Schools’ Infrastructure Buyambo

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Covid-19 Safety Tips

Let’s Grow South Africa. Together.

Wash & sanitise your hands
Hiamba ucoc izandla zakho

Keep your distance from others
Gcina umgama phakathi kwakho nabanye

Wear your mask
Nxiba i-mask yakho
Sakh’isidima News is produced by the Physical Resources Management Programme Support Unit (PSU). Editor: Shirazaan Taylor

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Sakh’isidima News
now available on the EFMS

If you’ve missed previous editions of Sakh’isidima News and you have access to the EFMS, we’ve got you covered. The newsletter can now be accessed on the EFMS in 5 easy steps:
1. Go to www.efms.doe.gov.za/
2. Log into the Eastern Cape EFMS page
3. At the of the page choose the tab DoE guidelines
4. Click on Infrastructure Programme Newsletter
5. Download the edition you wish to read
July was a turbulent month as we witnessed an increased number of COVID-19 infections brought about by the Delta variant. The mass vaccination of educators in the Eastern Cape took place to ensure that we are ready to resume the third term when schools opened for educators on the 22nd of July and for learners on the 26th. In total 50 700 educators and 13 122 non-teaching staff received their vaccines. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all education sector staff who opted to get the jab and urge those who have not done so yet, to do so.

As is customary in our province members of the EC Provincial Legislature conducted follow-up visits to districts and schools from 26 July to 6 August 2021. They were accompanied by Senior Managers from the Department to provide feedback on progress relating to the implementation of the House Resolutions of the February 2021 visits and to provide support to the districts and schools. Availability of suitable infrastructure is almost always on the agenda at these meetings and some of the infrastructure assessed was availability of adequate classroom accommodation, water, and sanitation. Provision of adequate classrooms is proving to be a challenge due to population dynamics in our province. Our data shows that within one district one can have both a situation of overcrowding as well as underutilisation of classrooms. This requires creative thinking on the part of our infrastructure team to adequately meet the needs of our schools.

Our country was also thrown into the depths of darkness with the recent spate of social upheaval and mass looting which occurred in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng earlier this month. Close to 137 education institutions were damaged and looted in KZN alone, 126 of these were schools. The damage to property includes burning of classrooms and administration buildings, breaking doors and windows, damaging school furniture, damaging fencing, and cutting electrical cables. In Gauteng, 14 schools were affected, and the damage is estimated at over R40 million. By the grace of the Almighty, sanity prevailed in the Eastern Cape with strong calls by the leadership of the province and the public at large against such senseless acts. We thank the people of the Eastern Cape for standing together to protect property, our local economy, and the jobs and the livelihoods of our people!

Our infrastructure programme continues despite a few setbacks relating to delayed projects and insufficient budget, but we will not be defeated. In this edition of *Sakh’isidima News* we showcase several projects that have been completed and some that are nearing completion, such as the mega Sophatisana Secondary in Buffalo City. We also bring you news about the new Bizana District offices which will provide 1500 square meters of office space for the smooth running of our administrative function in this district.

At the end of July, we bid farewell to an icon in the education sector, Dr A S Nuku who has served the Department for the past 39 years. In his last position, Dr Nuku was the DDG responsible for the Branch, District Coordination and Institutional Operations, under which the Physical Resources Management Chief Directorate falls. We wish Dr Nuku everything of the very best in his retirement.

In conclusion I would like to remind you that tough times never last, but tough people do. We are going through trying times as a country and as a province, but we must hold our heads high and continue to fight the good fight. We must remain strong and steadfast in our mission to provide the best possible start - a solid education foundation - to the learners in our province, so that they can prosper and achieve their life goals and ideals.

Mr F D Gade  
MEC for Education
Steady progress towards completion of Sophatisana Secondary

The Buffalo City metro has experienced a steady population growth of just over 1% per annum over the past few years, with the 2021 population standing at 717,000—a 1.13% increase from 2020. The United Nations population projections indicate that this growth rate will continue through to 2035*.

Buffalo City is one of the districts in the Eastern Cape which has seen an interesting shift in population dynamics with more people moving here in search of better opportunities. The district is also showing fascinating trends in classroom utilisation. Departmental information indicates that 26% of schools in the district are highly overcrowded whilst 37% are highly underutilised.

In line with the development trends of the district, Sophatisana Secondary School, situated in Reeston, a suburb in East London, is getting a facelift and much-needed new infrastructure.

The new project includes general upgrade to existing infrastructure, and the construction of additional buildings. The existing school, built from prefabricated structures with fibreboard walls, has been demolished. The site was handed over in August 2019 and despite lockdown regulations which delayed construction works in 2020, the project is progressing well and should be completed in the second quarter of 2022.

The school, classified as a Quintile 3 school, has over 1 000 learners who will benefit from close to 4000m2 of new and improved teaching spaces.

The project is valued at over R70 million and is being implemented by Coega Development Corporation.
807m²
Administration & Support spaces
- Administration block
- Dining & Nutrition Centre
- Refuse Room
- Guard Room

3823m²
Teaching spaces
- 2x Double storey classroom blocks
- 1x Single storey classroom block
- Library & Computer lab
- Science Laboratory

20
New Toilets (Flush)

Sophatisana
Secondary
1500 Square Meters of new office space for Alfred Nzo East district

Providing suitable office infrastructure is important to ensure that the administration of education can continue in a smooth and efficient manner. Excitement is mounting as construction of the new district office nears completion.

The site for these offices was handed over in February 2018, however the project was delayed by almost 12 months due to issues around the size of the land allocated for construction of the new buildings. Work is progressing at a steady pace towards finalising construction of the prefabricated offices, ablutions, and related support facilities.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa who is contracted to implement this project is steadily making progress and it is anticipated that works will be concluded by the end of August, if there are no unexpected delays.

The project cost is just over R28 million and will provide 1500m2 of office space in a double storey building where close to 185 ECDoe staff members will be accommodated.
As is customary, members of the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature accompanied by DoE officials visited selected schools in the 12 education districts to assess their readiness to tackle the new term using 14 indicators (to assess readiness). These are:

- Facilities
- Adequate water
- Sanitation
- Basic sanitation and hygiene packages
- Special schools
- Number of infrared thermometers
- Learner transport
- School Nutrition Programme
- Number of screeners
- Educators and non-educators
- Provision of COVID-19 essentials
- Psychosocial Support to Learners and Staff
- Quality of Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC)
- Communication

Thousands of learners and educators in the Eastern Cape braved the exceptionally cold winter conditions on Monday, 26 July as the third school term kicked off after several weeks rest.
The paradox of underutilised & overcrowded classrooms

Population dynamics and the historical neglect of schools in the former homeland areas is leading to an interesting phenomenon of both overcrowded and under-utilised schools across the province. This manifests in distinct trends from district to district and from one cluster to the next.

The latest User Asset Management Plan indicates that the educational facilities currently available (regardless of their condition) are inadequate for effective teaching and learning and calculates the shortfall (backlog) for each school based on the Regulations relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure. The Classroom backlog currently stands at 4,984 (1,140 ordinary classrooms and 3,844 Grade R Classrooms) and will require close to R13 billion to address.

The current capacity and utilisation of facilities provides different pictures of both overcrowding and at the same time underutilisation of teaching spaces across the twelve education districts. There are no formal definitions for “over-crowding” or “under-utilisation”, rather the following informal criteria are used by the Department to determine the extent of classroom utilisation:

**Optimal Learner Classroom ratio**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Combined</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>35.0</td>
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**Overcrowding**

- 4 or more additional classrooms → School classified as Highly Overcrowded
- 2 to 3 additional classrooms → School classified as Overcrowded

**Underutilisation**

- 4 or more classrooms not in use → School classified as Highly Underutilised
- 2 to 3 classrooms not in use → School classified and Underutilised

**Normal**

A school is classified as Normal if it requires 0 to 1 additional classroom.
Our data shows that there are schools in districts such as Alfred Nzo West, Amathole East, Chris Hani East and Nelson Mandela which are underutilised by more than 50%. There is also a prevalence of overcrowding and utilisation in the same district! The simultaneous over-crowding and under-utilisation is a challenge that needs to be met at a District / Circuit management level through the provision of non-infrastructure solutions.

As part of the DoE’s ongoing programme to provide additional classrooms, construction work to the value of almost R40 million was completed recently at three schools as profiled below.

**Attwell Madala Senior Secondary**

Umtata / King Sabata Dalindyebo
Local Municipality / OR Tambo Inland

R 16 million
22 Prefabricated Classrooms
Maclear Methodist Primary

Maclear / Elundini Local Municipality / Joe Gqabi

R 12.9 million
9 Prefabricated classrooms, ablutions and repairs to existing classrooms

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Nyibiba Primary

Dimbaza / Buffalo City Local Municipality / Buffalo City

R 10.86 million
10 Prefabricated classrooms, ablutions, and walkways.
Spotlight on...well maintained schools

Manqulo Primary
Maqathini  I  Mnquma Local Municipality Amathole East. Completed 2012

-32.46127500 South, 28.00537100 East
Save our schools

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