

COMPREHENSIVE, ALL-INCLUSIVE, PRECISE AND UNFILTERED GAUTENG EDUCATION DEPARTMENT BUDGET VOTE SPEECH AND PRIORITIES FOR 2023/2024 FINANCIAL YEAR AS UNLEASHED BY THE NEWLY APPOINTED MEC MATOME CHILOANE

by [Nie Cele](#) June 14, 2023 017

SHARE

Gauteng's Education MEC Matome Chiloane recently tabled the Gauteng Department of Education's (GDE) 2022/23 Budget Vote speech, during a house sitting at the Gauteng Provincial Legislature in Marshalltown, Johannesburg.

The significance of this year's Budget Vote is that it is the Department's first one since the appointment of a new MEC.

"As I deliver my very first budget speech as MEC for Education, I am pleased to be part of a Province that have made great strides in education, and I take immense pleasure in sharing the visible gain made in Education by my predecessors.

I draw your attention to efforts made in closing the gap in quality education between the fee-paying schools and the no-fee schools as well as achieving universal access to schooling.

I am, proud to present a budget plan that aims to focus on the consolidation of our Five-Year Strategic Plan with special emphasis on the Premier's Elevated Priorities to build on the successes achieved to date and to adjust our focus to achieve and make an even greater impact for the citizens in Gauteng.

As we witness, levels of dissatisfaction in some communities across the province, it would be apt to quote Amilcar Cabral, who said: "People do not struggle for ideas, or something that exists in the mind of individuals, but for change in their material living conditions.

National liberation, transformation, struggle for human rights, all these words remain meaningless if they are not related to the transformation of the daily lives of the oppressed people."

As such, our approach to education transformation in Gauteng is multi-faceted and is directed to address the quality of learning through quality improvement strategies that will improve the classroom performance of teachers and the active learning of

children in classrooms across all schools in the province, simultaneously we are introducing interventions that compensates for poor family literacy level and the impact of poverty affecting a large percentage of our communities in Gauteng.

It is for this reason that we wholly support the focus on Townships, Informal Settlements and Hostels.”

2023/2024 Budget

The 2023/24 Budget of R 63,4 billion will be used to accelerate our plight for better and more equitable education in the province. The Department’s total allocated budget for the 2023/24 financial year shows an increase of 6.2% from a main appropriation of R59.7 billion in 2022/23 to R63,4 billion in 2023/24 showing a rand value increase of R3,6 billion.

While our 2023/24 budget is driven by our national and provincial goals and elevated priorities. However, stringent budget realities have created a challenge in managing the tensions between key outputs and resources more effectively.

Notwithstanding any of these challenges we will continue to strive for better education in Gauteng.

Over R46 billion or 72.6% of the 2023/24 budget is spent on the Compensation of Employees, over R7,89 billion accounts for with Transfers and Subsidies, the budget for Infrastructure Development is allocated at R2,46 billion, leaving over R7 billion for programmes, nutrition, transport and other Goods and Services.

RESPONDING TO ELEVATED PRIORITIES

Honourable Speaker, the elevated priorities for education responds to the key challenges facing the people of Gauteng. We need to ensure that education contributes to the reduction of inequalities in our population.

Foremost amongst these challenges is access to quality schooling in the communities we live in and to respond to the high level of migration into the province.

It must, also, be recognised that Gauteng, and South Africa, has taken on an educational transformation more immense than any attempted in the world in the last few decades.

This transformation has been approached deliberately, consultatively, and with considerable attention to a sound legal base.

The transformation is beginning to produce results, first in equity and now increasingly in quality. Like, other agendas of this magnitude, this too has not been without challenges. The Department, however, continues to face down obstacles that are encountered. As Gauteng nears thirty years after sowing the seeds of transformation, we are increasingly reaping the fruits, further example to all that such profound reforms take years to design, more years to implement, and even more years to bear fruit.

In his State of the Province Address, the Premier, unveiled the Elevated Priorities of the Sixth administration to focus on the priorities elevated for accelerated implementation for the remainder of the Sixth Administration.

This is within the context of the adopted five-year plans and GGT2030.

IN EDUCATION THE ELEVATED PRIORITIES ARE AS FOLLOWS

- Improving Grade 12 results, measuring progress and educational outcomes must be a priority.

- Expand access of ECD sites across poor and marginalised communities including residential hostels.

- ICT schools' roll in the Townships must continue.

- investing in skills of the future by Continuing to open Schools of Specialisation to reach 35 schools by the end of the term, introduce a system of multi-certification.

- Modernisation, investing in school infrastructure and online

Admissions by investing in school infrastructure in townships, ensure accelerated delivery of smart public infrastructure to meet the demand identified through the online admissions remains a critical priority.

- Integration and incorporation of wellness programmes, and

Rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law into the

education system by assessing those in care centres and

rehabilitation centres ready for schooling and ensure they are reintegrated into the schooling system.

- School Safety must be a priority to ensure learner and teachers safety.

- Youth Development must be redefined to increase youth

Employability and employment.

OUR APPROACH TO THE ELEVATED PRIORITIES.

IMPROVING LEARNING

I am committed to ensuring that all phases of education are progressively targeted and that all grades will benefit from interventions that are designed to ensure that the root causes that are peculiar to that phase and that grade are addressed. We are not implementing a one size fits all solution to the challenges experienced in each phase.

At the centre of the framework is a commitment to deliver quality education in the classroom every day. To do this, we need to ensure that the inputs, for learners, teachers, and management, are provided and that there are programmes to compensate for the ravages of poverty and poor family literacy.

Our approach is focussed on aligning the whole system to support these interventions and to ensure that we use our scarce resources in a targeted schools-based approach that supports classroom practice in improving learner performance and attainment in a sustainable way.

FOUR TARGETED PROGRAMMES ARE

- Foundation Phase intervention focusing on improving basic literacy and numeracy and improving language competence for transition to a new language of learning and teaching in the foundation phase. This includes the universalization of Grade R.

- Senior primary phase intervention focusing on improving language practice in the language of learning and teaching and mathematics.

- Transition from primary to secondary school intervention programme will focus on improving language practice, mathematics, science, and accounting. We will also focus intensively on career counselling in Grades 8 and 9.

- Senior secondary intervention programme will focus on improving learner performance in six key subject areas where learner performance is the weakest. In addition, we will also focus on language skills and exam preparation.

The framework also identifies that the department must ensure that it is providing effective support, not just from our education districts but the head office as well.

The framework acknowledges the central role of social partners, that effective education requires deep societal change. We need strong, sustained, and deep support from many corners of civil society, from our unions, SGB elected representative and faith-based communities.

I will now focus on the response to the key Elevated Priorities.

Improving Grade 12 Performance – Reclaiming the “crown” –

Continuing the improvement of quality learning in the FET Band.

The Matric Class for 2022 did a sterling job by achieving a pass rate of 84.4% which represents an improvement of 1.6% as compared to the 82.8% pass rate that was obtained in 2021. In 2022 there was a total of 43 298 distinctions, which saw over 20 769 distinctions come from township schools, which is a “monumental achievement!”

The GDE pass rate has consistently been higher than the National pass rate and this trend continues.

A great achievement to note is the progress made by Gauteng in closing the gap between former model C and township schools' pass rate from 12% to 9%. In the 2022 NCS examination, 24 learners from township schools received total marks in Mathematics, Business Economics and Economics.

In 2023, the Department endeavours to improve the matric pass rate for Gauteng to 90% and the Bachelor Pass Rate to 50%, with specific emphasis in reducing the difference in NSC Pass rate between township and ex-Model C schools to 7%.

Further emphasis will be placed on increasing learner participation in Mathematics and Science and ensuring that 21.5% of learners are achieving 60% and above in Physical Sciences and 17.5% of learners are achieving 60% and above in Mathematics.

SUPPORT TO MATRICULANTS

SSIP is now in its thirteenth year of operation and has contributed to the improvement of the Matric pass rate since its inception in 2010. The SSIP programme focuses on improving learner performance in the FET Phase (Grades 10-12) with the aim being on improving the learner performance.

The Grade 12 programme will offer support to 446 priority underperforming schools, who performed under 80% in the 2022 National Senior Certificate examinations.

The programme will include supplementary tuition on Saturdays at 289 walk-in sites, during school holidays at 15 residential camps across all Districts and in the period running up to the end of year exams for about 15 000 Grade 12 learners.

Support will be offered in thirteen (13) core subject areas – Mathematics, Technical Maths, Mathematical Literacy, Physical Science, Technical Science, Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, Geography, History, English First Additional Language (FAL) and Home Languages. Additional training will be offered to 1200 FET teachers.

In 2023, the Department will be implementing the e-SSIP and subject integrated approach. All FET content programmes are re-aligned and revised to be pre-loaded onto smart boards and learner tablets in all our ICT enabled schools. The programme will include a more focussed paperless or ICT-based assessments approach that will provide data on the impact of the programme. A concentrated and integrated approach of ICT into key aspects of the SSIP programme through resourcing and the provisioning of ICT-enabled devices that will support the blended learning approach. A broad range of interfaces such as zero-rated websites and media platforms, will be extensively used to deliver quality learning and content to learners.

Furthermore, The Department will again offer additional support for Matric candidates that failed the exams and who have registered to write Supplementary Examinations.

The enhanced SSIP Broadcast Project will continue as a means of support to all learners.

Additional intervention programmes will be given in respect of All other Grades, which includes District support for all schools, monitoring the Curriculum and Assessment standards, access to e-content and Early Grade Reading Assessments (Grades 1-3).

The Introduction to African Languages and Maths, Science and Technology intervention programmes across all grades will be on going.

INVESTING IN SKILLS OF THE FUTURE.

Investing in skills of the future focuses on providing access to relevant curriculum offerings through schools of specialisation, technical high schools, and special schools. In addition, we will introduce a Multi- certification Skills programme for learners across all schools.

MULTI-CERTIFICATION SKILLS PROGRAMME

The multi-certification skills programme aims to equip Grade 1-12 learners with skills not offered by the academic syllabus, including coding, robotics, rocketry, drone technology, sign language and more. By the time the learners finish their schooling after 12 years, they will have a matric certificate plus 12 additional skills-based certificates, and we start the programme from grade one.

To ensure the efficacy of this programme, we have partnered with numerous experienced companies that provide invaluable expertise in each skill.

We are, also, working with various SETAs to ensure the credibility of the certificate obtained for each skill.

The programme would be gradually rolled out at public schools across the province, but institutions in townships and informal settlements would be prioritised.

The multi-certification Skills Programme (MCSP) was officially launched on the 15 March 2023 at the Katlehong Engineering School of Specialisation.

To ensure that this programme is experienced by all learners, the MCSP will focus on the following programmes:

- In the Foundation Phase (grades 1-3), Swimming, Coding and Robotics
- In the InterSen Phases (grades 4-7), Entrepreneurship Education, Sign Language, Music Enhancements.
- FET Phase, Technical Computer skills, Drones, Rocketry, First Aid Certification, Microsoft Digital Literacy, Welding, Plumbing, Basic Cad competency, Engineering and Graphic Design and K53.

To date over 100-Grade 11 learners commenced with the Multi-Certification skills programme in March 2023; Automotive -50 learners and Power Systems- 50 learners and 167-Grade 10 and 11 learners commenced with the Multi-Certification skills programme for Civil Services, and Construction.

We are excited to have introduced such an innovative programme that will give learners practical skills that are credible enough to use in our vast economy.

SCHOOLS OF SPECIALISATION (SOS)

In responding to the challenge of scarce skills development as outlined in GGT 2030, the province is implementing a strategy to reorganise and turnaround our schools, particularly schools in the township. We are investing millions of rands to improve the quality of education in the townships and to turn around what were historically labour reservoirs for unskilled labour, into zones of hope, development, and transformation.

A new era is ushered in with the introduction of a new type of public school– the School of Specialisation. These schools will assist in addressing critical skills shortages in Gauteng and in South Africa at large.

The Schools of Specialisation will also serve as laboratories to deepen teaching and learning methods that can be extended to nearby schools, instead of being islands of excellence with limited impact on the broader education community.

The Schools of Specialisations are strategically placed in the five economic corridors and municipalities, as they work toward the municipality's economic focus. The curriculum of the SOS's will focus on Mathematics, Science & IT, Engineering Commerce and Entrepreneurship and Sports.

The Department is rolling out 35 Schools of Specialisation before the end of the 2024 financial year. To date 22 schools of specialisation have been officially opened.

In the 2023/24 financial year the Department will spend R291 million on the resourcing of Schools of Specialisation and an additional R60,7 million TSS-RG grant on expansion of the technical high school programme.

INCLUSION AND FULL SERVICE SCHOOLS

Special education has changed over the years. New teaching methods, changing perspectives, and the emphasis on inclusion have shifted ideas and introduced new concepts. For special education teachers and the administration, it's an exciting time. In the implementation of this priority, special education can serve as a support system, and special educators can assist regular school personnel in managing the education of children with exceptionalities. When the special placement of a child is required, the aim of the placement should be to maximize the development and freedom of the child rather than to accommodate him/her in a regular classroom.

We are working hard at expanding access for learners with special needs through the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy. Our emerging strategy is to

deal with all children who experience barriers to learning, whether they are in mainstream schools, special schools, or out-of-school.

When referring to the target of inclusive education policy, we refer to

“Learners who experience barriers to learning”. This includes three groups of learners:

- Learners in mainstream schools that are failing to learn due to barriers of whatever nature (family disruption, language issues and poverty could be some of the barriers here).
- Learners in special schools who have been placed in the school on the basis of their disability (disability is considered be a barrier, although there may be many other barriers in addition).
- Learners of compulsory school going age who are out of school or who have never been enrolled in school due to barriers of whatever nature (multiple disabilities and poverty are two of the major barriers for this group).

The strategy will also consolidate and expand inclusive education in order to give each learner access to the support needed in order to achieve optimally and live gainfully. The Department will continue the early screening and identification for appropriate placement and learner support and conduct the relevant orientation, teacher training and subsequent screening.

The support for LSEN in both special and ordinary schools will be intensified through increased resourcing of specific Special Schools thus ensuring the availability of required services and equipment, to learners that experience barriers to learning and development.

Access to education for learners with special needs and Autism, will be increased through the optimal utilisation of existing Special Schools and increasing the number of Full-Service Schools through expanded support provisioning as per the SIAS Policy.

Currently there are 7 Autism-specific schools with 13 Autism-specific units at current special schools with just under 2 000 ASD learners enrolled in special schools. A total of 1,900 LSPIDs are serviced in 62 Special Care Centres and 10 Special Schools.

45 public ordinary schools have been converted to full-service schools and a further 3 new schools will be designated by the end of 2023/24.

There are currently 65 Public Special Schools that are operational in townships across the province, catering for over 58 954 learners in the province and this is estimated to reach 60 000 during 2023/24 financial year.

R75,4 million will be spent on increasing access to Special Schools, capacity building of the educators, the procurement of appropriate learner-teacher support material and the screening of learners and a further R89,3 million will be spent on Psycho-Social support for Inclusive Education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Gauteng is committed to improving early childhood development and more children are accessing this crucial building block of learning.

Investment in Early Childhood Development (ECD) is well-documented to be one of the most effective, long-term strategies for poverty eradication. Children learn the skills that will help them flourish, early in life, when the brain has the maximum capacity to develop.

Across government policies, ECD is a national priority programme included to support the principle of investment

in young children.

The NDP focuses on maximising the capabilities of the people and of the country and emphasises that action should be taken to improve ECD services. Investment in ECD is critical to ensure better performance in formal schooling which will result in improved post-schooling outcomes, including employment. Thus, the NDP recognises quality ECD as one of the measures to reduce the acute impacts of poverty. Policy developments in the last two years provide clear direction for the scaling up of ECD provision.

Government has committed to making ECD a public good and accelerating access to essential components of a comprehensive package of services from conception to formal school-going age.

ECD has two broad elements Pre-Grade R and Grade R programmes.

The department will work to ensure that all learners entering the schooling system have participated in ECD, regardless of their socio-economic status.

The Department will continue the expansion of Grade R to all public schools. In addition, pre-Grade R sites will be registered with Education Department to ensure that there is an adequate mix of public, private, and community-based pre-Grade R sites.

Pre-Grade R ECD function shift from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Education is now completed and the Department is assuming full responsibility for the sector. We are currently stabilising the sector by creating a National System, while the National Department of

Basic Education develops the norms and standards for resourcing and related regulations to address reliability of Data, Mushrooming of unregistered sites and Human Resource and capacity shortages.

The national audit of ECD sites have revealed over 10 800 ECD sites with less than 2500 sites are fully or partially registered.

The Department aims to finalise the registration of all outstanding ECD sites by 2024/25 financial year and remains committed to building new ECD facilities, enhancing and

increasing teacher training programmes and providing subsidies and establishing more ECD centres.

The Department has budgeted R447 million to be spent on Pre-Grade R in Early Childhood Development Centres.

ECD IN RESIDENTIAL HOSTELS.

To improve living standards in townships, informal settlements, and hostels (TISH), the Department identified 6 hostels in which Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres will be prioritized.

To date we have completed and functional centres in Denver, Mzimhlophe, Sebokeng, Boipatong, and Kwa-Thema Hostels. This intervention will eventually be expanded to the 15 Hostels across the province.

The Department has expanded the ECD centres to include Access and Care for the holistic development of children, this is inclusive of early learning and age-appropriate activities which includes Stimulation and Early intervention on barriers. In addition to the existing interventions the

Department will be expanding the Wednesday sports programmes to all 1273 ECD centres in the province.

PROMOTION OF QUALITY EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCE. ECD OF THE FUTURE

The GDE is in the process of building ECD of the Future centres. The first such centre is being built in Tshwane corridor – in Soshanguve.

The Department is committed to rolling out ECDs of the future across the 5 corridors. The ECD of the future centres will have classrooms with indoor splash pools, ICT centres, a water recycling area, and mini sports areas.

The budget allocation for this ECD of the future centre is R29 Million.

Coding and Robotics will gradually be introduced into the curriculum to meet the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The Department will be piloting Coding and Robotics in ECD centres by March 2024. This pilot programme will include Training and advocacy on implementation of coding and robotics in ECD and mediating Coding and Robotics resources to ECD officials.

Universalising access to Grade R As one of the Millennium goals, the universalization of grade R, the Department has made great strides in achieving its

goals. The Grade R learner enrolment in registered schools for 2023 (system-wide) is 127 876, which is an increase of 12 691 learners as compared to 2015 (115 185).

In 2023, the total number of Grade R learners in the public school system is 110 634 which shows an increase of 1.6% from 2022 (108 846) to 2023.

We will now undertake a headcount in ECD sites transferred to Education to determine the number of children in private Grade R classes.

INTEGRATION AND REHABILITATION OF LEARNERS INTO WELFARE AND WELLNESS PROGRAMME (Drug abuse and crime)

As we increasingly see the impact of social ills affecting schooling and learning. The Department has created capacity to implement proactive measures in containing the impact of bullying, violence, drug abuse and teenage pregnancy amongst school going children and youth. The Psycho- social support team provides psychosocial support to learners, educators and parents when responding to incidences of violence, rape, gangsterism and fatalities from accidents at schools. The team has successfully intervened where there have been violations of the rights of learners in the past and will continue to do so in future. The Department will also increase the number of team members to support the work of the team.

The department is also working with sister departments and organised civil society, especially faith-based organisations to intervene in schools in non-denominational manner to address the pressures that children and their schools face in dealing with these social ills. We strongly believe that parents and communities have a big role to play in countering the effects of social ills facing the youth of our country.

Rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law into the education system Children in conflict with the law and placed on in Child and Youth Care Centres by a court order and who have completed their rehabilitation must be reintegrated into schools. Scholastic baseline assessments will be conducted to understand the learners' curriculum support needs. As per SIAS policy the District Based Support Team will support the SchoolBased Support Team to develop Individual Support Plans to ensure catching up with learning content and for them to progress with their age cohort.

In addition, the Learner Psycho-Support Services will identify and refer Learners for in-patient counselling and support in DSD/DoH registered centres.

DEALING WITH DRUG ABUSE AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN

Alcohol and drug use has a detrimental effect on the health and well-being of learners. It is also recognised as a significant barrier to both teaching and learning in our schools. Substance abuse can clearly be linked to academic difficulties, absenteeism, and drop-out from schooling.

The department will raise the advocacy around drug abuse as a preventative strategy supported by legislative provisions of search and seizure raids in schools are preventative strategies. The Department will, also, work with Rehab centres to develop learning activity packs to support learners during the rehabilitation period,

additionally psycho-social support programmes will be implemented for learners when they return to school.

R122 million has been allocated for the 2023/24 financial year for identified learners to be enrolled in welfare and wellness programmes and a further R3,7 million has been allocated to ensure that 100% of the learners in conflict with the law are supported.

SCHOOL SAFETY.

The safety of all learners, teachers and support staff on the school premises remains the Department's priority. The Department continues to implement a School Safety Strategy. The Department has established both internal and external teams to provide integrated support in terms of the implementation of the Safety Strategy.

The school safety strategy is targeting 1700 Township schools and focusing on 275 High Risk Schools to work with Mathew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance in profiling, diagnosing, and identifying interventions to make schools a safer place for both staff and learners. All schools have been guided to establish safety committees as sub-committees of the SGBs which has been trained to implement the National

Schools Safety Framework.

In collaboration with Department of Community safety ,CPF and SAPS we are implementing a School Safety Patroller programme across mainly Township schools- This is funded by the GDE and targets 5000+ patrollers to provide security to the school on a 24-hour basis and they also control access, monitor activities around the school perimeter, control learners at high-risk road-crossings and support teachers on playground duty, while controlling learners at high-risk road-crossings and support educators on play ground duty.

In some high-risk schools and ICT schools armed securities are provided as rapid response. We are currently running a pilot project in 37 schools using CCTV cameras and a centralised control room to monitor activities in target schools.

This is further supported by SAPS, together we are working to strengthen the adopt a cop and ward-based policing to support schools across all communities.

GDE and SAPS are also engaging with NGOs and the Bavarian police service with approaches to securing schools.

This includes a local pilot in 2 schools in Gauteng.

R181 million will be spent on the Department's School Safety Programme including the employment of the 5000 patrollers.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION IS HELPING TO CLOSE THE GAP IN LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT.

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.

The impact of our pro-poor interventions is beginning to show in the performance of learners from no-fee schools. Learners in No-fee schools benefit from free educations, nutrition, scholar transport where needed and targeted quality interventions. These measures help to contain the effect of poverty on the child's ability to learn. As a case in point, the learners in no-fee secondary schools have an achievement gap of about 9% in the 2022 NCS exam compared to learners in fee-paying schools. Similarly, we are seeing changes in the primary grades.

NO FEE-SCHOOLS

In 2023 academic year, a total of 1387 schools are declared as no-fee schools in the province, servicing a total of 1 542 500 learners.

The national threshold for no-fee schools has increased to R1 536 per learner.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

The National School Nutrition Programme which aims to alleviate short-term hunger and contribute to the general health and development of needy learners.

The Department is currently providing a warm meal to over 1,651 million learners in all participating schools across all 5 Quintiles.

This School Nutrition Programme is funded by a national Conditional grant and in the 2023/24 financial year R1,3 billion is allocated to School Nutrition, R1,0 billion is part of the National School Nutrition Programme Grant and the Department contributes R300 million to subsidise learners from Quintile 4 and 5 schools that forms part of the programme.

SCHOLAR TRANSPORT

As part of the poverty alleviation policy of the Department, bus routes that are efficient to transport learners to the nearest school are being implemented. To ensure that learners enjoy a full day of learning, departmental officials regularly monitor the bus route to ensure learner are transported safely and that the transport arrives at schools timeously and collects learners timeously.

The Department is doing a rigorous inspection of all scholar transport vehicles to ensure that our learners are bussed to school in a safe and reliable vehicle. The Department further plans on subjecting all vehicles transporting our learners to roadworthy testing.

A total of 210 000 learners are currently using the scholar transport system.

The Department has budgeted R1,3 billion to Scholar Transport for increasing access to schooling of which:

- R744 million is allocated to Primary Schools.

- R472 million is allocated to Secondary schools.
- R177 million is allocated to Special schools.

SCHOOL SPORT

The Department will continue the Wednesday Sports Programme in no-fee primary schools. The programme will include athletics, football, swimming, cricket, volleyball, rugby, netball, chess, and boxing.

The Department has prioritised resources towards school sports programmes which cover multiple sporting disciplines for learners with special educational needs. LSEN School sports will focus on multiple-discipline learners with special education needs and these sports comprise of athletics competitions, football, and sporting programmes for the physically impaired, blind, deaf, and intellectually impaired learners.

The inclusion of the Wednesday Sports Programme at ECD centres are in the planning phase and will be implemented incrementally.

A total of R43,1 million is allocated to school sports, culture, and media activities.

INFRASTRUCTURE.

The Department has seen the demand for classroom space increasing rapidly.

The average learner growth in the province, over the last five years, has been approximately 2%, this is on average 50 000 new learners per year.

The schooling system in the province since 1995 has had an increase in learner enrolment of over 48%. There is no other province that has experienced this level of demand for learning spaces than Gauteng.

We have also seen an expansion of the scholar transport scheme to accommodate learners from informal settlements where we have not yet been able to build schools.

The infrastructure plan for 2023/24 will endeavour to assist in providing access to all learners of school going age in our continually changing environment, in accordance with the demands of the people in the province.

The Department will accelerate delivery of infrastructure in order to improve access of learners to schools and meet its objective of providing quality education to all. The Department infrastructure plan is under serve pressure due to budgetary constraints.

The department is engaging with Treasury to assist with alternate funding to support new classrooms to meet demand.

The Department's Infrastructure plan will deal with both the provisioning of new infrastructure as well as the maintenance, rehabilitation and upgrading of existing

infrastructure. In addition, the plan deals with the need for and the utilisation of the infrastructure, as well as with the changing situations in relation to emerging needs and utilisation. In the 2023/24 financial year, the

Department will prioritise new and replacement schools, as well as school maintenance.

In addressing the shortage of classrooms and addressing this issue of unplaced learners in Grades 1 and 8, Gauteng has received budgeted R6,8 billion (over the MTEF) from the infrastructure grants and provincial coffers.

Over R1,6 billion is targeted at building 17 new schools in high-pressured communities through the Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development.

The GDE's current New and Replacement School Programme included 17 schools from the GDE's current New and replacement Programme.

In addition, the Gauteng Department of Education supported by the Gauteng Infrastructure Financing Agency (GIFA) applied for funding from the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) funding for the building of new schools in the Gauteng Province.

The GDE application was approved and funding for the construction of 18 schools was approved by National Treasury and the department was awarded R1.5 billion from the National Treasury over three years.

This is a special province specific grant from the national Budget for Infrastructure Fund.

This is a major boost from the National Treasury over three years to build new schools and replacement schools for dilapidating mobile and asbestos schools.

Along with the 18 BFI-funded projects the overall schools building programme consists of 35 schools. (18 BFI funded schools +17 GDE new and replacement schools).

In addition to the Departmental built schools and classrooms, the department has decided to move with the self-built classrooms.

This programme is being used to address backlog in infrastructure delivery.

The programme is run with schools that is able to manage its own build projects, schools that are able to manage the finances that is associated with such a programme. This is a continuous programme.

ROLL OUT OF E-CLASSROOMS

In line with the provincial GGT 2030 framework, the Department is modernising and improving public education. The E-learning strategy is in line with the DBE's e-

Education guidelines and its requirements are the cornerstone of ICT transformation in education in the province.

In Gauteng, we have introduced ICT to create a tech-enabled teaching and learning environment to improve education outcomes with a focus on learner performance and attainment.

The use of technologies will enhance teaching quality by giving both teachers and learners access to extensive learning material, through the use of smart boards, tablet devices and smart software in the classroom, including digital exercises and lessons.

The Department is currently making great progress in rolling out the Tech-enabled learning environment.

Learners use the tablets to complete the exercises and research with the on-the-spot assignments that give teachers an indication of whether learners are grasping the content. This Tech-enabled learning environment will be fully rolled out in all high schools by 2024.

Significant progress has been achieved. To date 604 schools are benefiting from the E-learning programme. Over 7 594 LED boards, over 19 569 teacher devices and 71 494 learner devices have been distributed.

In 2023/24, the Department intends expanding the project to cover all grades in the targeted schools.

The Department intends to accelerate delivery by promoting and supporting self-initiated school renovations to benefit from the ICT programmes. We will also encourage learners from Quintile 4 and 5 schools, where parents can afford to support learners, to bring their own devices to schools.

To achieve the ultimate vision of a “paperless” classroom, the Department must further develop its teachers and learners in its institutions.

Teacher training, improvements to school infrastructure and the distribution of educational devices, is key to achieving this vision.

An intensive teacher and principal training programme are being developed to orientate and train teachers and managers on the integrated use of technology to improve curriculum delivery in the classroom.

Given the importance of ICT to improve teaching and learning, the Department intends to significantly upscale the rollout of the ICT project in the province in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

The investment we are making through the ICT rollout is intended to benefit schools, and the broader community. ICT schools are community assets.

We urge communities to join forces with schools in their area, to protect these assets against opportunistic criminal elements that would seek to damage or loot the school property, even going as far as to inflict harm on learners who benefit from the technology rollout.

We need to preserve and protect not constantly replace and repair our assets.

This is draining our resources and if this continues it may render the programme unsustainable.

For the 2023/24 financial year R1,1 billion has been allocated to continue the rollout of the e-classrooms.

CONSOLIDATING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE PROVINCE TO ADDRESS FRAGMENTATION.

The aim of the Department in the new financial year is to improve skills development amongst the youth and linking the skills to career paths and development.

It also encompasses sustainable employment responsive to

labour market demands and the provision of bursaries, internships and learnership programmes.

The focus for the coming year is on skills development for the priority economic sectors.

The Provincial Cabinet has approved the Gauteng Integrated Youth Development Strategy (GYIDS) 2030 seeing that young adults constitute 39% over 5 million in Gauteng.

The Department will continue to drive the mass participation of all learners to pursue post-schooling opportunities, through the re-positioning of the GCRA.

The aim of the repositioning of GCRA is to consolidate Youth Development activities for greater impact and reach and address the current fragmentation.

The Department aims to develop a Function Framework that confirms the scope of work for the GCRA in this space and incorporates the transfer of Tshepo 1 million and other relevant youth interventions in the GPG and aims to formulate the Strategy to end of term with the migration of functions and budgets and related resources.

The province will also reposition Tshepo 1 million as a comprehensive youth development program that integrates all youth development initiatives in the three spheres of government.

KEY PROGRAMMES BASED ON THE CURRENT MASTER SKILLS PLAN IN SUPPORT OF GGT2030 AND TISH.

The Workforce Development Programme has got two components the unstructured and structured components.

The purpose of the Unstructured Component of the programme is to give unemployed youth access to workplaces where they can gain work experience for a minimum of 12 months and maximum of 24 months.

Host employers are identified, or they request unemployed youth as per their requirement and the GCRA Source, match and select young people who meet the requirements as determined by the host employers.

For 2023/24 the bigger numbers will come from the Mass Participation programme where the GCRA will go to the five Gauteng corridors where opportunities will be plugged to the youth on the spot by government and private sector.

The cost driver – is stipends.

The purpose of the Structured Component of the programme is through partnerships with industry the GCRA will strengthen implementation of youth development programmes which include:

- Candidacy Development Support programme linked to professional registration with professional bodies or council which is statutory requirement.
- Learnership programme which leads to qualification registered on the National Qualification Framework.
- Apprenticeship programme learning programmes officially listed trade on National Qualification Framework; and
- Skills programmes.

For 2023/24 – 2025/2026 through a partnership with MerSeta, 6000 youth will be trained as solar technicians.

THE BURSARY PROGRAMME.

The programme is aimed at building a pool of skilled talent in the Gauteng City Region, funding the young people of Gauteng largely, to pursue studies at various accredited and registered Post School Education and Training(PSET) institutions across the country. A full cost bursary is awarded until completion based on performance and once graduated the GCRA assists with work placement for those not in employment through the internship programme.

CAREER GUIDANCE

Providing access to career guidance content for Grades 8-12 in Gauteng schools specifically and beyond including the PSET students.

The GCRA is coordinating the programmes for all the Gauteng schools together industry experts, HEI's, TVETs and Government for the learners to match their vision and industry needs.

Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) Phase 4 of the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) implemented in the basic education sector, the target is 40 000 and the cohort 1 appointment resumed in February 2023 and the appointments are still underway for Cohort 2.

The 2023/24 budget allocated for youth Development is R1,5 billion. This amount will be spent on youth development, learnerships, skills programmes, the provisions of bursaries to learners in quintile 1 to 3 schools and skills required by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

We are strongly of the belief that education remains a key instrument in addressing poverty.

IN CONCLUSION.

As I conclude, I want to remind the House that, as the African National Congress (ANC), we continue to share a vision and a history of ensuring participatory and quality education that acts as a crucible for the empowerment of the poor and powerless.

Through education we will decisively conquer inequality based on race and class.

Let me end by paying tribute to our Premier for making education his number one priority; to my colleagues in the Executive Council for their support; to Rufus Mmutlana, the Acting Head of Department, Mr Edward

Mosuwe, our previous Head of Department and the team at GDE for their hard work and dedication; to the Acting Chairperson and members of the Portfolio Committee for their insight and oversight; the ongoing work that each and every member of this House does to make education a societal priority; and last but by no means least to the many thousands of principals and educators in our province who, despite daunting challenges, prioritise the future of our children above all else.

For more information, contact the Gauteng Department of Education's

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