



**Western Cape
Government**

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ANNUAL REPORT

PROGRESS WITH ELIMINATING BACKLOGS AND TOWARDS MEETING THE REGULATIONS RELATING TO
MINIMUM UNIFORM NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

DECEMBER 2022

INTRODUCTION

The Western Cape Education Department (“WCED”) has a total of 1456 Public Ordinary school facilities across the Western Cape, with a total area of 5.2 million square metres and an estimated Capital Replacement Value (CRV) of more than R75 billion. Around 73% of these schools are primary schools, and as some of the schools in the province are the oldest in the country, are a very valuable national asset.

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

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

Five in every seven schools in the Western Cape were built more than 30 years ago and many are reaching the end of their useful lives. Approximately 20% of schools in the total school portfolio (+300 schools) were constructed prior to 1960 and have an historic, heritage profile. In general, these facilities are built of appropriate materials, but are deteriorating at a faster rate because of extreme weather and other environmental and social factors. These schools were not designed or assembled to endure lifespans of more than 60 years and need modernization and upgrade work. Approximately 53% of the total number of schools in the province (+750 schools) were built during the apartheid era between 1965 and 1994, and nearly all of these were built fully or partially of inappropriate materials or have sub-standards components – mainly wood, asbestos, and precast concrete. The structural and safety conditions have similarly deteriorated to the point where complete facilities at schools (such as upper levels of double story classroom blocks) have been rendered unfit for its intended purpose and schools have been restricted from using these facilities.

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

WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PROGRESS TO DATE

The WCED has since 2014/15 directed funding towards eliminating backlogs and in doing so have replaced 59 schools constructed of inappropriate materials, and placed 113 mobile ablution facilities at 62 schools, placed 265 classrooms at 46 schools on the backlog list and provided 122 new schools fences to replace vandalised or stolen fences at schools on the 2014 backlog lists. The WCED also contributed to the establishment of 15 laboratories and assisted 25 schools with funding to provide universal access. These infrastructure projects do not represent the full extent of the WCED's infrastructure programme; instead, these infrastructure projects have assisted with eliminating the original backlogs declared.

BACKLOG STATISTICS

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

Category	2014 Backlog	2022 Backlog
Inappropriate materials	207	73 ²
Sanitation	At 96 schools	At 113 schools ¹
Classrooms	149 classrooms at 53 schools	228 classrooms at 89 schools ³
No fence	15 schools	0 schools
Laboratories	352 schools	284 Schools
Sports Fields	103 schools	103 schools
Libraries	37 schools	9 schools
Universal Access	499 schools	467 schools

Table 1: Current nature of Infrastructure backlogs at schools in the Western Cape (2022)

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

²The number of schools in the Western Cape built in full or in part of inappropriate materials to be replaced is 73. This does not represent the risk profile of schools that are beyond its asset lifespan or that present safety or functionality risks.

³Aggregate of capacity backlog only and not indicative of conditions.

1. SCHOOLS BUILT OF ENTIRELY INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS INCLUDING WOOD, METAL AND ASBESTOS (PRIORITY 1)

Based on information gathered from the 2006 NEIMS assessment, the WCED developed a baseline list of schools built of inappropriate materials that has subsequently been updated based on remedial work done. At the time of the 2014 survey, there were two-hundred-and-seven (207) schools on the list. Schools already under construction or in planning and feasibility stage, as well as schools to be replaced under the ASIDI programme were excluded in the original calculation purposes.

The remaining number of public ordinary schools that need to be replaced fully or in part to meet the regulations relating to the minimum uniform norms and standards for public schools infrastructure is 73 of the 207 schools identified in the 2014 survey, a number that excludes (1) 9 new schools presently in construction, (2) 16 public ordinary schools that are built fully from inappropriate materials but that are operating on leased premises, (3) schools that have been closed and (4) those schools deemed to be built only partially of inappropriate materials and for which an alternative remediation method can be used.

Remediating the situation at leased schools is the responsibility of the landowner / lessor, who is expected to both provide a safe and functional operational environment and to provision new facilities in a way that meets the stated norms and standards in terms of both capacity and condition. Costs to do so are factored into contracted lease rates. The WCED does not invest public money directly on privately owned land towards meeting infrastructure norms. Against this baseline the following progress has been made since 2014:

District	2014 Backlog	Completed	Remaining
CAPE WINELANDS	26	3	23
EDEN AND CENTRAL KAROO	26	6	20
METRO CENTRAL	27	13	14
METRO EAST	8	7	1
METRO NORTH	18	10	8
METRO SOUTH	24	12	12
OVERBERG	12	4	8
WEST COAST	16	4	12
Grand Total	157*	59	98**

Table 2: Progress with replacing schools built of inappropriate materials in the WC since 2014/15 (2022)

* Includes 16 public ordinary schools operated on leased premises

**In 2022, 9 schools are in construction. A further 12 schools are at various stages of planning

2. SCHOOLS WITH A CHALLENGE RELATED TO THE AVAILABILITY OF CLASSROOMS, ELECTRICITY, WATER SANITATION, ELECTRONIC CONNECTIVITY AND PERIMETER SECURITY (PRIORITY 2)

There are no schools in the Western Cape that do not have access to any form of power supply, water supply or sanitation.

ABLUTION FACILITIES AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE (PRIORITY 2)

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

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

District	Shortage of Toilets	Number of Schools
CAPE WINELANDS	222	25
EDEN AND CENTRAL KAROO	129	19
METRO CENTRAL	113	18
METRO EAST	132	9
METRO NORTH	73	8
METRO SOUTH	51	8
OVERBERG	75	11
WEST COAST	103	15
Grand Total	898	113

Table 3: Shortage of ablution facilities at schools in the Western Cape (2022)

The WCED originally declared a backlog of ablutions at 96 schools. Since 2014 the WCED have addressed the ablution shortages at 16 schools. The current backlog of 898 ablutions at 113 schools remain and needs to be verified as part of the programme to provide ablution facilities.

It is important to note that all schools in the Western Cape have access to water, electricity, and ablution facilities. From time to time, as with any municipal service, water, sewerage, and electrical connections fail. It is however important that schools address these disruptions with their norms and

standard funds and report these disruptions as part of emergency maintenance procedures, for record purpose and interventions.

PERIMETER FENCING AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Information gathered from the 2014 survey indicated that less than 4% of schools in the Western Cape (54 schools) had no fence. Schools on leased property are excluded as the property owner takes the necessary responsibility to ensure that the facility is properly secured and fenced. The result is that the fencing backlog was determined to be 15 schools.

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

As is the case with ablutions, improving fencing conditions are not considered to be part of the norms and standards backlog, but would need to receive appropriate attention as part of maintenance and fencing programmes.

AVAILABILITY OF CLASSROOMS AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Information regarding the availability of classrooms at schools was gathered from CEMIS and is based on a student to classroom ratio of 40 learners per classroom, using only classrooms and not specialist rooms such as libraries and laboratories. At the time of the original survey, the calculated classroom shortage was 149 classrooms at 53 schools. Based on the same criteria and for the schools assessed at baseline survey, it is estimated that the Western Cape has current classroom shortages at 189 schools.

At an aggregated level the WCED has enough classrooms for the 1,159,726 learners in public ordinary schools. The learner to classroom ratio is at 33.6. A closer look at the data, however, indicates that available space is not necessarily in areas with high demand for learner placement.

Since 2014/15, the WCED has built 252 Grade R classrooms, 464 expansion classrooms and provided 1,080 mobile classrooms to relieve service delivery pressure. This equates to 1,796 classrooms built over the past 8 years. If averaged at 30 classrooms per school, these 1,796 classrooms constructed equates to approximately 60 new schools. The WCED aims to build 842 classrooms in 2022/23. The rate of the build is unprecedented as it aims to provide 26000 new places in schools in 2023.

This report endeavours to link the classrooms constructed to the classroom backlogs reported and to report on the specific progress made to eliminate the backlogs originally reported. While new classrooms are constructed to add capacity to the system, the backlogs at certain schools are not necessarily eliminated, sustaining the backlogs reported in this regard.

3. SCHOOLS WITH A CHALLENGE RELATED TO LIBRARIES AND LABORATORIES FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND LIFE SCIENCES

LABORATORIES AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

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

The implementation of the 2014 strategy made for the provision of laboratories from 2018/19. To date 20 laboratories were provided to schools ahead of schedule.

SPORTS FIELDS AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

In 2022 there has been no changes to the backlog of sports fields. The 2014 survey found that 496 schools had no access to sports fields, approximately one third of all public ordinary schools in the Western Cape. However, when leased schools and replacement schools are excluded, the backlog is 103.

Most of the schools listed as not having sports fields, had been provided with a basic facility in the past but have seen it deteriorate to the point where the facility is not usable.

LIBRARIES/MEDIA CENTRES AT SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

In 2022 there has been no changes to the backlog of libraries. The 2014 survey found that approximately 1290 schools have access to a library, while 165 schools have no access to a library. Adjusting for leased and replacement schools, the current number of schools that do not have libraries is 9. As with labs, consideration of the placement of mobile libraries at leased and other schools is being considered along with other options.

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

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

Since 2017/18 funds have been transferred to 43 schools to upgrade ablutions for differently abled learners and to build ramps for wheelchairs. 20 of the 43 schools that received funds appears on the 2014 backlog list and achieved practical completion. Further analyses of the backlogs indicate 12

schools (new and replacement) built over the last 10 years made provision for access to disabled learners. The remaining backlog is 467 schools.

THE COST TO ELIMINATE THE REMAINING BACKLOGS

Over and above the existing capacity backlogs, the conditions of facilities and other demands keep changing with time. For the Province to be on track and ideally ahead of all these changes and to ensure that facilities continue to be conducive for the intended purpose and meet the prescribe norms and standards, a significant capital injection is required. The cost of eliminating backlogs in the Western Cape is estimated to be:

Category	Backlog	Approximate cost/item	Budget Required
Schools built entirely and partially of inappropriate materials (priority 1)	73	R80 m	R5.8 billion
Upgrades of sanitation (priority 2a)	113	R0,5 m (4 toilets)	R112,3 million
Schools that require additional classrooms (priority 2b) *	228	R1 m	R228 million
Schools that require upgrading of perimeter fence **	28	R1 m	R28 million
Schools that require laboratories	284	R 500 000	R142 million
Schools that require libraries	9	R 500 000	R4,5 million
Schools that require upgrades to improve accessibility	467	R 200 000	R93,4 million
Estimated costs to eliminate backlogs			R6.51 billion

Table 4: Cost of eliminate Infrastructure backlogs at schools in the Western Cape (2022)

*Estimation of the shortage of classrooms factors in the significant investment in new classroom capacity in the 2022/23 financial year in which R400m is being spent on classroom additions, upgrades, and re-purposing to address overcrowding.

** Estimation of the perimeter fences to be upgraded considers the 5-year programme 2020/21 – 2024/25 in the Western Cape to upgrade 150 fences in high risk and vulnerable communities

WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PLAN TO ADDRESS THE BACKLOGS

Implement a risk-adjusted school replacement strategy over the next 7 years and invest appropriately to ensure safety and functionality of all users in our schools.

This means that we will:

1. Address 100% of the needs to replace or rehabilitate schools built entirely or partially of inappropriate materials.
2. Address 100% of the backlogs related to sanitation and perimeter fencing to ensure safety and functionality
3. Address needs related to availability of classrooms towards meeting the demand for school places and reducing overcrowding.
4. Normalise digital connection of schools
5. Shift from school-library buildings to classroom-libraries for primary school, and virtual libraries in secondary schools.
6. Shift to science kits in primary schools

The Regulations relating to the Minimum uniform norms and standards for public school infrastructure gazetted in November 2013 define schools built partially from inappropriate materials as well as those schools built entirely from materials such as asbestos, metal and wood as inappropriate. The WCED remains steadfast in its intent to replace all schools that are structurally unsound and that are built of non-permanent structures.

The remaining 73 schools built of inappropriate materials (“plankie” schools) are comprised of:

- 56 schools that is structurally unsound and need to be fully demolished and rebuilt replacement
- 17 schools that have large sections of the school built of inappropriate materials (asbestos roofs) that would need replacement, but full demolition of the buildings may not be necessary.

Additionally, the WCED has within its school portfolio a total of 44 “mobile/non-permanent” schools built of prefabricated materials that would need to be replaced on a case-by-case basis over the next 7 years.

During the final 3 months of the 2022/23 financial year, the WCED will finalise the programme of replacing schools based not only on the age or type of construction material that the schools are built of but also based on the risk profile for each school other key factors that are anticipated to influence the performance of the infrastructure asset over the short term - notably climate resilience, social stresses such as vandalism and theft, and more specifically the rapidly changing service delivery context.

In the year under review for this report, the WCED has had to intervene at 2 schools that, while not on the list of schools built of inappropriate material, present significant concerns of safety to users of the facilities at the schools and its local stakeholders. Given the inadequate nature of the school builds, and the fact that the schools show accelerated degradation since the most recent facility condition assessments were conducted at those schools in 2017, major rehabilitation and replacement projects have had to be scoped and prioritised for delivery using the current year budget. The WCED anticipates that it would need to intervene at more schools that are at a higher risk of suffering critical asset failure and that would need access to emergency funding provisions in case urgent stabilization and emergency remediation work is needed.

Plan to address challenges related to shortages of ablution facilities

Although all schools in the Western Cape have access to ablutions facilities and water and electricity supply, disruptions to these services does occur from time to time (blocked sewerage, water pressure changes, leaking taps, bursting pipes etc).

Schools have the primary responsibility to ensure continuity in service delivery by putting in place contingency measures so that it can withstand and respond to disruptions while access to primary services are restored. If the school cannot address the disruption through maintenance, the WCED will intervene.

The identification of ablution backlogs also changes over time and needs to be re-assessed every three to five years, as additional learners and classrooms are added to schools and as existing ablutions fail.

The plan for the current 113 schools that require intervention is to provide ablution facilities to these schools over the next 3 years at a rate of approximately 35 to 40 projects per year.

Plan to address the need for perimeter fencing

Fencing remains part of the Western Cape Governments priority to address safety and security issues at schools in the province. As the conditions of fences change continually, the WCED diligently maintains a record of schools that require intervention with fencing. Schools inform the WCED about their fencing needs through reporting through our Safer School programme.

Emergency Maintenance programme include significant repair of stolen or vandalised fencing, including gate operations.

The current plan identified 30 schools per year over a 5-year period to receive a new fence. This programme is currently being implemented with 3 years already complete, in construction or in planning (2020/21, 2021/22 & 2022/23) and 2 years remaining (2023/24 & 2024/25). The programming sequence is continually re-assessed, and new schools are added to the programme as required.

Budget savings from this fencing programme is also being used to include additional schools and schools' sites in the programme. This fencing programme is envisioned to continue past the 5 years.

Plan to eliminate the shortage of classrooms

The WCED has continued and accelerated its efforts to address the need to expand schools to place more learners who seek access to education in the Western Cape – delivering mobile classrooms, expanding existing schools with brick-and-mortar classrooms, and constructing new schools in high demand areas.

The Rapid School Build Programme is the Western Cape Education Department's response to rapidly expand the number of new school places to accommodate the sustained levels of net growth in student enrolment, within the context of an increasing service mandate and in response to heightened demands for equitable access to quality learning and skills development opportunities.

The key deliverables of the Rapid School Build (RSB) initiative are to:

- fast-track the design and construction of beautiful new schools in geographic areas of critical school shortage across all municipalities in the Western Cape.
- Use new construction technology and project delivery methods to add classrooms and education facilities that will expand access to skills development
- Replace failing infrastructure and implement catalytic projects that help schools withstand shocks and stresses.

Plan to eliminate the other needs and backlogs

The WCED will continue to pursue partnerships with prospective collaborators and co-funders from the private and NGO sectors. Long established collaborations are in place with the Archway Foundation and the SAME Foundation to provide laboratories to schools, as well as the MTN Foundation to provide computer and multimedia centres

The WCED is also continuing with providing universal access to schools and upgrading facilities to accommodate learners with different abilities.

- 17 schools are receiving funding in 2022/23 to improve access for disabled learners and is anticipated to be completed in 2022/23.

Concluding Comments

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

The increased demand for services against the backdrop of fiscal constraints causes a dilemma in infrastructure planning: i.e. how to optimise the cost of maintenance and asset lifecycle management.

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

The Provincial Finance Management Act (PFMA) places a legal obligation on government to maintain all its assets and not doing so is negligent. Given the expanding nature of the provincial education system over the last 5 years, the priority allocation of Education infrastructure budget has necessarily been to capital projects, with only the balance to a minimum threshold retained for maintenance. The concept of life-cycle maintenance using government funding is therefore largely a theoretical one: no building has maintenance funding ringfenced for the duration of its lifecycle. This causes a trade-off between maintaining what we have versus new, which leads to a 'disconnect' between the maintenance budget and the actual maintenance needs. The magnitude of the deficit between the actual immovable asset maintenance budget allocations and the proposed generic lighthouse budget – recommended to be between 2 – 4% of the education asset portfolio's current replacement value (CRV) – is highlighted below.

Financial Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Grand Total
Actual Maintenance Budget R'000	469 631	636 215	755 255	781 572	1 029 059	3 671 732
Preventative Maintenance Budget Required R'000	1 400 000	1 400 000	1 400 000	1 400 000	1 400 000	7 000 000

Maintenance Budget Deficit R '000	-930 369	-763 785	-644 745	-618 428	-370 941	-3 328 268
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Table 3: Maintenance budget deficits across schools in the Western Cape (2022)

The annual budget deficit contributes to a separate maintenance backlog, which, based on the last 5 financial years, in the order of R600 million a year. With the competing demands placed on a largely committed budget, the only affordable asset management approach is a “run-to-failure” maintenance strategy where maintenance is performed when the asset component fails. As a result, infrastructure maintenance is reactive and corrective rather than proactive and preventative. This widening gap is of great concern and requires the WCED to critically re-think the approach to the maintenance of its school infrastructure portfolio. This is a priority planning activity to be undertaken as we head into the 2023 academic year.

MS Abrahams

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: EDUCATION PLANNING

DATE: 22 December 2022

B Walters

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HEAD OF EDUCATION

DATE: *22/12/2022*

D Maynier

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WESTERN CAPE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

DATE: 22 December 2022