



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Reorganising the education landscape for a Sustainable Future
2017/18 MTEF Budget Speech - Vote 5: Education by
Mr Panyaza Lesufi, Member of the Executive Council for Education
Gauteng legislature – 27 June 2017**

Madam Speaker
Honourable Premier
Deputy Speaker
Honourable Members of the Executive Council
Honourable Chief Whip and Leaders of Opposition Parties
Honourable Member Joe Mpsisi, Chairperson of the Education Committee
Honourable Members of the Education Committee
Honourable Members of the Legislature
Leadership of Teacher Unions
Leadership of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS)
Leadership of School Governing Bodies
Invited guests from the education community
Officials of the Department of Education
Honoured guests
Comrades and Friends

Thobela!

Madam Speaker

Following in the Steps of a Great Leader

As we debate, the education budget of 2017/18, today, we also remember with fondness the finest son of the soil, the late ANC President and one of the key architects of our freedom and democracy, Mr Oliver Reginald Tambo. Had he lived, he would have turned 100 years old, and this year South Africa celebrates the centenary of his birth.

He was a man passionate about education and his achievements would be extra-ordinary in the South Africa of today, let alone during the dark decades of the apartheid regime. Oliver Tambo is celebrated for his exceptional leadership qualities and for providing direction during the darkest years of the struggle for liberation. He lived by a singular purpose "to break down barriers of division and create a country where there would be neither Whites nor Blacks, just South Africans, free and united in diversity."

Importantly, many forget that Oliver Tambo was a teacher and spent 10 years teaching mathematics and science at his old school, St Peter's Secondary School in Rosettenville, Johannesburg. He graduated with a B.Sc. degree in Mathematics and Physics from Fort Hare University. He then enrolled for a diploma in higher education but could not complete it after being expelled for his political activism. When the news of his expulsion reached his old school, St Peter's, they immediately offered him a post as Maths teacher.

Oliver Tambo fought fiercely against the evils of the apartheid system and its many injustices and did this through educating young people. Over the ten years of teaching, Tambo made an enduring impact on his students at St Peters. Dozens of his students remembered his distinctive, interactive and encouraging style of teaching, using methods, which were well ahead of their time. Oliver Tambo inspired many to take up teaching too. After hours, he introduced the concept of the Youth League to his senior students. Some of them went on to join the movement and become prominent comrades. Amongst them were Andrew Mlangeni, Henry Makoti, Duma Nokwe, Joe Matthews, Vella Pillay and a number of others.

Later on, he completed his post-graduate degree in Law and, in 1953, went on to open the first black-owned legal practice in Johannesburg with his friend and fellow comrade, President Nelson Mandela, the first President of a free and democratic South Africa. As partners, Mandela and Tambo fought in the courts for equality for all South Africans, a goal that was to elude them for a further 40 years.

Today, he is highly renowned throughout the world as a man of much fortitude, unquestionable morals and incredible perseverance. Oliver Tambo never gave up on his dream of an equal South Africa and spent the majority of his life in service of his country. He understood the value education had to himself and others in achieving this dream and, throughout his life, became a symbol of the impact that one outstanding mind can have on the plight of an entire nation.

More importantly, Tambo, throughout his life, warned us that a country that does not take care of its youth does not deserve its future. With the growing unemployment and unemployable youth, urgent interventions are required to rescue the situation. A renaissance is necessary so that young people should no longer be victims of their surrounding circumstances.

Investing in Youth for a Sustainable Future

In our minds, youth stands for dreams, innovation, and new opportunities - or simply put, the future. Yet, too many of these dreams are today being frustrated. Globally, youth unemployment is three times higher than that of adults. This is a problem in developing and developed countries alike. The potential of a whole generation risks being wasted with skills losses that would diminish long-term economic prospects while stoking social tensions. In Gauteng, every day, over 2,7 million young people, who are neither working nor studying, risk their lives in the hope of finding economic opportunities. When given the space and opportunity to do so, young people turn their energy and creativity towards solving today's challenges and tomorrow's problems.

We need to work together to make it easier for them to create opportunities, for themselves, and for others. Creating large numbers of decent jobs for young people is critical for achieving overall development objectives, from poverty reduction to better health and education. Dealing with youth employment can mean the difference between a growth-boosting demographic dividend

and a social time bomb. It is no coincidence that in the wake of the Arab Spring, global investment in youth-related initiatives, especially related to employment, has increased sharply.

The 2030 National Development Plan recognizes the importance of tackling youth unemployment, and calls specifically for promoting youth employment and economic empowerment. Full social and political engagement is impossible without economic empowerment, a point that is as true for women as it is for young people of either gender. This is why the notion of 'economic citizenship' being promoted by youth formations is so powerful.

I want to applaud the Premier for his leadership and efforts to deal with youth employability. In 2014, government launched Tshepo 500 000 now known as Tshepo 1 Million with an aim to giving hope to the youth through skills development, facilitating sustainable employment and assisting with the setting up of businesses. To date, more than 350 000 young people have benefited from the programme to find sustainable jobs, trained and skilled in areas of high demand and accredited in entrepreneurship amongst other things. Tshepo 1 Million can only make a big dent if it unleashes a new movement of public and private sector partners around the urgent problem of youth unemployment.

The 2017/18 Education Budget

Honourable Members

Education remains the key lever out of poverty and economic stagnation and remains our primary weapon in the struggle for economic transformation and in the quest for a better life for our people, especially the poor. It is for this reason that education is the apex priority and gets the biggest slice of the provincial budget. The Department's budget increased from R39 billion in 2016/17 to R40,8 billion in 2017/18, an increase of R1,7 billion. Since 2013/14, the education budget has grown by 39,8 %, a significant increase of R11,6 billion. The largest portion of the budget is allocated to Public Ordinary School Education.

Compensation of employees' accounts for the largest portion of the budget, amounting to R30.2 billion, with an increase of 7.2% translating into R2 billion from the 2016/17 financial year. The increase in compensation of employees is mainly attributed to the filling of all key vacant posts in schools and districts and providing for inflation related salary increases. The goods and services budget that includes school nutrition, school maintenance and examinations increased by 26,1% from R3,7 billion in 2016/17 to R4,7 billion in 2017/18. The increase in goods and services mainly relates to increases in school nutrition for quintile 4 and 5 schools and scholar transport. The transfer payments of subsidy allocations to public and independent schools, for 2017/18, amounts to R4,2 billion. The budget for Payment for Capital Assets decreased from R2,7 billion in 2016/17 to R1,5 billion in 2017/18. The Department will continue to address the backlog of classrooms, refurbishment and maintenance of schools as well as providing ICT compliant - infrastructure to cater for the e-learning methods of learning. This is in line with the priorities set out by the provincial government in addressing its mandate.

Improving the quality of public education is our apex priority

This massive investment in education, by the provincial government over the last two decades, has seen the provincial education system rising to become one of the leading education

departments nationally, managing both the growth in size and quality. Good progress has been made in both learner performance and school stability over the past 22 years.

The Mid-Term Review of Gauteng Government, released earlier this month, shows that, since the start of the fifth Administration, the provincial education sector in the province has strongly delivered on its commitments since education was declared as an apex priority.

We have made progress towards universal coverage of children of school-going age. The number of learners in public basic education has almost doubled - from 1,3 million learners in 1994 to almost 2,4 million in 2017. Access to early childhood development is now at 95%, fast approaching universal access. The primary school attendance rate is at 95% and secondary school attendance rate is at 92%.

We have made progress in the introduction of Early Childhood Development through the public schooling system.

We have progressively worked towards eliminating inappropriate school structures, replacing them with state-of-the-art buildings, especially in historically neglected areas. Seventeen new public ordinary schools have been completed over the mid-term and eleven new special schools have been established in township areas for learners, who have a physical disability, who are deaf and who are blind. We have also provided dignified sanitation, water and electricity to hundreds more schools in compliance with the National Norms and Standards for school Infrastructure. We have also begun a process of replacing 29 Asbestos schools across the province.

To fight hunger and poverty in schools, we have expanded the school nutrition programmes or feeding schemes in both primary and secondary schools. The nutrition programme now reaches over 1,4 million learners every school day, who are given food free of charge to improve concentration and productivity.

We have also expanded access to free education for children from poor households. More than 1,2 million attend no fee schools, which is at least 65% of our schools. No child must be denied basic education because their parents are poor or deceased.

Over 100 000 learners have access to scholar transport.

Gauteng continues to be among the top three best performing provinces in the National Senior Certificate (Grade 12) examinations, contributing 23% of all bachelor passes and 22% of distinctions in the country. We have also made progress by steadily and emphatically improving Matric results. The performance of Township schools has improved quite dramatically over this period. In this regard, let me once again congratulate the Matric Class of 2016. They have worked hard and made us proud.

In other grades, Gauteng performed better than all provinces in the 2016 report on Trends in International Mathematics and Science benchmarking study (TIMSS).

STATSSA reports the provincial Literacy rate at 96% and the number of over 20s, in Gauteng, without education reduced from 4,5% to 2,3%.

As part of modernising public education in Gauteng and rolling out e-learning systems, 1861 Grade 12 classrooms had been converted to smart classrooms. The conversion of 1765 Grade 11 classrooms has also been completed in the last financial year.

Government has invested R800 million in bursaries, learnerships and internships in order to equip Gauteng's youth with the necessary skills and work experience.

BUT the continuing mismatch between the education system and the skills required by key sectors of industry is leading to many skills development initiatives that seek to respond to the skills gap.

The challenges facing South Africa and African learners in particular is no different to what Oliver Tambo experienced in November 1936, when he completed his Junior Certificate (JC) examination, with first class pass, alongside black and white students in the Transvaal. Oliver Tambo decided to study science, as he assessed that there was an imbalance in the black professions as there were too many BA candidates. Ideally, he had wanted to study medicine but at the time no university would accept black students. Three years later, Oliver Tambo completed his science degree.

Despite the expansion of the curriculum offerings in township secondary schools and the introduction of the technical vocational subjects, we have not seen the desired participation and throughput of African in the sciences to impact on university completion rates in maths, science and engineering related degrees. Clearly, we need to do more to achieve the desired outcomes of the 2030 NDP.

Positioning Education to end-of-term and beyond – empowering the next generation

Honourable Members, with education remaining the backbone of socio-economic transformation in the province, Gauteng government is committed to improving the transition from school to post schooling opportunity. It is vital for the province to continue and intensify the transformation of basic education in order to unlock the potential of all learners so that they can participate in post schooling education, training and employment. We can no longer be satisfied with improving pass rates and bachelor passes. We must focus on the outcomes of basic education, namely: how many learners proceed to higher education, how many learners go into employment with training opportunities and how many become youth entrepreneurs.

To this end, I have agreed to a new Delivery Agreement for Education with the Premier which reflects our current approach of consolidating delivery in Education to the end of term and ensuring that we focus on getting the foundations of basic education right so that *“Every Gauteng learner should acquire the necessary skills and competencies to successfully transition to post-schooling opportunities.”*

The Agreement further specifies that this high-level goal will be attained through a combination of the following strategies:

- Improve enabling conditions at schools through a focus on the functionality of schools, including the eradication of non-compliant school buildings;
- Improve learner performance in Gr 3, 6 and 9 and a reduction in grade repetition;
- Improve pass rate and of quality of matric passes;
- Facilitate transition to post school opportunities; and
- Ensure e-learning capability is available in GPG classrooms.

It is important to clarify that these goal and strategies do not deviate from our current plans, but elevate key aspects of our delivery plans to leverage those high-impact investments and strategies, so that we achieve the provincial targets set for Education by 2019, and that we make progress toward the NDP targets for education by 2030.

The Reorganisation of Schools Programme

Over the past 20 years, we have been investing in interventions and supplementary learning programmes to improve the success of learners. We have made great progress in improving the flow-through of learners to Grade 12 and the completion of Matric, but as our provincial system matures, sustainable quality improvement is dependent on each classroom being productive and that the teaching and learning processes are effectively transacted; and that assessment practices will identify learning gaps and remediate to reduce and eliminate learning backlogs at the end of each year of schooling.

To achieve this, the Department must ensure that the focus on whole school improvement is intensified and that we create access to specialised educational opportunities. In this term, we adopted a “Reorganisation of Schools” or RoS programme that responds to the provincial plan for Transformation, Modernisation and Reindustrialisation of Gauteng. Through the RoS programme the GDE aims to build schools that exhibit excellence, thereby expanding learner opportunities within and beyond the system. The RoS programme will also operationalise the GDE’s ICT-in-education and 10-pillar strategy, which is already being rolled out to schools across the province.

The RoS programme aims to make Gauteng one of the world’s best-performing and most cohesive school systems by ensuring that we create a world-class education system. To this end, we have prioritised five change levers through which we bring about the vision envisaged.

Firstly, Improving the quality and functionality of Public schooling. This change lever aims to strengthen school functionality and improve the quality of education delivery across all Gauteng public schools through performance improvement initiatives that will create state-of-the-art public schools and produce highly knowledgeable and skilled learners who will be able to compete with top talent, not only in South Africa, but also on the global stage. This change lever is at the heart of the reorganisation and will be the main driver for improved performance across the public schooling system in Gauteng. The implementation is based on international best practices from across the great public schooling systems.

The improvement initiatives that form part of this lever will shift good performing schools towards international benchmarks and standards, and bring about a step change in holistic learner development and learner outcomes in poor performing schools.

The change theory is based on existing legislation and requirements. The law requires all schools to develop school improvement plans based on findings from self-evaluation, evaluation by districts and/or Whole School Evaluation. This framework is called Whole School Improvement (WSI).

The department through districts is systematising these processes to provide direct support to schools with a view to improved learner performance and regulatory compliance. In order to prioritise district support, including both human and material resources, we will categorise schools based on learner achievement levels and related indicators. We will use four categories of schools

namely: poor, fair, good or great. While all schools will be supported we will focus on township schools and schools at the bottom end of the continuum.

We are using a four-step approach in order to realise this system-wide improvement.

- First, we have determined the main drivers of school performance and school functionality. School categorisation will be based on objective learner assessments including matric result and systemic evaluation results, while the nine focus areas of the well-established Whole School Evaluation framework will be used to measure school functionality. We then classify schools into the four segments of poor, fair, good or great using the categorisation.
- Second, each priority school will be subjected to an in-depth diagnostic process using self-evaluation and district verification processes to determine the functional level of the school – a process we call profiling.
- Third, the school together with the district will develop a detailed school improvement plan with clearly identified interventions to drive improvement in school performance and functionality. The district will allocate additional resources to ensure smooth and effective implementation to achieve the desired remediation. Every quarter, schools and districts will evaluate progress and re-profile in order to identify further actions to strengthen areas where performance is lacking or to sustain areas of good performance.
- Fourth, annually we will review the categorisation and functionality of schools. This will be supported by periodic external Whole School Evaluation to benchmark school improvements and provide further guidance to the system.

For this financial year the Department envisages piloting this lever in 70 schools and extended it to an additional 33 underperforming schools in the province. This will be expanded to cover all high schools and primary schools beginning with township schools.

Through this approach we will institutionalise learner improvement strategies based on good practice from quality improvement interventions and to lock-in gains made in Language and Mathematics through the implementation of key interventions namely: the Literacy and Numeracy (LITNUM) Strategy, the Drop all and Read Campaign; and the Grade 8 and 9 Mathematics Strategy. These gains include:

- Monitoring and supporting the utilisation of the Mathematics and language lesson plans provided;
- Supporting teachers to optimally use the resources provided such as wordlists, readers, posters, charts, workbooks, learner multi-lingual workbooks, and Mathematics Multi-lingual dictionaries. Monitoring curriculum coverage and school-based assessment coverage and providing guidance on remedial measures;
- Building capacity of teachers to improve on their classroom practice; and
- Build to the capacity of principals, deputy principals and Heads of Department to monitor and support curriculum and School-Based Assessment coverage, workbook utilisation, and quality control of assessment tasks

We will also institutionalise learner improvement strategies based on good practice from the Secondary School Improvement Programme for Grade 10 – 12 and to progressively reduce our dependence on external supplementary programmes and place reliance on school-based teaching and learning processes. For now, we will continue to work with the SSIP programme.

From the 3 to 16 July, the SSIP camps for the July holidays will take place in various venues across Gauteng. Some of the camps will take place in Universities signifying the developing relationship

between the Gauteng Department of Education and institutions of higher learning. The Department will arrange two types of camps, namely residential and walk-ins during the winter break. These interventions will ensure that we improve learner competence to ensure that 90% of candidates will pass the National Senior Certificate by 2018/19. We also aim to increase the bachelor passes to 40 % of learners writing the NSC examinations and the number of learners who pass Mathematics and Physical Science in the NSC examinations to 70%.

I am happy to report that the preparations for the 2017 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations are on track. In total, 108 466 learners have registered as full-time candidates to write the NSC examinations in 888 registered examination centres, of which, 99 431 learners are from public schools. There are 8 877 progressed learners and 3218 learners have been granted concessions. I wish all the Grade 12 learner good luck with their preparations for the most important exams of their school life.

Secondly, Introduce Schools of Specialisation in line with the provincial development nodes. This change lever seeks to nurture the development of top talent in Gauteng across various disciplines, producing the country's future generation of economic and industrial entrepreneurs and leaders. It should be noted that there are two approaches to deliver against the NDP objectives on closing gaps in critical skills. While one approach is to concentrate on delivery a high volume of skills, the second is to provide an enhanced education to nurture top talent.

It is clear that a different approach is required for schools that serve high volumes of learners versus schools that train a small body of highly talented professionals. The former function within the existing school operating model and regulatory framework, where tailored improvement initiatives are needed, based on a school performance and functionality analysis and categorisation. The latter only focus on one or two areas of specialisation and must craft a distinct operating model, based on global best practice. For these, a new type of school must be created, a school of specialisation.

Schools of Specialisation will contribute to addressing the critical skills shortages in South Africa by nurturing the system's most talented learners. The aim of Schools of Specialisation is to respond to the provincial plan for Transformation, Modernisation and Reindustrialisation of Gauteng and to expand learner opportunities within the system and post matric, especially learners from economically disadvantaged communities.

Learners in schools of specialisation will hence be small by definition, and will be comprised of learners who have specific talents, both academic and non-academic. The rationale for placing learners in such schools is that they show high potential with one specific area of talent. Their grades should be above average and they should be keen to take on challenges. Such learners will benefit from the exposure to a talented peer group. Based on research from other parts of the world, Schools of Specialisation have a distinct operating model in terms of their funding sources, learner selection and admissions, teacher support and development, curriculum and post-matric career support and trajectories. Schools of Specialisation, as in other developed and emerging markets, typically spend around 50 to 70% of class time on the area of their focus. Schools of Specialisation also have extended hours to cover this area in greater depth. They also have specialised facilities, for example, workshops, laboratories or sports grounds. The Schools of Specialisation also ensure that learners participate in a social responsibility component to add value to the surrounding community, e.g. learners should assist community members in fixing basic things or researching to solve local environmental challenges.

To date, the department has officially identified 16 Schools of Specialisation (SOS) in Phase 1 and a further 15 in Phase 2. Of these, eight schools are currently operational as Schools of Specialisation, while nine are in the process of being converted. Six of the eight operational Schools of Specialisation prior to 2015 were formerly known as Schools of Focused Learning. These include, the National School of the Arts, East Rand School of the Arts, Rosina Sedibane School, Pace Commercial School, John Orr Technical School, UJ Metropolitan and St Barnabas College. The remaining two operational Schools of Specialisation, Curtis Nkondo Schools of Specialisation, and Magaliesburg Schools of Specialisation, were converted and established between 2016 and 2017. The Notice of Intention to convert the remaining identified schools into SOS has been prepared and is ready for publication to allow the public to make representations.

I am also pleased that nationally, the Minister, in support of efforts to improve youth employability, has tabled a proposal to implement a three-stream education system. One of the major reasons for introducing the three-stream system is to decrease dropout rates as well as to meet the skills demands of the economy and address unemployment. The model will consist of an Academic Stream, Technical Vocational Stream and a Technical Occupational Stream.

- The **academic stream** will resemble the current schooling system, with a focus on academic studies.
- The **technical vocational stream** will include subjects like engineering and technical drawing, and will be aimed at students who want to study trades after school like engineering, boiler making, and fitting and turning.
- The **technical occupational stream** is aimed at producing students who can leave matric and immediately enter the workplace, with skills like spray painting, woodwork, and hairdressing.

I am in support of this diversification of the curriculum, as it will only assist in improving the relevance of basic education across all schools and improve the employability of all school leavers.

Thirdly, Twinning of Schools: This lever aims to accelerate the achievement of holistic learner development across Gauteng public schools by promoting social cohesion and increasing learner access to quality education delivery. The Twinning Programme will improve holistic learner outcomes as a result of improved access to, and sharing of, resources, including infrastructure that will lead to mutual benefit. This lever also concentrates on improved Teaching and Learning by sharing of expert teachers and promoting skills transfer. A secondary aim of this lever is to improve social cohesion as learners, educators, and parents interact and engage with people from different backgrounds breaking class and race barriers.

This will be achieved through the implementation of the Section 17 governance model that allows one or more schools to be governed by one SGB. This governance model creates structured and methodical partnerships that allows for joint planning and execution of programmes between schools of varying socio-economic or spatial backgrounds. This creates an environment in which to share best practices and resources across schools, and also allows for cultural exchange.

To date the Province has gazetted four pairs of schools, namely:

- Bovet Primary and Lyndhurst Primary
- Cultura High and Zithobeni Secondary
- Alexandra Secondary and Sandown High
- Reiger Park Secondary and Sunward Park

In addition, the Department is consulting with a further 2 sets of school to rollout in this financial year namely: Halfway House Primary and Mikateka Primary School and Wordsworth High School and Unity Secondary School. Northridge Primary School and Onderstepoort Primary Farm School are in the consultation and induction phase of twinning.

The department is undertaking an evaluation of the pilot twinned schools and to draw lessons with a view to increasing the number of schools to be twinned by the end of the 2018/19 financial year. The evaluation will also provide guideline to strengthen legislation to support the full implementation.

Fourthly, Ensure optimal and effective use of resources: This change lever aims to accelerate the improvement in spatial allocation of resources across the province, in order to address one of the key structural challenges facing Gauteng – namely, the continuation of apartheid economic geography and spatial inequalities.

This lever will optimise the allocation and distribution of resources to schools that are most in need, and enhance the ability of the system to utilise these resources effectively. Concretely, it will do this by identifying opportunities to optimise infrastructure and procurement spend across the public schooling system in Gauteng. This will also deal with inefficiencies across schools and also deal with non-viable small schools.

Through the merger, closure and conversion of non-viable schools, the landscape of schooling can be changed positively and resources, including educators are redeployed in accordance with their qualifications, expertise and experience. For the period 2013 to 2017, the Department has gazetted and closed 105 small schools, mainly farm schools. In the 2017/18 year, the Department envisages merging and closing 8 schools. These processes are at an advanced stage, 2 of the 8 schools' submissions were approved and intention to merge the 2 and close 1 school has been published calling for representation from the community. A further 7 Schools are in the process of closure due to dwindling learner numbers in 2017.

Finally, Improve Head Office and district support: This lever aims to strengthen the quality of support provided by GDE provincial and district officials in order to deliver large-scale system improvements. This lever, also, supports the achievement of Premier David Makhura's aspiration to coordinate and streamline service delivery across all provincial departments by aligning the GDE's district regions with metro municipalities. This lever will scale up regional planning by ensuring that education services are aligned to IDPs and regional economic development plans. While all education district boundaries are aligned to municipal boundaries, metros and municipalities have had to interact with 3 or more district directors. We have reorganised the work of the regional chief directors responsible for districts by aligning their responsibilities along metros and district municipal boundaries to improve on coordination, planning and support.

In support of the change levers is the rollout of E-learning and ICT

Honourable Members, contrary to the belief of some of our critics, exposing our learners to a 21st Century curriculum and decent conditions in which to learn is not and I quote 'an unnecessary luxury'. It is an imperative of our TMR and the NDP.

Madam Speaker, the delivery agreement I have signed with the Premier commits my Department to a programme of consolidation in respect of the E-learning and ICT rollout. Over the short period of its implementation, this programme has transformed the delivery of Education in Gauteng.

Over the MTEF, we have set further ambitious targets for the delivery of smart schools. Our focus will continue to be on ensuring that these schools are enabled with ICT infrastructure, and supported with other critical educational inputs like ICT devices, teacher training and on-site support. Our delivery targets for the period to the end of term will therefore focus on ensuring:

- the 5+2 'schools of the future' that we piloted since the inception of the programme, continues to be supported and impacts closely monitored;
- ICT is enabled in all Grade 11 and 12 schools in the 377 No fee schools;
- all new schools constructed will be smart schools, meaning ICT-enabled;
- all schools that achieve a 100% pass rate automatically become smart schools;
- all the twinned pairs of schools are included in the rollout; and
- the ICT programme is progressively expanded to all township high schools.

Our experience in implementing the smart schools programme over the last three years has been that teachers have overall embraced it with much enthusiasm. They were able to share our vision of ensuring every Gauteng learner is equipped with the 21st Century skills to enable productive future lives.

Even those teachers whose experience with technology was extremely limited and who were initially anxious about their own capabilities have emerged as some of the strongest advocates of the ICT rollout. We are aware that some of our teachers have had to overcome a significant barrier and we salute them for their courage in taking up the challenge. We are aware that some teachers, already battling to master their subject matter, were faced with the further challenge of integrating technology into the curriculum. As a system we have had to devise the training programmes that would support an E-learning curriculum, whilst addressing any such gaps. There was no precedent for this anywhere else in the country. We had to start from scratch to build up a programme to upgrade the skill and capabilities of our teachers.

We recognised from the beginning that the ICT programme would rise or fall on the strength of our teachers' abilities. So, whilst we have made massive investments in terms of ICT infrastructure, devices and so on, we have equally ensured that we source the best expertise to assist with this specialised content development and provide the kind of teacher training and on-going on-site support that would realise the vision of transformed classroom practice.

Our main challenge was to ensure sustainability – deepening knowledge and skills and supporting classroom practice in order to realise the true benefits of an E-learning curriculum. To this end, we have gone beyond teacher training and included School Management Teams (SMT) and School Governing Bodies in our programmes, which is consistent with a whole-school approach to ensuring the programme is well-embedded and supported at all levels. Together with our partners in the Department of E-Government, we are looking into developing an Educational portal and Cloud access, which will allow all other schools not targeted as part of the rollout in the short-term, to connect with their own devices and access educational content that is aligned to the curriculum.

The Department will further commission an independent, external evaluation of the ICT and E-learning programme, so that we account for the massive investment we have made, gather best practices from the implementation to date and review ways in which we can further strengthen the implementation.

Honourable Members, ICT is here to stay and I want to thank the private sector who are working with us, to help realise our vision of a modernised education system. I want to highlight just one example.

The Telkom Foundation has decided to invest in a programme to identify, develop and support learners from Grade 8 through to employability in ICT over the next three years. The Tshwane West ICT Programme is a three-phased approach through which Telkom will work with five schools and approximately 2700 learners, mainly around Garankuwa. The Telkom Foundation will contribute tablet computers for all grade 8 learners and teachers, establish a user ICT lab per school, rollout interactive boards in all grade 8 classrooms, interactive content, training for teachers and introduce a psycho-social programme which will ensure that social issues that hinder academic progress are managed with learners while building learner character, leadership and resilience. The programme will be officially launched at the Winterveldt High School on Monday the 3rd of July 2017.

We will continue with our Pro-poor Interventions to ensure we create enabling conditions for quality outcomes

To ensure that learners from disadvantaged communities in Gauteng are not denied their right to quality education we ensure that they have access to free schooling, meals, scholar transport, and homework and sport support systems.

Nutrition

In line with our poverty alleviation programme, 1 445 567 learners from 1622 schools will be fed. This includes all learners from Quintile 1-5, benefitting from the no-fee policy. The Department received R762 million from the National School Nutrition Programme grant. An additional R316 million is allocated by the Province to cater for learners in Quintile 4 and 5 no-fee paying schools, who are currently not provided for under the Grant.

Scholar Transport

The Department is transporting 101 844 learners to approximately 419 schools across the province to increase access to schooling. R779 million has been allocated to fund this programme.

No fee Schools

The Department services 1394 no-fee schools with approximately 1 293 111 learners in 2017/18. The national threshold for no-fee schools has been increased to R1243 per learner, thus increasing spending to R340 million in 2017/18. The Department has allocated R13 million for school fee exemptions for the 2017/18 financial year.

Extra School Support Programme (ESSP)

The Extra School Support Programme will continue in the Province, by providing after school support for the homework programme and the school sport programme. The Department is employing 1500 homework assistants to provide homework support to Grade 1-7 learners in priority schools. A further 1500 sport assistants are deployed to priority schools to assist in

coordinating school sports. The Department has allocated R49 million for homework assistants for the 2017/18 financial year and an additional R29 million for After School Services.

School Safety Programme

School safety remains one of the Department's main concerns. The safety of all learners, teachers and support staff on the school premises will remain the Department's priority. The Department is employing 4500 patrollers on contract to assist in creating a safe and secure school environment. The Department of Community Safety, the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Department of Social Development will continue with the collaborative agreement to ensure school safety. The Department encourages the search and seizure operations and raids on unlicensed liquor outlets and shebeens. The Department has allocated R13 million to promote school safety, with an additional R125 million allocated to the patrollers that are employed as part of the school safety programme.

School Sports

The Department will be continuing with the Wednesday sports programme in 1731 no-fee primary schools. This programme will include athletics, swimming, winter sport codes, cross country and summer sport codes. The Department will focus on sporting codes in special schools. School sports for Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN) will focus on multiple-disciplinary offerings for learners with special education needs such as, athletics competitions, football and sporting programmes for the physically impaired, blind, deaf and intellectually impaired learners.

Finally, through the GCRA we will support Skills development

Through the Gauteng City Region Academy, we are ensuring that Gauteng becomes the skills engine that will position the province to achieve a radically transformed economy and that will serve both the skills needs of the province, but also of the country. The Premier and EXCO last year approved a revised provincial skills plan, the Gauteng Master Skills Plan II, which articulate the provincial skills priorities and provides a roadmap for how we will achieve the ambitious vision set out in the Plan. Our social partners have emphatically embraced the Plan and we have had secured massive support from big business. The key elements of this plan also resonate with the four pillars of Tshepo 1 million that has a four-pronged approach viz.:

- Pillar 1: Demand-led learning focused on ensuring readiness for employment;
- Pillar 2: Transitional placements – in the form of internships with stipends;
- Pillar 3: Decent jobs with minimum employment periods of 6 to 18 months; and
- Pillar 4: New economy focusing on the development of new and young entrepreneurs for sustainable new ventures.

The GCRA will work in Pillar 1, training, which enables pools of candidates that can take up opportunities under Pillars 2 to 4.

In addition, as part of our contribution to Tshepo 1 million, we are intensifying our efforts, in collaboration with the dedicated team appointed by the Premier to manage this programme. We are ensuring a concerted drive so that up to 4121 qualifying learners receive bursaries annually. We will continue to incentivise the top three learners from No-fee schools, by guaranteeing them a bursary. We will look to strengthen our partnerships with the SETAs and the private sector to increase the pool of funding available for this purpose by at least 3-5% by the end of the political term. Our contribution to youth skills development will include 3935 learnership and internship opportunities, skills development programmes for unemployed youth and experiential learning

programmes for 22 272 learners. We will employ 20 000 Harry Gwala interns for deployment to Teacher Centres and Garry Gwala Technical Centres to support the ICT rollout in schools.

Over the MTEF, we will support our learners at a critical juncture in their schooling careers, with the necessary guidance to ensure they embark on careers that will set us on a new, competitive footing regionally and internationally. Our vision is that our learners will be empowered with the kinds of skills required for productive academic and work lives and the confidence to boldly step out and pursue those careers that were previously only preserved for the privileged. We want to see engineers, scientists, pilots emerge, but also professional artists and musicians. We want girl learners to take up those spaces in our universities, to succeed with support from our bursary programmes and to ultimately make a difference in the lives of their communities and our society at large. It is only once we have the mass participation of all our young people and it becomes the 'new normal' for our children to pursue post-schooling opportunities, that we will turn the tide on perpetual cycle of poverty, under- and unemployment and wastage of our enormous talent.

In Conclusion

The inequality that defines the youth of Gauteng can be eliminated. This province's contribution gave South Africa a Tambo. May the memory of his life mean the renaissance and blossoming of the public schooling system. Oliver Tambo was indeed, for the better part of his adult life, an embodiment of all that was good and noble about the teaching profession and leadership. He was also the chief custodian of the principles of fundamental social change. This makes him the perfect role model for all educators in our country. They should study his life for inspiration. We thus encourage all our teachers to honour, protect and advance the legacy of this outstanding educator, ANC President Oliver Tambo.

As Members, you are called upon to share your ideas and dedicate all your time and efforts, in the interests of strengthening and improving the country's education system. We will always prioritise the education of our children, because it is only through quality education that we can win our struggle against unemployment, poverty and inequality.

Let me end by paying tribute to our Premier for his sustained commitment to quality education; to my colleagues in the Executive Council for their support; to Mr Edward Mosuwe, our Head of Department and the team at GDE for their hard work and dedication; to Comrades and Members of the Portfolio Committee for their insight and oversight; to the on-going work that each and every member of this House undertakes to make education a national and provincial priority; my family for their loving support and last but by no means least to the many thousands of principals, educators and school governors in our province who, despite daunting challenges, make all learners' education their singular priority.

Ke a leboha
Thank you