, the African National Congress has taken a decision that there must be common*

assessments in Grade 3, 6 and 9 which will be common throughout the country so as to ensure that every child in South Africa is on an equal standard. They must be able to go through to the exit point at a high level and at Grade 12. We want to improve the quality of results at this level.)

The President has also set targets for numeracy and literacy at both Grade 3, 6 & 9 for each year up to 2014. As a department we are supposed to set our target as a province around these issues, in line with what was said by the President. This is meant to improve the quality of learning at that lower level and address the challenges that the members have confronted regarding the poor quality from the feeder schools. These are meant to address that poor quality at those levels.

We will also be focusing on the capacity building of the foundation and intermediate phase educators to improve this challenge and included in that is the stepping up of the mother tongue base bilingual education – as hon Mrara has alluded – that language is a serious problem.

Our newspapers are written in English. Children who use English and Afrikaans as home language do not have a problem of translating the question paper. Afrikaans is their home language. They do not have a problem of interpreting question papers. Our children have a problem in terms of interpreting that question paper. So these are some of the issues that we want to engage with at a CEM as why does our question paper not an English and an IsiXhosa version so that a child can look at the IsiXhosa version even if he is expected to answer in English. That can help in terms of understanding the meaning of the question.

These are some of the issues that we want to deal with at a policy level. In the next CEM we will be dealing with these issues. Some of the issues that we will be dealing with which is policy related are the appointment of principals. Already the ANC has taken conscious decision on this matter to avoid conflicts in schools. Let us bring the appointment of principals to districts or we may skip them because it is subject to manipulation that creates a lot of instability when there is infighting. We have to ensure that we take the leadership in these schools seriously.

These are the issues that we want to debate at a policy level. The assessment model is one of the issues that we want to review. In our assessment model there is CAS moderation continuous assessment which is 25% in the GET. When that comes to FET level, that is Grade 10, 11 and Grade 12 is the other way round; the emphasis is on test at an FET band. Learners are not prepared because that is small in GET while it is big in FET band. We do not prepare them for FET band in our assessment model. These are some of the issues we want to debate and review in order to assist the system and deal with the issue of equality.

One of the issues that we will be attending to is the gap in terms of the content especially in Social Studies which used to have Geography and History.

You will find that it is strong in History and weak in Geography and in the process it does not prepare a learner who is going to do Geography at high school level. We have agreed at the ECM level that we need to review of prescribing text books so that we do not blindly prescribe them. We want to centralize this thing and identify text books of quality and prescribe them according to grades and learning areas. That is what we want to do to improve the quality in our schools.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are running out of time. Can you wrap up MEC?

The MEC: As I conclude, hon Deputy Speaker, as I indicated earlier also the issue of language we will be dealing with an issue of the quality of rural education, as part of the rural development strategy. Our focus as the Department of Education – we will be focusing on improving the quality of rural education.

We are saying hon Deputy Speaker, that the momentum that has been created out there, we need to sustain the momentum. The initiatives like the plough back campaign that have improved the quality of results in the schools where it has been initiated – we want to encourage hon members here to go back to the schools where they went through as I have done as I am wearing that of my former school. We can identify the problems of schools and see where we can assist. In those schools where this thing has been initiated already it has made a lot of improvements.

We are confident as a province that we are going to improve. This is our year and we are not cursed. We have a potential to improve because there are district that have been improved by 16% others by 12% which means we have a potential to improve even by 10% if we take the average of the improvements in certain districts.

In those few words hon Deputy Speaker, I welcome the report of the portfolio committee. [Applause.]

Report adopted.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is clear that education is the basis for everyone. That means it is a societal concern. At some stage we need to host a symposium and debate more on this issue so that we improve our education as a province. We shall organize that symposium to ensure that we consider all the matters that you have raised. The reason why we ask many questions to the MEC is that we have a concern.

Siza kubulela iindwendwe zethu ezivela ngaphandle eziye zabayinxalenye yale nkqubo besinayo namhlanje yokuxoxa siphicothe imfundo yabantwana bethu. Siyanibulela kakhulu ndicinga umhlonipheki uMrara xa niphumayo uza kucela nize ngapha kweli cala azokwazi ukuba athethe nani. *(We would like to thank our visitors from outside who have come to grace our today's proceedings while we were debating and interrogating issues around the education of our children. Thank you very much and I think hon Mrara will ask you to come this side so that he can talk to you.)*

Secondly, we have circulated the profile for members. Hopefully all of us we have filled that, including our MEC so that we can also look at our education and not look at that of our children only.

We were informed earlier by the MEC for Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture, hon Tom, that there is a provincial summit of 2010. Remember we are going to host as well as a province, so we have to promote 2010 and understand everything that we have to understand. There is a Provincial Summit at two o'clock. Venue; where is the venue – in East London somewhere. You shall be informed – Regent Hotel at two o'clock. All those interested are welcome; that is what I was told by the MEC.

Okokugqibela; ngomhla we-5 kweyoKwindla iNdlu yeeNkokheli zeMveli ebesithetha ngayo iyavulwa ngokusesikweni. Sonke siyamenywa siyokuzibonela ubuhle bobugcisa. ISebe oRhulumente waMakhaya lilo ebeliquzelela isakhiwo sale Ndlu yeeNkosi. *(Lastly, on 5 March, Traditional Leaders will officially open their House, which was referred to. We are all invited so that we can see that state of the art facility. The Department of Local Government has facilitated the construction of the House of Traditional Leaders.)*

The MEC for Education said we need to involve them, so as part of that process we are welcome to attend that occasion.

That concludes the debate on all the matters for today. The House will adjourn until 3 March 2010 at 10:00.

The House adjourned at 13:05.