



Schools' Infrastructure Buyambo

In this edition

- 2 Breaking down barriers to learning through inclusive education
- 4 Taking Inclusive Education to the People
- 5 Providing infrastructure conducive to inclusive learning
- 6 Working together to leave a legacy in the Buffalo City Education District
- 7 Class of 2019 - interview with top learner
- 8 It's all systems go for the start of the 2020 school year!
- 10 Completed Projects 2018-19
- 11 Infrastructure Performance - 3rd Quarter 2019
- 12 What's happening in February 2020

From the editor...

Can you believe that we've reached the end of January already?

We've got a bumper edition full of good news and heart-warming stories in this edition of *Sakh'isidima News*.

First and foremost we must congratulate the class of 2019 on their stirring performance. The province achieved a pass rate of 76.5% and 63 198 learners in the Eastern Cape sat for the National Senior Certificate exam. We bring you an in-depth interview with Lomso Dumezweni - the top Quintile 3 achiever in the province - where he shares some of the factors that led to his outstanding performance.

We also bring you news from the field, focusing on the school readiness visits led by the Eastern Cape provincial legislature and Departmental officials. The teams had a jam-packed programme engaging with stakeholders and visiting over 200 schools across the province over just a few days.

It was also a hectic start to the year for the Inclusive Education directorate as they embarked on an advocacy campaign "Taking inclusive education to the people". Two events were held in OR Tambo Coastal to create awareness of the Department's efforts to build an education system in which learners with disabilities are free from prejudice, labelling and stigma. We also provide insight into the norms and standards for infrastructure as it relates to inclusivity and access.

We also bring you some of the infrastructure programme highlights relating to projects completed in 2018-19.

Your feedback is important to us. We can only improve your reading pleasure through constructive feedback, so please share your thoughts via one of the mediums provided below.

We hope you enjoy this edition and wish you well for the year ahead.



Sakh'isidima News
Produced by ECDoE PSU: Communications
Any comments can be sent via WhatsApp to 067 413 0383
Or by email to: infrastructure@ecdoe.gov.za

Breaking down barriers to learning through inclusive education

Our Constitution espouses the values of 'human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms'. In a just and equitable schooling system, these values are extended to all learners irrespective of their learning ability.

A focus on Inclusive Education to give credence to the values enshrined in our Constitution was cemented with the passing of the Education White Paper (6) on Special Needs Education in 2001. This laid the foundation for supporting policies, regulations and guidelines all aimed at creating awareness and bringing about change in the way that learners with diverse needs are regarded and treated in full-service/inclusive schools.

How do we as the Eastern Cape Department of Education respond to these needs?

The Department is responsible for providing:

- An Institutional/School Environment conducive to teaching and learning.
- Physical and material resources to aid teaching and learning.
- Accessible and suitable transport.

In addition, the Department is also responsible for creating awareness around the rights of learners with special educational needs and advocating for the rights of these learners so that they can enjoy access to an equal learning environment that is free from prejudice, labelling and stigma.



So, what are some of the barriers that learners may experience, that we need to be aware of and respond to?



Learners:

- who have difficulty in reading and writing;
- with hearing, visual and coordination difficulties;
- living in poverty;
- with health and emotional difficulties;
- experiencing difficulties in remembering what has been taught to them; and
- who need assistive devices and adapted materials such as Braille.



“Barriers to learning” – Refer to difficulties that arise within the education system, the learning site and/or within the learner him/herself which prevent access to learning and development.

Full-service/inclusive schools are mainstream education institutions that provide quality education to all learners by supplying the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner.

The journey towards shaping an inclusive education environment

1996
SA Constitution

2004 - 2009
Inclusive Education field test conducted.

2005
Conceptual and Operational guidelines for Special Schools as Resource Centres Developed.

2010
Guidelines for Full-Service Inclusive Schools developed.

2013
Regulations relating to minimum uniform norms and standards for public school infrastructure passed.

2014
Approval of the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS).

July 2001
Education White Paper 6 - Special Needs Education

Building an inclusive education and training system – Gazetted.
Makes provision for the identification of full-service or inclusive schools.

2005
Draft guidelines for Inclusive Learning Programmes developed.

2007
Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the South African Government.
Places an obligation on the system to provide an inclusive education system.

2011
Guidelines for Responding to learner Diversity in the Classroom through curriculum and assessment policy statements 2011, developed.

2014
Guidelines to Ensure Quality Education and Support in Special Schools and Special School Resource Centres to Support Inclusive Education developed.

Bonke Ngabethu | All are ours | Almal is ons s'n Taking Inclusive Education to the People –

The MEC for Education, Mr Fundile Gade accompanied by Eastern Cape Premier, Mr Lubabalo Mabuyane engaged with stakeholders in the OR Tambo Coastal district on 23 January to emphasise the centrality of Inclusive Education in embracing and empowering people with disabilities. The MEC also visited Arcadia and College Street Special Schools in East London as part of the Department's ongoing advocacy strategy to create awareness around its inclusive education policy.



Providing infrastructure conducive to inclusive learning



How do the MUNS-PSI regulations provide for learners with disabilities and special education needs?

The Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards on Public School Infrastructure (MUNS-PSI) passed in 2013 provides guidelines for planning and delivery of school infrastructure which promotes inclusivity. This relates to both design and classroom sizes.

As with mainstream schools, all schools intended for learners with special education needs must comply with:

- Universal access and universal design;
- The requirements related to the nature of the specialised support programme offered; and
- The level of support required.

Universal Access and Universal Design

The requirements and principles of Universal Design applies to all buildings, access ways, indoor and outdoor facilities as well as signage and communication. This is applicable to new schools and to any additions, alterations, and improvements to existing schools.

Minimum Universal Design requirements include the following:

- Clear floor area in passages, walkways, and points of access for people using wheelchairs and other mobility devices and aids;
- Parking for persons with disabilities should be located as close as possible to entrance areas;
- Ramps and handrails with regulated slopes, heights, and spacing should be provided;
- Toilets for the disabled must meet the requirements of the National Building Regulations;
- All schools must be provided with adequate notice boards, accessible to all users in the school building and which contain signage that is visible and legible;
- Tactile signage should be provided for learners and educators with impaired vision;
- Visual aids should be provided to communicate with learners and educators who are deaf or hearing impaired.

In addition, all other aspects of Universal Design must be compliant with the relevant requirements of the National Building Regulations and SANS 10-400.

Classroom sizes

Classroom sizes are determined by the space allocation for learners, learners with special needs and educators as follows:

Grade R			Grades 1 to 12		
1.6m ²	2m ²	7m ²	1m ²	2m ²	7m ²
per learner	per learner with special needs	per educator	per learner	per learner with special needs	per educator



There are 47* Schools for Learners with Special Educational Needs in the Eastern Cape.

* EMIS Data November 2019

Working together to leave a legacy in the Buffalo City Education District



Ms Nomvuselelo Fikeni is the District Director for the Buffalo City Education District. She has been in this position for just over a year and says that she is intent on driving a culture of professionalism and high-performance in the district.

According to Ms Fikeni, the BCM team are ready for 2020. However, the only problem is dealing with new enrolments, late enrolments, instances where placements offered were not accepted, and instances where parents wish to move their kids from one school to another within the city centre.

An emerging trend in Buffalo City Metro is that parents want their kids to attend schools in the city centre (particularly East London and King William's Town) which only has about 29 schools, whereas the greater BCM region has over 400 schools. This poses a challenge in terms of the available infrastructure leading to a situation where schools in some areas are empty whilst others are overflowing.

The immediate strategy to address the over-enrolments at some schools, is to move prefabs from schools where they are not being utilised to there where they are needed. There are also a few schools that are empty, and we will be moving the overflow of learners to the vacant school buildings.

The district is focusing on revitalising the township and rural schools and have introduced English and Afrikaans medium classes in the township schools. According to Ms Fikeni this has worked well at the schools where it was introduced last year, and this trend will continue.

The District Director attributes the success of dealing with some of the infrastructure issues to the improved relationship with the Head Office management team. "Our relationship with the infrastructure team is great and we've been having constant meetings with them. I am confident that with their support we will find solutions to some of the infrastructure challenges we are facing. This does not necessarily mean building more schools, but rather, using the current infrastructure more effectively."

This is a leader who understands the value of teamwork. She says, "I am proud of my BCM District team, we are working together towards a common goal – leaving a legacy - and they have provided the utmost support to me since I joined the team."

Ms Fikeni has a special message to communities. "We cannot do our work as education alone. Communities need to take initiative and responsibility for education. For example, it is the responsibility of parents to enrol learners timeously, otherwise this becomes a problem for the Department. We need to continue working together. The District Education Forum is a very effective platform which facilitates communication between the Department and the community."

Education is a societal issue which requires the involvement of all stakeholders to succeed. The Department values the contribution of all its stakeholders in shaping the education landscape to meet the needs of learners, educators and the broader communities in which we operate.



“I did not lack anything in my school environment”

Confident, articulate and determined... these are the first impressions you get when engaging with Lomso Dumezweni, one of the Eastern Cape's Class of 2019 top achievers from Nyanga High School in Ngcobo near Mthatha. Sakh'isidima News had the opportunity to interview this young man during the Provincial NSC Awards in East London at the beginning of January 2020.



Which school did you attend?

I attended Nyanga High School in Ngcobo. The school was approximately 70 km from home and that's why I stayed at the school hostel.

What was the most difficult thing you faced in preparing for your exams?

I was working under a lot of pressure because everyone - my school, my family and my peers - was expecting excellent results from me. In 2018 one of the top achievers also came from my school and I was under pressure to do our school proud. The pressure came from me not wanting to disappoint the many people who were looking up to me to perform. I had to spend less time with my friends so that I can focus on my studies. This was an easy choice as I was determined to succeed.

How did you overcome this to achieve such great results?

My Nyanga High school family and my family kept on motivating me and this helped. My relaxed and calm disposition also helped me through.

Tell me a little bit about your family? What does this achievement mean to them? And to you?

I am the sixth out of eight children. My family is a family of smart people and every time they would compare each other's achievements. My siblings were bright sparks at school. One of them obtained a Provincial Award in 2016. This achievement means a lot to me because I have broken a big record and my family are also very proud of me.

Tell me a little bit about your school journey. What are the positives and what are the negatives that you encountered?

I was fortunate to go to good schools. In my village I went to Flower Junior Secondary School in Dutywa which had teachers who are motivated and do their work tirelessly. I then went on to a private middle school, but I had to unfortunately leave this school as my mother could not afford it since she had to pay for the tertiary studies of some of my other siblings. I then enrolled at Nyanga High School (a public school). I must say that this is one of the best schools that I attended. The teachers, the security, the support staff are very good. They motivate learners to study hard, so I would say the whole environment at Nyanga High School is excellent because we are all on the same mission.

Did you ever attend a school where you felt that the quality of the infrastructure had a negative effect on your ability to access quality teaching and learning?

No, not at all. I love chemistry and the only thing that I experienced at High School was that some of the chemicals in the lab had expired when we must do experiments. This was a bit demotivating. The other thing is that we did not have access to computers. Since we are entering tertiary studies this sets us back a bit as computers are used in everyday life.

What inspires you?

I'm from an area where many teenagers do not finish school. I therefore need to set an example and show them that your background does not need to determine your future, but rather what you are capable of as a person.

What are your future plans?

I want to become a medical doctor. I have not enrolled yet. I'll probably look for a bursary. In the meantime I will be assisting the Grade 12 learners at Nyanga High to prepare for maths at the forthcoming maths camp over the next few weeks.

What is your message to the youth of the Eastern Cape?

Take education seriously. In the Eastern Cape we are underprivileged. With education you can be anything. Look at me now. I am experiencing this kind of life - I'm sleeping in a beautiful hotel that I did not pay a cent for. All I did was study. So education is the key to anything you want in life.

NSC 2019 – Eastern Cape Highlights

- * 63 198 learners wrote the NSC exam
- 48 331 achieved their NSC
- * Provincial pass rate 76.5%
- * Top Achiever, Quintile 3: Lomso Dumezweni, Nyanga High School
- * Top Technical Science Achiever: Masixole Nogemane, Vakele Technical Senior Secondary School
- * Special Awards: Special Needs Education Sibabalwe Mkunqwana Vukuhambe Special



It's all systems go for the start of the 2020 school year!

The Eastern Cape is one of the few provinces in which the legislature undertakes visits to schools to assess their state of readiness. 2020 is no exception as teams from Eastern Cape Department of Education led by the provincial legislature visited over 200 schools across the length and breadth of the province during the period 15 to 24 January 2020.

The Department's readiness to implement the 2020 school year impacts on several stakeholders – educators, learners, communities, and service providers, amongst others. Consequently several stakeholder meetings were held at a district level to provide a platform for the Department to brief stakeholders on their level of readiness and to answer questions posed by interest groups.

The priority areas for school readiness relate to learner admissions; infrastructure and provision of school furniture; availability of Learner and Teacher Support Materials (LTSM); availability of teachers; preparedness of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) to provide daily meals; and scholar transport.

The Physical Resources Management (PRM) Chief Directorate is responsible for ensuring school readiness in terms of Infrastructure, focusing specifically on:

- The availability of water and electricity;
- Safe and clean ablution facilities;
- Enough classroom accommodation; and
- School furniture for learners and teachers

We asked colleagues who attended the stakeholder meeting at Rhusane District Office in Buffalo City whether they thought the district is ready for the 2020 school year:



Ms Noluthando Snobolo, Chairperson: Buffalo City Metro District Steering Committee, National Education Collaboration Trust

"There are quite a few schools that are becoming white elephants due to learners enrolling at better performing schools. These schools should be re-purposed so that the use of the infrastructure can be optimised. The Department should also address leadership at poor performing schools and redeploy principals from better performing schools to build capacity at poorer performing schools."



Mr Leon Kasper, Deputy Director: Supply Chain Management, BCM District Office

"We are ready with infrastructure at primary school level. Secondary school infrastructure is required in the inner city due to the high migration from township to inner city schools. Parents feel that learners are more secure, and that the facilities and quality of education at inner city schools is better."



Mr Andries Mentoor - Circuit Manager, Buffalo City Education district

"All 18 schools in my circuit are ready to tackle 2020. Some have already started teaching and learning. There are, however, still late admissions from township to inner city schools due to the misperception that inner city schools provide better quality education. This perception needs to change as there is ample space available at performing schools in this circuit."



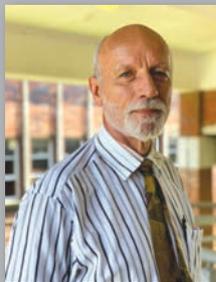
Mr Mawethu Nqunqa - Subject Advisor, Technology, Buffalo City District office

"Our workshop with technology teachers last week helped us and we are now more than ready to tackle the new year on 15 January."



Ms Nolitha Masela - Physical Resources Management, Control Works Inspector: Buffalo City, Sarah Baartman, Amathole West & Nelson Mandela Bay

"Infrastructure is ready for 2020 but we definitely need more budget to address our backlogs."



Mr Johan Botha – Physical resources Management, Chief Quantity Surveyor, Head Office

"Yes, we are ready. We've made great strides and improvements of our analysis of projects on the ground. With the support and additional resources we are better able to monitor, control, and share infrastructure project information."



Mr Laxola Dywili – Deputy Chief Education Specialist: LTSM

"Top up of textbooks was done last year and stationery has been supplied to all schools. We are ready. The only thing that we will deal with are the walk-ins."



Completed Projects 2018-19

Basic Services: Water / Sanitation / Electricity



Early Childhood Development centres



Emergency Response



Special Schools



Major Maintenance & Refurbishment



Fencing



Hostels



Replacement Schools



Additional Classrooms



Total Projects 305

Facts & figures completed projects

Top 5 projects over R40m

R124m

Sive Special School
Cedarville
Alfred Nzo West

R78m

Tholang Senior Secondary School
Maluti
Alfred Nzo West

R57m

Sakhululeka Secondary School
Fort Beaufort
Amathole West

R51m

Storms River Primary School
Stormsrivier
Sarah Baartman

R46m

Healdtown Comprehensive School
Lamyeni
Amathole West

Infrastructure Performance - 3rd Quarter 2019

The following projects were completed in the 3rd quarter (Oct-Dec) of 2019.

Early Childhood Development centres



Sizamulwazi Public School
Joe Gqabi Education District



R9.5m

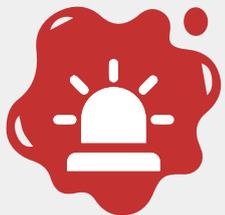
Replacement Schools



Mfiki Primary School
Amathole Education District

R36m

Emergency Response



Nqabara Senior Secondary
Amathole East Education District

Nomaka Mbeki Technical Senior Secondary
Amathole East Education District

Vusukhanyo Junior Secondary
Chris Hani East Education District

Cove Ridge Primary
Buffalo City Education District

Vinish Junior Secondary
OR Tambo Coastal Education District

R32m



Did you
know?



Projects completed
in 2018-19

- The highest investment value in terms of projects completed in 2018-19 was in Alfred Nzo West. At R280.5m, this was more than double the amount of the highest recorded investment values for some of the other districts.
- Two ECD Centres (Gqebena JSS & Entilini PS) with a combined project value of R17.6m were completed in Chris Han West.
- Three Special Schools & Hostels were completed (Sive, Healdtown, College

Street) with a combined value of R175m.

- 163 fencing projects were completed, most of these in Nelson Mandela (28), OR Tambo Inland (26), Sarah Baartman (25), and Alfred Nzo West education districts.
- Amathole East (20) accounted for almost half of the 44 emergency responses that were completed.
- 7 of the 15 major maintenance and refurbishment projects were done in Nelson Mandela education district. The highest number of projects (41) were also recorded in this district - most of these were fencing projects.



Vision

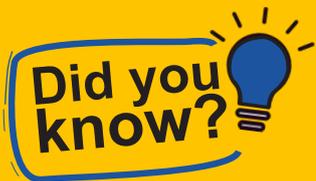
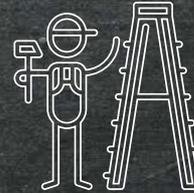
To provide learners with opportunities to become productive, responsible and competitive citizens through an inclusive quality basic education system.

Mission

To achieve the vision, we will implement appropriate and relevant educational programmes through quality teaching and learning; mobilise community and stakeholder support through participation; and institutionalise a strong culture at all levels of the Department.

Values

High performance | Responsiveness | Accountability
Empathy | Access | Equity | Integrity



International Mother Language Day is celebrated every year on 21 February.

The aim is to promote awareness of language and cultural diversity across the world.



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What's Happening

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

DoE Calendar

4-7th Infrastructure Executive Reporting meetings

Commemorative Events

- 2nd World Wetlands Day
- 4th World Cancer Day
- 13th State of the Nation Address
- 20th World Day of Social Justice
- 21st International Mother Language Day