



Western Cape
Government

Education



EDUCATION MINISTRY – WESTERN CAPE
**PROGRESS MADE IN ACHIEVING
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

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MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION - WESTERN CAPE

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Four years ago, in November 2009, the Western Cape Government released its strategic plan for education 2010 – 2019.

The overarching objective of this plan is to improve learner outcomes in this province.

In formulating this objective we were clear that there is no quick fix when it comes to improving the quality of education provided in the Western Cape, and that it would only be through a sustained, focused and systematic approach that we would achieve the objectives we have set for ourselves.

The plan focused on 10 key priority areas that aim to improve the life chances of all learners in the province through the provision of quality education.

Four years later, the Western Cape Government can confidently say that it has made progress in achieving the objectives of improving learner outcomes in the Western Cape.

This document provides a summary of what we planned to achieve and what we have achieved so far.

It gives the public the opportunity to hold us accountable to the objectives we set four years ago.

Literacy and numeracy

Strategic goal - We will improve literacy and numeracy outcomes by directing maximum resources (both human and financial) to the first three years of schooling. This will be coupled with compulsory testing of learners in Grades 3, 6 and 9 from 2010 throughout the province. Benchmarks and targets will be set for each school.

In the last four years, the Western Cape Government has prioritised the improvement of literacy and numeracy skills by implementing a number of initiatives within the system, particularly in the Foundation Phase.

Our literacy and numeracy strategy includes extensive testing, learning from these tests, teacher training and support, heavy investment in texts, and parent mobilisation.

We test Grades 3, 6 and 9 to assess literacy and numeracy performance. The results of these tests inform our strategy and assist us to identify schools and areas where remedial action is needed. The Western Cape remains the only provincial government in South Africa to implement systemic testing of this nature.

Since 2009, the Western Cape Government has expanded these tests significantly. In 2010 the WCED started testing learners in Grade 3 and 6 consecutively each year, rather than every second year, and introduced Grade 9 testing for the first time in 2010. The tests are a huge logistical exercise with over 245 000 learners now taking part each year.

Independent schools have also been invited to participate in the tests.

In 2011, the WCED, expanded the tests, as well as increased the levels of difficulty of the language tests following recommendations arising from research commissioned in 2010 on how to improve education outcomes.

Based on these recommendations, there has also been an increased focus on the role of Foundation Phase curriculum advisors (CAs) in regularly observing classroom practice, specifically learner's levels of cognitive demand, pacing and time on task.

Teacher development is also critical to improvements in literacy performance, and we have developed and hosted a number of workshops and conferences intended to contribute to the improved teaching of literacy and numeracy. In 2009, the WCED embarked on an 8 year training and support plan to support Literacy and Numeracy development for all educators in Grades 1-6.

Throughout the year the WCED offers workshops and seminars that aim to develop teachers' knowledge and skills in the areas of language and mathematics. One such programme is the June/July Language and Mathematics workshops for primary school educators which focus on content and teaching strategies.

In 2012, the WCED introduced target setting in our primary schools. Schools are required to submit set targets for improvement per grade for the year and, in the case of underperforming schools, specific activity plans on how they will achieve their targets.

In 2012, the WCED also launched an incentive programme that financially rewards primary schools that have improved the number and quality of passes achieved in the Grade 3 numeracy systemic testing.

As part of the model of post-provisioning the WCED has set aside additional posts specifically for the Foundation Phase, in order to keep the learner: teacher ratio as low as possible in this critical phase period. 690 additional posts have been allocated to the Foundation Phase since 2009.

Accountability

Strategic goal - All officials and principals will sign performance contracts with targets for improving learner performance. These contracts will be monitored on a quarterly basis. There will also be far greater attention focused on the management of schools at the district level, with officials and teachers held to account for their role in improving individual school performance.

After over a year of development and consultation, the revised Western Cape Provincial School Education Act was introduced at the beginning of 2011. Amongst other things this legislation allows for increased accountability within the system.

In 2011, the WCED committed itself to a series of consultations with relevant stakeholders on the implementation of a performance agreement for principals and deputy principals. This process has been taken up in the ELRC at national level.

At a practical level, in 2012 the WCED piloted the School Improvement Plan System (SIPS) - an online management tool that requires each principal to submit and update a set of school-based information that can be used for effective planning purposes.

As part of efforts to strengthen accountability at all levels within the system, our school principals are using the SIPS to set targets for improvements for each grade. Once determined, these targets are captured in the SIPS database; are carefully monitored to ensure that each school is progressing; and are one of the benchmarks for evaluating performance.

Officials are able to monitor the performance of learners against the targets set by the schools throughout the year. Where schools are not meeting their targets, the WCED provides specific support.

One of the valuable functions of the SIPS is the resources page, which allows the WCED to monitor and assess textbook and workbook procurement levels; whether these books are being used by schools; as well as whether learners have fundamental items such as the required number of desks and chairs in the classroom.

Where shortages of these resources are identified and reported to the WCED via the quarterly monitoring programme in schools, the WCED will take steps to ensure that the necessary resources are procured and delivered to schools as soon as possible.

Using the SIPS, officials from the WCED are better placed than before to monitor and respond to the needs of our schools and our principals are better equipped to assess, improve and take responsibility for the resourcing and performance of their schools.

Faster response times and support

Strategic goal - We will improve the responsiveness and efficiency of the WCED through a focus on changing the organisational culture and improving the WCED's business processes and systems. The Head Office and district offices of the WCED will be structured, designed and equipped to provide rapid response service and support to schools and teachers.

Effective information and communication systems are critical for the purposes of communication, planning, and supporting our schools. In the last four years, we have made a range of systems improvements to ensure better quality service at the point of delivery.

A number of business processes have been automated by providing schools, district offices and Head Office units with access to online reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

The SIP (as discussed above), for example, is one initiative that will allow the WCED to monitor and assess resources at schools; absenteeism trends; learners on the nutrition programme; learners enrolled for the WCED's learner transport scheme; staff and learner numbers (including past trends and projections); as well as the frequency of meetings with parents to discuss the academic performance of their children.

In addition to this, the WCED has developed the District Management Information System (DMIS), which allows district offices to capture, plan and report on all school visits more efficiently than before. This system increases accountability, reduces the time spent on reporting, facilitates problem-solving and supports service delivery.

In order to improve the way in which we communicate with and provide support to our principals, over 1 500 PC tablets were delivered to all school principals across the province. It is also intended to assist principals in organising daily activities and timetables; recording meetings; and preparing presentations.

Another area of improvement is the dramatic acceleration in the filling of teacher vacancies. Four years ago there were two teacher vacancy lists per annum, which meant that schools had to wait at least six months to finalise an appointment. We now publish vacancy lists four or more times per year to ensure that permanent teacher appointments are made timeously.

The WCED has also introduced a new online system that will make it much easier for teachers to apply for jobs in the province. The e-Recruitment System allows teachers to capture and store their CVs online, as well as, apply for vacant teaching posts. Applicants will no longer have to make copies of documents for each application submitted, pay postage costs, or stand in queues to submit applications before closing dates. Over 20 000 educators have registered on this system in the last year.

Given the important role that principals play in improving school performance, the WCED has adopted a new approach to filling principals' posts aimed at ensuring that these are filled as quickly as possible. Improved business processes have led to a ten day turnaround time for the appointment of principals, thereby reducing the periods for which teachers are in acting positions. By installing management and leadership in the school as quickly as possible, we are contributing to a positive school environment and ensuring greater stability within the system.

The WCED has also ensured that all schools are informed of their teacher allocation for the next school year by August so that schools can plan efficiently for the next school year. This is critical in drawing up school timetables and the allocation of learners to classes.

There has also been a structured programme to ensure all aspects of school readiness for 2013. This includes physical preparedness, such as the ordering of desks and chairs as well as curriculum and management readiness.

In September this year, the WCED released a planning calendar for the 2014 school year which includes a number of dates for training programmes and workshops for educators.

The planning calendar also includes a schedule of dates for meetings such as those to set standards, tests and examinations, as well as other important administrative deadlines that will allow principals and educators to plan ahead in good time.

Our Early Enrolment campaign has successfully ensured that as many learners as possible have been enrolled in the system for the 2014 school year which assists with effective planning.

Improving teacher morale

Strategic goal - We will reduce the administrative workload of teachers to provide more time for teaching. Teachers will be provided with texts on time. Teachers will also be provided with opportunities for ongoing professional development and training. Officials will provide administrative and academic support to teachers and schools on demand.

Teacher training and development is one of the core responsibilities and priorities of this Government.

To deliver on this commitment, we have increased the budget allocation for the professional development and training of our educators from R79 million in 2009/2010 to R112 in 2013/2014.

The Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute offers a variety of in-service teacher development training programmes. Approximately 13 000 educators have received training on this campus in the last 4 years.

Over 3 600 educators have attended courses that include training in areas such as Labour Relations practices, ICT proficiency and special needs education.

Many of these programmes are targeted at schools where learners are underperforming. There are also courses on offer for aspiring school principals and school leaders, a Mathematics Solutions Conference, and a Reading and Writing seminar. Over 5 400 educators have attended conferences focused on Mathematics solutions and Reading and Writing.

In the last three years the WCED have provided training programmes on the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for educators throughout the system. Approximately 30 000 educators were trained in preparation for the implementation of CAPS which streamlines and strengthens the curriculum and focuses on what must be taught and when. Teachers have also welcomed the potential of the CAPS - with its special focus on reading and writing - to improve literacy and numeracy performance.

250 schools each year also receive training and school-based support in Language and Mathematics development as well as additional readers and learning support materials as part of our 8 year training and support plan.

We are very pleased to see so much support for our workshops and seminars and we thank our educators for giving up their time to improve their teaching skills.

Quality texts and materials

Strategic goal - The WCED will, over the next three years (2011-2014), ensure that every classroom is text-rich with reading books for each Grade 1-6 classroom and textbooks for Grades 4-12 for each core subject on offer. Incentives for textbook recovery and use will be provided. We will also make greater use of technology to deliver a quality curriculum into the classroom.

This Government is firmly of the belief that textbooks are an essential education resource for the development of reading, writing and language skills. Building text-rich schools is one of our significant interventions to date and the WCED has committed itself to providing learners with textbooks in every core subject to support the delivery of a quality curriculum.

Over R605 million has been invested in this plan since 2011/2012. By January 2014, the WCED will have provided more than 8 million books over the past three years.

This is over and above books bought by schools from funding we provide in terms of national norms and standards. Schools are required to spend about 50% of norms and standards funding on textbooks and other learning and teaching materials.

Included in the roll-out of textbooks to schools, the WCED provided, for the first time, a mathematics textbook for learners in Grade 1 and Grade 2 to help support mathematics learning in the Foundation Phase.

Our new online textbook ordering system has played a key role in making the rollout of textbooks a success.

In 2011, the WCED introduced an online system for ordering textbooks that makes it easier for schools to order their textbooks. This system offers schools a good choice of textbooks and has improved and fast-tracked the ordering process with schools meeting their deadlines to place orders for textbooks with relative ease. This has allowed the WCED to remain on track to deliver the required textbooks by the end of the fourth term in time for the following school year.

The WCED is the only provincial education department to have developed such a system. The WCED is now advising other provincial departments. We are delighted and proud to share best practice with them.

Another success factor has been our efficient procurement process, particularly the way we invoice publishers. We have improved our invoicing system which has speeded up the submission of invoices to publishers.

This has made it much easier to pay publishers on delivery which has in turn resulted in faster delivery times.

In terms of technology, every school learner and educator now has access to some form of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) that contributes towards enhancing curriculum delivery.

In preparing learners for the future and to ensure that they have better access to texts and materials than before, the WCED has developed an e-Education Vision that will see the expansion of our existing technology base and digital resources and the introduction of appropriate solutions that are responsive to changing education needs.

The Western Cape Government's vision for ICT in education includes:

- empowering educators and learners to use technology effectively and innovatively;
- implementing robust and reliable ICT systems that support e-Education;
- technology-enriched school environments;
- the training of educators in ICT; and
- the sourcing, procurement and provisioning of digital resources through multiple access points.

The WCED has also developed an e-Education platform in the form of a curriculum website and a Learning Management System which houses a repository of educational digital resources such as over 400 free digital learning objects and a collection of free software for educational purposes.

The Western Cape Government is committed to bringing broadband access to schools, as well as to provincial and municipal government facilities, by the end of 2015. It is our view that high speed broadband connectivity is the foundation on which ICT can be integrated into our schools, making equitable access to the information highway possible for all users, regardless of location.

Poverty and crime

Strategic goal - Poverty and crime impact severely on learning. The WCED, in collaboration with other government departments and civil society organisations, will provide food and other poverty-alleviation measures to address the needs of poor learners. We will strive to make schools safer through physical safety measures, greater co-operation with the SAPS and Metro Police and actively promoting community involvement in protecting schools. In addition, the WCED with other government departments and the SAPS will conduct random inspections and tests at schools for drugs and weapons.

Hungry children cannot do full justice to the learning opportunities provided. The Western Cape Government appreciates the importance of the school feeding scheme in our schools.

The amount allocated to the WCED's school feeding scheme has increased progressively, by more than 100% since 2009, from R112 million to R260 million in 2013/2014.

Overall, in the Western Cape, over 430 000 learners in 1 026 schools in the Western Cape receive meals every day. 63 000 of these learners are in Quintiles 4 and 5. The Western Cape is only one of two provinces that feed additional learners in quintile 4 and 5.

The national framework for the conditional grant for school feeding sets out who benefits from the conditional grant. In terms of the requirements of this grant, the funding makes reference only to learners in Quintiles 1-3 and in identified special schools. It does not make reference to quintile 4 and 5 schools. Therefore, the WCED has deviated from this current policy in order to feed additional learners in schools in Quintiles 4 and 5 serving poorer learners.

In 2013, the WCED introduced for the first time, a breakfast meal for learners, in addition to the lunch meal they receive each day. The nutritional value of the meals has also improved. Schools have been assisted in replacing and improving kitchen equipment so that warm meals can be served.

In terms of school safety, 200 schools have, in the last four years, been provided with improved security infrastructure. This infrastructure includes physical security measures such as fencing, safety gates, burglar bars, stone guards, access gates and alarm systems linked to armed response companies. An additional 400 schools have received limited security mechanisms according to direct needs.

The WCED has been working hard to form sustainable partnerships with other spheres of government (such as the Department of Police, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport and others) and non-governmental organisations whose focus is on safety.

This year we launched a collaborative pilot project with the City of Cape Town that saw six School Resource Officers being introduced to six schools within the Cape Town Metropole area. The School Resource Officer (SRO) Pilot Project aims to build safer school environments and safer communities by having a dedicated Metro Police officer stationed at each of the participating schools to coordinate and improve existing school safety initiatives. By forging effective partnerships between participating schools and the communities in which they operate, the SRO Pilot Project aims to supplement existing school safety programmes. This pilot will be reviewed in the coming weeks to determine its success and whether we should expand it further into our schools.

As part of our efforts to ensure that our schools are safe environments within which teaching and learning can take place, we amended the Western Cape Provincial School Education Act to define and strengthen the powers of our schools to conduct search and seizure operations and random drug testing exercises. The WCED has provided schools with extensive guidelines on how these operations and exercises should be conducted.

School maintenance

Strategic goal - The WCED will develop a list of priorities for infrastructure maintenance and will adopt the most cost effective and efficient means of maintaining schools including public-private partnerships.

Ensuring that our schools are kept in a suitable condition is a priority for us.

While we have increased the school maintenance budget significantly in the last three years by more than 50%, the WCED plans to direct more expenditure towards maintenance projects.

In September 2012, a new infrastructure plan was announced for the three year period 2013-2016.

The plan envisages shifting maintenance expenditure from its current 17% of the overall infrastructure budget to 40%.

The major focus on maintenance in this plan is not only about increasing the portion of the budget available for improving the maintenance of our schools. It is also about fundamentally changing the way maintenance is conceived and executed.

In the past, the majority of maintenance interventions was defect-driven as opposed to being based on a life-cycle analysis of our school infrastructure. The WCED's new infrastructure plan envisages day-to-day maintenance by schools, therefore decreasing the need to repair defective stock resulting from neglect.

We have now identified maintenance priorities from across the province and have compiled a prioritised list of schools that are in need of maintenance. 420 schools have been identified to receive maintenance and refurbishment over the next three years.

A further 45 schools will benefit from life-cycle maintenance.

There are 130 maintenance projects currently underway in our schools.

Redress

Strategic goal - The WCED will direct its human and financial resources to those districts and schools that have historically experienced under-investment.

This Government's policies and priorities are aimed at improving the life chances of all learners in the Western Cape, including learners from the province's poorer communities. This means expanding access to schools equipped to provide a quality education through the allocation of sufficient resources.

The vast majority of our resources are quite rightly invested in schools that serve poorer communities. For example, 80.2% of our budget allocations to items such as textbooks, stationery, learner transport and feeding schemes goes to the poorest 60% of our learner population.

We have prioritised the allocation of educator posts to our poorer schools, with the maximum allowable 5% of posts being top sliced and allocated to poorer schools.

In 2012, the Western Cape Government approved proposals that have resulted in additional funding being provided to public schools serving poorer communities from 2013. This included:

- the utilisation of finances made available to equalise the per learner amounts to be paid to no-fee schools (i.e. public schools in National Quintiles 1, 2 and 3); and
- an increase in the per learner amounts to be paid to over 300 fee-paying schools serving less affluent communities.

This year, the WCED proposed even further funding of public schools serving poorer communities. This included:

- an offer to over 200 fee-paying schools to apply to become no-fee schools from 1 January 2014.
- top-up funding for schools in Quintile 4 and 5 to 100% of the no-fee threshold amount of R1 059 per learner for 2014-2015.

The offer of no-fee status was made to help assist schools in Quintile 4 and 5 in alleviating some of the funding challenges they face as a result of the non-payment of school fees by parents.

216 schools have since applied for no-fee status. The WCED has allocated R20 million for the remainder of the 2013/14 financial year and R46 million in 2014/15 to cover the costs.

In addition to the funding described above, in 2011, for the first time, the WCED paid out more than R20 million to our fee-paying public schools in National Quintiles 4 and 5 as compensation for fee exemptions granted to learners in 2010. In 2012, R30 million was paid out to schools for fee exemptions granted in 2011.

These amounts were the highest in the country.

In 2013, this figure has again increased. An amount of R42 million has been deposited into the accounts of 700 schools which have now qualified for compensation for fee exemption .

These allocations have assisted fee paying schools struggling with the cost of granting fee exemptions to apply for funding so that they are better placed to meet their financial challenges than before.

In the last four years, we can confidently say that we have directed the majority of our resources to those schools that desperately need proper and sustained remedial action and support.

Some further interventions include those in our underperforming schools. These include:

- intensive management support from our district offices;
- mentoring programmes;
- subject-specific support for schools with historically low pass rates; and
- the delivery of additional textbooks in critical subject areas.

As part of our Grade 12 improvement plan, the WCED has increased the support given to all schools with passes below the provincial average by providing a tutoring programme for complex areas of the syllabus, arranging holiday camps, and providing a 'tips for success' booklet to every Grade 12 learner in the province.

These programmes are evidently improving results at these schools with the number of underperforming schools (i.e. schools with a Grade 12 pass rate of less than 60%) declining from 85 in 2009 to 26 in 2012.

Migration and new schools

Strategic goal - The Western Cape Government will use the best available research to plan for the in-migration to the Western Cape and use research trends to ensure that schools and teachers are available to provide quality education to children who enter the province.

An audit of the province's infrastructure at the end of 2009 indicated that there was a significant need for new schools to meet the demands of increased enrolment in certain areas caused by, amongst other things, inward migration and new housing developments.

To assist us in responding better and more efficiently to the changing demands placed on our education system, the WCED has developed a new electronic tool for improving infrastructure planning for education in the Western Cape, namely the Geographic Information System (GIS) for Infrastructure Planning.

The new GIS for Infrastructure Planning uses as base information the utilisation levels of schools depicted geographically which provides us with a better opportunity than before to interrogate and diagnose systematically school provisioning issues so that we are better equipped to make informed decisions with regard to the consolidation and expansion of school infrastructure in the Western Cape.

Since the announcement of our infrastructure plan in 2010, the WCED has already planned and completed the building of 47 new and replacement schools in the province. These newly built structures have benefited approximately 57 000 learners.

The majority of these schools are in areas that were previously disadvantaged or are serving rapidly growing communities.

Our new infrastructure plan for the 2013/14-2015/16 financial period will see the completion of 26 new schools, 46 replacement schools, 5 replacement classroom projects and 124 Grade R classrooms.

Therefore a total of 72 new school structures will be built during this period. The WCED are currently completing construction on 4 new schools and 17 replacement schools which are due for completion next year. A further 11 new schools and 16 replacement schools are currently in planning

In order to provide quality education to all our learners, the WCED introduced the 'classroom expansion' plan, which ensures that learners from a diversity of backgrounds, most especially from disadvantaged communities, enjoy greater access to schools in the province with a record of success. In this way we are expanding access to quality education.

School management and leadership

Strategic goal - The WCED will provide targeted management training and in-school support to all members of school management and SGBs.

Over 1 600 principals and school management teams have participated in training workshops that have been held over the last few years.

Training courses at the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute have focused on the following:

- the principal as manager of the curriculum;
- the roles and responsibilities of deputy principals;
- the roles and responsibilities of heads of department, of aspiring principals and school leaders;
- the induction of principals and deputy principals;
- school management team training; and
- women in, and into, management.

The WCED, in co-operation with the private sector, has also held an annual Principals' Seminar on values-based leadership.

In the case of principals, our focus has been on providing enhanced stability in schools and on the development and support of those who are inexperienced or in need of extra mentoring.

All districts have held induction sessions for their new appointees. 583 new school principals have been appointed since 2009. 102 were appointed in 2013. The WCED has introduced a series of steps to ensure that more stringent conditions are applied in the appointment process.

Since 2009, 900 bursaries have been awarded to aspirant and existing school principals to improve their qualifications through the ACE in School Management and Leadership.

Principals have already been informed about the various seminars on offer for 2014 in the planning calendar sent out in September 2013 to all schools.

Last year, School Governing Bodies elections were held and compulsory training for all our new School Governing Bodies took place throughout the province.

The WCED has developed and published guidelines for school governing bodies on how to select the best nominees for principals' posts. New governing bodies have received training on these guidelines with our circuit teams providing guidance to governing bodies on procedures and the measures they can use to assess candidates for principals' posts.

In order to improve the financial management of schools, the WCED also released guidelines for governing bodies on how to draw up and deal with the records and financial statements, the annual budget and the receipt of funds, giving important instructions on how to manage and audit the books, records and statements.

As part of the WCED's resolve to strengthen school financial management the WCED conducts financial audits of specific schools. The audits provide the WCED with substantial information and evidence that SGBs need to be trained further and supported more vigorously with regard to their financial management responsibilities, including strengthening the training of School Corporate Officers and principals.

INDICATORS FOR SUCCESS

With reference to the performance levels included in the table below, it is evident that we have improved the quality of education in this province in the last two years.

Policy Priority	Performance Area	2009 Performance Levels	2010 Performance Levels	2011 Performance Levels	2012 Performance Levels
Improved academic performance in Literacy and Numeracy in grades 3, 6 & 9 by testing the full cohort	Literacy Grade 3	53.5%	54.9%	*30.4%	38.9%
	Numeracy Grade 3	35%	48.3%	*47.6%	51.5%
	Literacy Grade 6	48.6%	52.3%	*31.5%	36.9%
	Numeracy Grade 6	17.4%	24.4%	*23.4%	26.4%
Improved National Senior Certificate	Matric pass rate	75.7%	76.8%	82.9%	82.8%
	Matric pass numbers	34 017	35 139	33 146 #	36 992
	University admission/ Exemption numbers	14 324	14 414	15 215	16 319
Reduction in number of under-performing high schools	No of schools with <60% pass rate	85	78	30	26

*(In 2011, the WCED, expanded the tests, as well as increased their levels of difficulty so that they are in line with international experience and best practice. Because of the changes made, it is no longer possible to make comparisons between past Literacy/Language results and Numeracy/ Mathematics and the most recent results. Therefore, the 2011 results should be seen as a new beginning and not in contrast to the 2010 results.)

#(We were faced with a statistical anomaly with the Class of 2011 as a result of the standardisation of age of admission in January 2000. The Grade 1 intake in the year 2000 dropped by approximately 20 000 learners in the Western Cape. Therefore a smaller cohort progressed annually through the system.)

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