

# Consolidated Report on Inspections of Service Delivery Sites: Departments of Education



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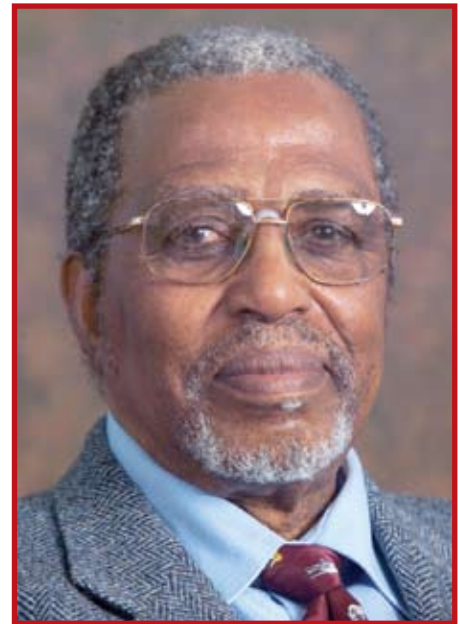
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# FOREWORD

Section 9 of the Public Service Commission Act, 1997, provides that “the Commission may inspect Departments and other organisational components in the Public Service, and has access to such official documents or may obtain such information from Heads of those Departments or organisational components or from other officers in the service of those Departments or organisational components as may be necessary for the performance of the functions of the Commission under the Constitution or the Public Service Act”.

In line with the above-mentioned mandate, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has, since 2006, been conducting inspections of selected service delivery sites. Inspections are a fact-finding exercise to observe and get first hand information on service delivery. The broad aim of the inspections is to assess the quality of services provided to the public and to determine if Departments are meeting the required standards and the needs of the people using the service.



In 2007/08 the PSC identified the need to conduct inspections in the form of announced and unannounced visits in both National and Provincial Departments of Education. Eight (8) Provinces, namely, Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and North West as well as the National Department participated in the inspections. The inspections took place at the Head Offices, selected District Offices and Schools. The overall purpose of the inspections was to establish the extent to which recommendations contained in the PSC’s reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, (which can also be made applicable to other provinces) and *Guideline on School District Management* had been implemented. The inspections also sought to determine the level of the departments’ compliance with and implementation of the *Batho Pele* principles.

The inspection teams led by the Public Service Commissioners found that whilst, in general, significant strides had been made with regard to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports, there was still room for improvement. In fact, there were District Offices that had not even seen the PSC reports that informed the inspections. This suggests that the reports were not adequately shared with staff members, thus affecting the extent to which recommendations made by the PSC could be implemented. The inspection teams also found that there was uneven progress with regard to the implementation of *Batho Pele* principles. Officials in certain Provinces informed the inspection teams that they had never heard about *Batho Pele* principles.

It gives me great pleasure to present the consolidated report on inspections in the Departments of Education. Individual reports were sent to the respective Executing Authorities and Accounting Officers. This consolidated version is for a broader audience of stakeholders, including Parliament and the public. I believe that the inspections are a valuable monitoring mechanism whose findings can contribute towards service delivery improvement.

The PSC also wishes to register its appreciation of the Executing Authorities’ and officials’ cooperation and willingness to share information, the warm reception that was shown by the supervisors and the rest of the staff at the Offices and schools visited, and the preparedness of the citizens to share their service delivery experiences.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sangweni', written in a cursive style.

**PROFESSOR SS SANGWENI**  
**CHAIRPERSON: PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
CBD	Central Business District
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CI	Curriculum Implementer
DO	District Office
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FET	Further Education and Training
FSDoE	Free State Department of Education
GET	General Education and Training
GPRS	General Packet Radio Services
GSSC	Gauteng Shared Services Centre
HO	Head Office
HOD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LF	Learner Facilitator
LRC	Learner Representative Council
LTSM	Learner Teacher Support Material
MEC	Member of Executive Council
OBE	Outcome Based Education
PASA	Publisher's Association of South Africa
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
PPN	Post Provisioning Norm
PSC	Public Service Commission
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards
SAPS	South African Police Service
SASAMS	South African Schools Administration and Management System
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SGB	School Governing Body
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMS	Senior Management Service
SMT	School Management Team

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. BACKGROUND

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997)<sup>1</sup>, commonly known as the *Batho Pele* White Paper, states that a transformed South African Public Service will be judged above all by one criterion: its effectiveness in delivering services which meet the basic needs of all South African citizens. Improving service delivery is, therefore, the ultimate goal of the Public Service transformation programme. The Public Service Commission (PSC) has since the 2005/06 financial year conducted inspections in the Public Service. In 2007/08, the PSC conducted inspections in the Departments of Education in eight (8) Provinces, namely, Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and North West as well as the National Department. The aim of the inspections was to assess the quality of services provided to the public and to determine if Departments were meeting the required service standards and the needs of the people using the service.

This consolidated report on inspections in the Departments of Education is the second in a series of inspections conducted by the PSC. The first report was produced in 2007 and was based on inspections conducted in the National Departments of Home Affairs and Labour, as well as Provincial Departments of Housing (Gauteng) and Social Development (Free State).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The inspections were conducted at the National Head Office, eight Provincial Head Offices, twenty three selected District Offices and forty nine schools of the Departments of Education. To initiate the inspection process, letters were sent to the Executing Authorities (EAs) and Accounting Officers (AOs) at both National and Provincial level informing them about the intention of the PSC to conduct inspections in their Departments. Whilst prior arrangements were made with officials of the Departments for the announced inspections, no mention was made of the unannounced inspections. Officials were not informed about the unannounced inspections in order to ensure that the inspectors are afforded the opportunity to attain the most representative picture of the daily operations and practices at service delivery sites with regard to their compliance with the *Batho Pele* principles.

For purposes of data collection, a questionnaire and a checklist were developed and used for the announced and unannounced inspections, respectively. The inspection teams were comprised of the Public Service Commissioners and officials from the Office of the Public Service Commission. Commissioners played a leading role and provided strategic direction during the inspections.

## 3. KEY FINDINGS

Findings in relation to specific Provinces and the National Department are provided in the report. The following are key generic findings on announced and unannounced inspections which apply to all the Departments of Education. These key findings are based on the engagements of the inspection teams with the staff of the Departments and service users as well as observations made at the service delivery sites.

### 3.1 Announced Inspections

- Overall, significant strides have been made with regard to the implementation of the PSC recommendations contained in the two reports on *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Leaner Teacher Support Material and the Guideline on School District Management*. However, there is a need to engage District Offices on the two reports as some of the District Offices that participated in the inspections indicated that they had never seen these reports.

<sup>1</sup>. Republic of South Africa. Department of Public Service and Administration. *The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery*. 1997.

- Sixty three percent (63%) of the District Offices visited during the inspections mentioned that budgeting for LTSM is needs based and also informed by the quintile<sup>2</sup> system. Since the quintile system does not take into account the income levels and poverty backgrounds of individuals, its use as a budgetary tool for LTSM tends to disadvantage schools serving learners from poor backgrounds.
- Seventy five percent (75%) of the District Offices visited mentioned that the payment of suppliers is centralised at the Provincial Head Offices. This demonstrates compliance with the PSC recommendation on centralisation of payments to suppliers to ensure speedy payment.
- Eighty eight percent (88%) of the District Office visited had a policy or strategy for improving the book retrieval system. However, the implementation thereof was found to be weak. As a result of the poor implementation of book retrieval systems, departments are not in a position to account for many books gone missing.
- Seventy five percent (75%) of the District Offices visited have a task team established for LTSM provisioning. However, the general view on the functioning of the task teams is that their contribution to improved delivery of LTSM is minimal because provisioning of LTSM is done at the Provincial Head Offices.
- Ninety percent (90%) of the District Offices visited are not empowered in terms of delegation of functions to support schools in the procurement of school facilities, learning material and appointment of staff. District Offices always have to seek for permission and approval from Provincial Head Offices before making some decisions. As a result of the lack of delegation of functions to District Offices, service delivery is affected.
- In 70% of the District Offices visited, coordination and communication between District Offices and Provincial Head Offices remains a challenge. For example, District officials receive invitations to attend meetings at short notice and as such, they fail to honour these meetings due to prior commitments.
- In 98% of the District Offices visited, it was mentioned that the Education Management Information System (EMIS) is centralised at the Provincial Head Offices. In few District Offices, where the system was found to be in place, it was not adequately resourced and staff had not been trained to use it.

### 3.2 Unannounced Inspections

- Ninety five percent (95%) of the service points visited did not have service delivery charters. A service delivery charter would provide customers with information on the level of service they can expect from the Department.
- Ninety five percent (95%) of the service points visited did not have complain or suggestion boxes in place. This suggests that citizens are not afforded an opportunity to complain or make suggestions regarding the services they receive.
- Seventy five percent (75%) of the sites visited had a generally acceptable outside signage. However, inside signage remains a problem. It was also found that there was no staff to guide visitors or clients inside the service delivery points. This makes it difficult for users to find their way inside service points.
- Ninety five percent (95%) of staff at both District Offices and schools visited was found to be friendly. They also demonstrated professionalism and knowledge regarding their work. This will go a long way in enhancing the image of the Public Service in delivering services to the communities.
- In 98% of service points visited, staff did not wear name tags or badges. The practice of not wearing name tags makes it difficult when citizens make a follow up on services rendered, to know who to talk to.
- It was observed that in general, staff that interacted with the inspection teams knew about the *Batho Pele* principles, however, it was found that they lacked understanding of the practical application of these principles. In some instances staff confessed to have never heard of *Batho Pele* principles.
- The inspection teams observed that the majority of the service points were kept clean. This contributes to enhancing the image of the Public Service and it makes citizens feel important.
- In isolated cases, the inspection teams observed that some schools do not have ablution facilities, toilets and running water. Few incidents of drug or substance abuse and rape were also reported.

2. The quintile system is used by the Department of Education to determine the level of impoverishment in the area at which a particular school is located. For information on the system, please see Government Gazette No. 29178, 31 August 2006: Department of Education, National Norms and standards for School Funding.



## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Announced inspections

- District Offices are at different levels in terms of being exposed to the contents of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material and the Guidelines on School District Management*. Most officials in these Offices were not aware of the recommendations contained in these reports. Provincial Head Offices, and in particular units responsible for the functioning of District Offices and learner teacher support material, need to engage District Offices on the two PSC reports.
- The Departments should improve communication and reporting mechanisms between Provincial Head Offices and District Offices, and between District Offices and schools. Improved communication will facilitate interaction between these Offices, which can contribute to improved service delivery.
- The Departments should monitor and evaluate the implementation of the book retrieval system. Educational campaigns should also be undertaken to sensitise parents and learners about the importance of returning books to schools for use by the subsequent generation of learners.
- The Departments need to develop terms of reference for the establishment and the functioning of the task teams on LTSM provisioning. Currently, the efficiency and effectiveness of these structures are not satisfactory.
- Departments should expedite the delegation of functions to District Offices. Such functions should include procurement of school facilities and appointment of staff to fast track service delivery at that level.
- The Departments should ensure that the implementation of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) takes place at District level. Capacitated staff on the management and utilisation of EMIS would ensure effective service delivery.

### 4.2 Unannounced inspections

- Provincial Head Offices of the Departments of Education need to assist Districts Offices in developing service delivery charters to ensure that service users understand the type of services rendered and standards thereof. Once developed, service delivery charters should be translated into local languages and be displayed where they could be easily noticed by members of the public. Provincial Head Offices should monitor compliance with the development and display of service delivery charters.
- Complain and suggestion boxes should be made available to enable citizens to either lodge complains or make suggestions on service delivery improvement. Such mechanisms should be supported institutionally. For instance, on complains there must be a complain handling system to efficiently respond to citizens' complains.
- The wearing of name tags should be made compulsory in line with the *Batho Pele* principles of transparency and openness. Where staff does not have name tags, Provincial Departments should ensure that they are made available.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The inspections in the Departments of Education have spawned helpful information in relation to the implementation of PSC recommendations on its previous reports as well as the level of the Department's compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. Detailed findings and recommendations relating to specific Provinces and the National Department are contained in the report. It is the PSC's view that the findings and recommendations of this report will provide the Departments of Education with an opportunity to reflect on the challenges encountered at service delivery points and take remedial measures to improve service delivery where it was found to be lacking.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Section 9 of the Public Service Commission Act, 1997, provides that “the Commission may inspect Departments and other organisational components in the Public Service, and has access to such official documents or may obtain such information from Heads of those Departments or organisational components or from other officers in the service of those Departments or organisational components as may be necessary for the performance of the functions of the Commission under the Constitution or the Public Service Act<sup>3</sup>”.

In line with the above-mentioned mandate, the PSC developed a Protocol on Inspections<sup>4</sup>. The purpose of the Protocol on inspections is to assist the PSC to conduct inspections in a meaningful and objective manner which is important for both the integrity of the inspection processes and the quality of the reports that are subsequently generated. The Protocol also facilitates consistency in the manner in which the inspections are conducted. The Protocol was piloted in 2005/2006 in service delivery sites of the National Departments of Home Affairs and Labour, as well as Provincial Departments of Housing (Gauteng) and Social Development (Free State)<sup>5</sup>. Based on the findings of these inspections, certain recommendations were made.

During 2007/08, the PSC used the Protocol to conduct inspections in the Departments of Education in eight (8) Provinces and at National level. These inspections sought to establish the extent to which recommendations contained in previous PSC reports<sup>6</sup> have been implemented and to determine the level of the departments' compliance with and implementation of the *Batho Pele* principles. Individual reports containing findings and recommendations were sent to the respective Executing Authorities and Accounting Officers.

The purpose of this consolidated report is to present the findings and recommendations of the inspections conducted at the National Department of Education as well as the Provincial Departments of Education in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and North West. At Provincial level, inspections were conducted at the Provincial Head Offices, selected District Offices and schools whereas at National Department, inspections took place at the Head Office only.

## 1.2 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE INSPECTIONS

The broad aim of the inspections was to assess the quality of services provided to the public by government Departments and to determine if Departments were meeting the required service standards, and the needs of the people using the services. Furthermore, inspections are fact finding exercises to observe and get first hand information on service delivery issues. The specific objectives of inspections were to:

- afford the PSC an opportunity to observe the extent to which service is delivered to citizens and to get a sense of what kind of service delivery challenges are facing staff in their positions, particularly at service delivery points;
- engender a sense of urgency and effectiveness among officials regarding service delivery,
- introduce objective mechanisms of identifying both weaknesses and strengths in improving service delivery,
- report serious concerns about the quality of service delivery and compliance with the *Batho Pele* requirements,
- carry out investigations of serious failures as pointed out by inspections and other studies, and
- improve service user care relationships and promote a service user oriented Public Service.

## 1.3 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.3.1 Scope of the inspections

The inspections were conducted at the National Head Office, eight Provincial Head Offices, twenty three selected District Offices and forty nine schools of the Departments of Education. In the selection of both District Offices and

3. Republic of South Africa. The Public Service Commission Act. 1997

4. Republic of South Africa. The Public Service Commission. Protocol on Announced and Unannounced Inspections 2007.

5. Republic of South Africa. The Public Service Commission. Consolidated Report on Inspections of Public Service Delivery Sites. 2007

6. Republic of South Africa. The Public Service Regulations 1248 of 2005

schools, an attempt was made to include urban and rural service delivery sites. Consideration was also given to combine different levels of schools such as primary and secondary schools.

### 1.3.2 Methodology

To initiate the inspection process, letters were sent to the Executing Authorities (EAs) and Accounting Officers (AOs) at both National and Provincial levels informing them about the project of the PSC to conduct inspections in their relevant Departments of Education. At Provincial level, further engagements were held with representatives of departments with a view to introduce the exercise and obtain key information leading to the identification of the service delivery sites to be visited.

Two types of inspections were conducted, namely **announced** and **unannounced** inspections. The inspection teams were comprised of Public Service Commissioners and officials from the Office of the Public Service Commission. Commissioners played a leading role and directed the inspections.

**Table 1: List of District Offices and schools visited**

Eastern Cape Sites			
District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Mthatha District Office	12 November 2007	Qokolweni Senior Secondary School	12 November 2007
		Zamukulungisa Senior Secondary School	12 November 2007
East London District Office	13 November 2007	Sikhulule Senior Secondary School	13 November 2007
		George Randell Senior Secondary School	13 November 2007
Free State Sites			
District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Thabo Mofutsanyane District Office	24 October 2007	Kholathuto Secondary School	24 October 2007
		Letlotlo Primary School	24 October 2007
		Akofang Senior Secondary	25 October 2007
Motheo District Office	25 October 2007	Vulamasango Senior Secondary	26 October 2007
		Pelonomi Primary School	30 October 2007
Fezile Dabi District Office	30 October 2007	Matlwangtlwang High School	31 October 2007
		JMB Marokane Primary School	31 October 2007
Lejweleputswa District Office	29 October 2007	Boitekong Primary School	1 November 2007
		Bahale Secondary School	1 November 2007
Gauteng Sites			
District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Sedibeng West District Office	16 October 2007	Bafokeng Primary School	16 October 2007
		Tharabollo Secondary School	16 October 2007
Johannesburg East District Office	17 October 2007	Braynston Primary School	17 October 2007
		Braynston High School	17 October 2007

<b>KwaZulu-Natal sites</b>			
<b>District Offices</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Date</b>
Amajuba District Office	23 October 2007	Thembalentsha High School	22 October 2007
		Zibambeleni High School	22 October 2007
		Ekuhlakanipheni Primary School	23 October 2007
Obonjeni District Office	25 October 2007	Babazani Primary School	25 October 2007
		Kufezekile Secondary School	25 October 2007
		Asiphikelele Secondary School	25 October 2007
Empangeni District Office	24 October 2007	Nsezi Primary School	26 October 2007
		Bhejane Primary School	26 October 2007
		Gwejobomvu Junior Secondary School	26 October 2007
Empangeni District Office	24 October 2007	Nsezi Primary School	26 October 2007
		Bhejane Primary School	26 October 2007
		Gwejobomvu Junior Secondary School	26 October 2007
		Hluma Secondary School	26 October 2007
Vulindlela District Office	15 October 2007	Nkwezela Primary School	31 October 2007
<b>Limpopo Sites</b>			
<b>District Offices</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Date</b>
Capricorn District Office	19 October 2007	Molautsi Secondary School	26 October 2007
		Pietersburg Comprehensive School	26 October 2007
Waterberg District Office	16 October 2007	Segooa-Kgala Primary School	30 October 2007
		Somavhunga Secondary School	30 October 2007
Sekhukhune District Office	19 October 2007	Laerskool Burgersfort	2 November 2007
		Mogolo Secondary School	8 November 2007
<b>Mpumalanga Sites</b>			
<b>District Offices</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Date</b>
Ekgangala Regional Office	3 October 2007	Hloniphani Secondary School	3 October 2007
		Tjhidelani Primary School	3 October 2007
Ehlanzeni Sibande Office	8 October 2007	Sitintile High School	8 October 2007
		Msogwaba Primary School	8 October 2007
Gert Sibande Regional Office	15 October 2007	Reggie Masuku Secondary School	15 October 2007
		Ermelo Primary School	15 October 2007
<b>Northern Cape Sites</b>			
<b>District Offices</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Date</b>
Frances Baard District Office (Kimberly)	22 October 2007	Kimberly Junior Primary	22 October 2007
		Tshireleco High School	22 October 2007
		Emmanuel Junior Secondary School	22 October 2007

Pixley Ka Seme District Office (De Aar)	29 October 2007	Orion High School	29 October 2007
		Emthanjeni Primary School	29 October 2007
<b>North West Service Sites</b>			
District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Central District Office	18 October 2007	Sejankabu High School	18 October 2007
		Barolong High School	30 October 2007
Bophirima District School	26 October 2007	Seisele Primary School	26 October 2007
		Walter Letsie Secondary School	26 October 2007

### 1.3.3 Announced inspections

Announced inspections took place at the National Department, Provincial Head Offices and selected District Offices of the Departments of Education. The announced inspections focused on the implementation of recommendations contained in the 2006 PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, (which can also be made applicable to other Provinces), and the *Guideline on School District Management*. The following table highlights a summary of the recommendations of the two reports. A full set of the recommendations is attached in **Annexure A**.

**Table 2: List of recommendations as contained in the 2006 PSC reports**

Report on KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material	Report on the Guideline on School District Management
<p>The PSC recommended in the above mentioned report that Departments of Education should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Improve LTSM budget controls and management to ensure that budgeting is needs based.</li> <li>(b) Centralise payment of suppliers.</li> <li>(c) Improve book retrieval system.</li> <li>(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators.</li> <li>(e) Review LTSM requirements.</li> <li>(f) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM.</li> <li>(g) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM.</li> <li>(h) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning.</li> <li>(i) Task Districts to conduct frequent visits to schools.</li> <li>(j) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes.</li> </ul>	<p>The PSC recommended in the above mentioned report that Departments of Education should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Ensure that Districts are empowered to render all support functions to schools.</li> <li>(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices.</li> <li>(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the Districts.</li> <li>(d) District Offices play a pivotal role in strengthening school management.</li> <li>(e) Ensure that the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) is managed at District, circuit and school level.</li> </ul>

For purposes of conducting the announced inspections, the PSC designed a questionnaire (**Annexure B**) based on the abovementioned recommendations. Once the dates for the inspections were secured, the questionnaire was sent to the relevant stakeholders in order to guide the inspections and to ensure that all required information would be made available at the time of the inspections.

### 1.3.4 Unannounced inspections

Unannounced inspections took place at the National Head Office, District Offices and schools. At the National Head Office and District Offices, unannounced inspections followed immediately after the announced inspections, however the National Head Office, District Offices and schools were not informed in advance about the unannounced inspections. This was to ensure that the inspection teams would find the state of service delivery the way it usually is on a normal day. The main aim of the unannounced inspections was to observe service delivery in action and to determine the Departments' compliance with the implementation of the *Batho Pele* principles.

The following key issues were taken into account during the unannounced inspections:

- Observation of facilities;
- Observation of access to information;
- Observation of staff;
- Talking to citizens;
- Talking to staff; and
- General observations

For purposes of conducting the unannounced inspections, the teams were guided by the checklist<sup>7</sup> (**Annexure C**) which contains the above mentioned issues pertaining to the *Batho Pele Framework*.

### 1.3.5 Limitations of the study

The following are the limitations experienced during the inspections:

- At the Provincial level, the inspections started at the Head Offices of the Provincial Departments of Education, and proceeded to the selected District Offices and schools. As a result of the approach applied, the inspection team could not always verify some of the statements made by District Offices about Head Offices. For example, District Offices indicated that they do not have delegated powers to appoint staff because this is centralised at the Provincial Head Offices, and this could not be verified with the Provincial Head Offices.
- The inspection teams could not always rigorously verify documentation to support the statements given by officials at both Districts Offices and schools level. For example, statements made on the effectiveness of the book retrieval system applied at school level could not be verified through supportive evidence.
- Unannounced inspections at schools were conducted during the examinations period. As a result the inspection teams could not always get optimal cooperation.
- For the unannounced inspections at schools, one of the categories of stakeholders to be interviewed was parents. However, this did not happen because there were no parents at schools on the days when the inspections were conducted.

### 1.3.6 Structure of the report

The structure of the report is as follows:

- **Chapter 2** presents an overview of the findings of the study
- **Chapter 3** presents the findings from the Department of Education: Eastern Cape
- **Chapter 4** presents the findings from the Department of Education: Free State
- **Chapter 5** presents the findings from the Department of Education: Gauteng
- **Chapter 6** presents the findings from the Department of Education: KwaZulu-Natal
- **Chapter 7** presents the findings from the Department of Education: Limpopo
- **Chapter 8** presents the findings from the Provincial Department of Education: Mpumalanga
- **Chapter 9** presents the findings from the Department of Education: Northern Cape
- **Chapter 10** presents the findings from the Department of Education: North West
- **Chapter 11** presents the findings from the National Department of Education
- **Chapter 12** presents conclusion and overall recommendations

7. Adapted from the DPSA's checklist for unannounced visits 2005

# Chapter Two

## Overview of the Findings



## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the findings of both announced and unannounced inspections. The chapter highlights the progress made by the Departments of Education with regard to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management* reports, which were the focus of the announced inspections. Furthermore the chapter presents findings on the departments' implementation of and compliance with the *Batho Pele* framework which was the main focus of unannounced inspections.

## 2.2 ANNOUNCED INSPECTIONS

The overview of the key findings of announced inspections is presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

### 2.2.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material

#### *(a) Improve LTSM budget controls and management to ensure that budgeting is needs based*

In its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, the PSC recommended that the Departments of Education should improve budget controls and management to ensure that budgeting is needs based. The findings of the inspections show that 63% of the Provinces have made progress in improving LTSM budget controls and management. In the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Northern Cape, North West and Limpopo, for an example, budgeting is based on needs such as the number of learners enrolled, required text books, curriculum priorities, required stationery and the quintile system. The quintile system is used by the Department of Education to determine the level of impoverishment of the area in which a particular school is located. When used alone, the quintile system has limitations in that it does not adequately take into account socio-economic factors.

#### *(b) Centralise payment of suppliers*

The PSC report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*, had recommended that payment of suppliers should be centralised to prevent delays and inability to ascertain the amount outstanding to suppliers. During inspections, it was found that in 75% of the Provinces, (namely, Eastern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West), the payment of suppliers is centralised at the Provincial Head Offices.

It was further established that in 25% of the Provinces, (Gauteng and Northern Cape), the payment of suppliers is not entirely centralised at the Provincial Head Offices. In Gauteng Province, the inspection team was informed that although most of the payment of service providers and suppliers is centralised at Provincial Head Office, payment depends on the type of budget that is being dealt with. For instance, the budget for Special Provincial Grant and programmes such as, Qids-Up, Early Childhood Development and Dinaledi are Head Office's responsibility. Adult Basic Education, the training budget for LTSM and the budget for non-Section 21 schools is the District Offices' responsibility. In the Northern Cape, the inspection team was informed that the payment of service providers is decentralised at District Office level for Non-Section 21 schools, but payments are captured at Provincial Head Office.

The findings of the inspections show that in 100% of the Provinces, the turnaround time for payment of suppliers is 30 days. However, Provinces like Mpumalanga, Free State and Eastern Cape conceded that the 30 day payment period is not always met by Provincial Head Offices.

### (c) *Improve book retrieval system*

Improvement of the book retrieval system was one of the PSC's recommendations in the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material* report. During the inspections, it was found that 88% of the Provinces have made progress in the improvement of the book retrieval system. For an example, in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and North West, the inspection teams were informed that these Provinces have developed formal mechanisms in a form of policies, strategic documents, asset registers and standardized systems to deal with book retrieval. However, the challenge faced by these Provinces was the implementation of the systems or policies to retrieve books. For instance, officials in the Eastern Cape Province informed the inspection team that while they have an asset register that is applied and monitored regularly, the monitoring processes at the schools by the Circuit Offices are still weak.

In the Free State Province, officials informed the inspection team they have developed a School Administration and Management System (SAMS), where book retrievals can be recorded. According to the Provincial Head Office, the system is able to access records of all schools electronically. On further probing the matter, it became apparent that District Offices and schools were not trained on how to use the system.

It was, however, encouraging to the inspection team to note that 50% of the Provinces, (namely, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga) had recognised the need to embark on educational campaigns to educate learners and parents about the importance of preserving, maintaining, taking care and returning books to schools for use by future generations.

### (d) *Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

The PSC report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material* recommended that the Departments of Education should ensure that there was selection of appropriate LTSM by educators. Findings from the inspections show that 100% of the Provinces had ensured that educators were involved in the selection of appropriate LTSM. The participation of educators in the selection of LTSM was done within a stakeholder committee, where educators happened to be members of the committee. Other stakeholders included, National and Provincial Head Office representatives, subject advisors, curriculum advisors, publishers, labour unions, parents and NGOs in the education sector.

Whilst 88% of the Provinces mentioned that the selection of LTSM took place at their Provincial Head Offices, it was found that in Limpopo, the selection of the LTSM was done at National level, where the Provincial Department was afforded representation during the selection process.

### (e) *Review LTSM requirements in line with curriculum changes*

In its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*, the PSC recommended that the Departments of Education should review LTSM requirements in line with curriculum changes. It was found that in 63% of the Provinces, (namely Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape), progress had been made with regard to the review of LTSM requirements. In the Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and North West Provinces (38%), no mention was made with regard to progress on reviewing LTSM.

### (f) *Closely monitor the quality of LTSM received by schools*

The PSC recommended in its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*, that there should be close monitoring of the quality of LTSM received by schools. During the inspections, it was found that in all Provinces, monitoring the quality of the LTSM received by schools was indeed taking place.

Although it was mentioned that the responsibility of monitoring the quality of LTSM was carried out by both District Offices and schools, the inspection team found that in practice, in the majority of Provinces (88%), (namely, Eastern

Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape), the responsibility for monitoring the quality of the LTSM received by schools was shifted to schools, since these were the end recipients of the LTSM. The inspection team further established that in the North West monitoring the quality of LTSM was conducted by LTSM managers through reports from service providers.

*(g) Ensure that the department has the necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

In its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*, the PSC had recommended that the Departments of Education should ensure that they had the necessary capacity to effect the provisioning of LTSM. The inspection teams found that 77% of the Provinces had ensured capacity to effect the provision of LTSM. The Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape Province had made provision for a top-up system to effect the provisioning of LTSM. The top-up system involves filling resource gaps in cases where there was under-budgeting for LTSM. In this way, the Department made provision in anticipation of changes such as increases in learner numbers and other unforeseen circumstances.

It was also observed that the common development in all the Provinces was with regard to the provision of training of staff on the top-up system. The Provinces had different approaches to the provision of training on the top-up system. For instance, in the Eastern Cape, some officials did not see any need for a training programme solely focusing on top-up system and felt that this programme could be incorporated in the budget cycle training. Officials further mentioned that clarity, orientation and exposure to the top-up concept was lacking at District level.

In Gauteng, the training of educators on the implementation of the top-up system was conducted by District Offices, in the form of workshops and school visits, focusing on procurement processes, budgets, needs analysis and prioritisation. The Tshwane West District had databases established at schools, which contain relevant information to address inadequacies where they occur. This system is also linked to the retrieval system of text books and stakeholders are made aware of this arrangement.

In KwaZulu-Natal, although the Department informed the inspection team that it conducted on-going training to schools regarding top-up, no evidence could be provided to substantiate this assertion.

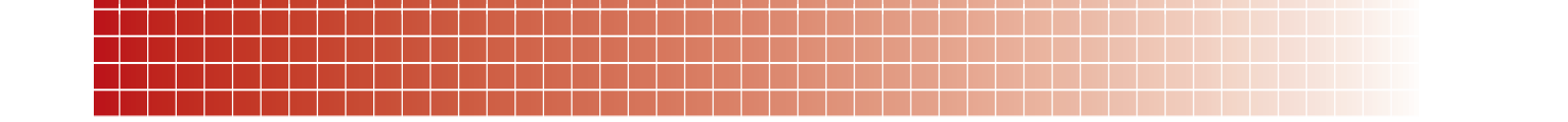
Furthermore in the Mpumalanga Province, the inspection team was informed that extensive training on the LTSM top-up system was conducted for principals, stock-controllers and Circuit Office Chief Clerks on a yearly basis. District Managers were responsible for ensuring that their District Offices had appropriate capacity for the LTSM top-up.

*(h) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

Setting up a task team on LTSM provisioning was one of the PSC's recommendations in its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*. The findings of the inspections show that 75% of the Provinces, (namely Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape and North West) have established task teams on LTSM provisioning. In Limpopo and Mpumalanga the inspection teams found that task teams have not been established. Officials in the District Offices of the two Provinces mentioned that LTSM provisioning is the Provincial Head Offices' responsibility.

In the Provinces where task teams were said to be in place, it was not clear who comprised these task teams as well as the functions thereof. For instance, in the Free State, officials at District Offices were not aware of the existence of the LTSM task team and what its functions were. In the Frances Baard District of the Northern Cape, it was reported that the task team was not functioning very effectively because some units failed to adhere to the management plan. It was further mentioned that stakeholders do not always honour the set delivery dates. The Provincial Head Office reported that it was addressing the challenges that were brought to its attention.

Whilst the actual functions of the task teams were not clearly articulated by all Provinces, 38% of the Provinces, (namely, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and North West) mentioned that positive initiatives were taking place as a result of the task teams.



For instance, in the Eastern Cape, the inspection team was informed that there had been a noticeable improvement in the distribution of LTSM since these task teams were established. In Gauteng, it was found that District Offices were able to function better and to hold schools accountable for their own budgets. It was further mentioned that another aspect of improvement is that due to different levels of expertise within the respective task teams, the team members were able to assist one another.

In the North West, the inspection team was informed that the task team had resulted in coherence and working together among different directorates on LTSM matters. The task team also oversees the transfer of skills and resources to the district as per the decentralisation process.

*(i) Task districts to conduct frequent visits to schools to verify and check what excess stock is available*

In its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*, the PSC recommended that the Departments of Education should task District Offices to conduct frequent visits to schools to verify and check what excess stock is available. The inspection teams found that only 75% of the Provinces, (namely, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and North West and Free State) mentioned that their Districts Offices conducted visits to schools to verify and check what excess stock was available.

The inspection teams found that in 25% of the Provinces, (namely, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal), District Offices apply different approaches to check excess stock when conducting visits. These include soliciting reports on excess stock from school principals. Essentially, District Offices in the abovementioned Provinces do not conduct visits to schools to verify and check what excess stock is available. However they check excess stock through other mechanisms.

The inspection teams further noted that 63% of the Provinces transferred excess stock to needy schools. In the Eastern Cape, Free State, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West Provinces, excess stock was allocated to schools where there was greater need. Whilst in Gauteng Province it was not clear how excess stock was dealt with, officials in Kwa- Zulu Natal Province denied that excess stock of LTSM posed a serious problem, hence in the schools that the inspection team visited, no excess stock was found.

*(j) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes*

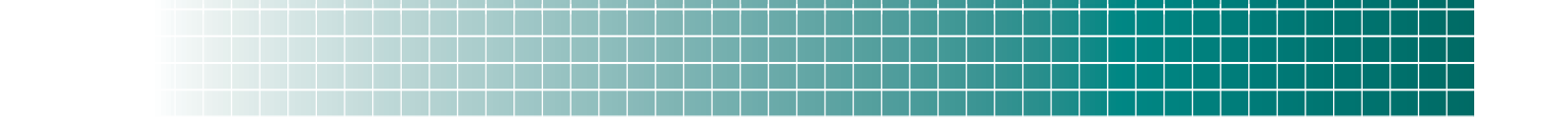
In its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*, the PSC recommended that the Departments of Education should develop a monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes. In this regard, the inspection teams found that 25% of the Provinces, (namely, the Eastern Cape and North West) monitored and evaluated LTSM processes through a Service Level Agreement entered into with the suppliers.

In 38% of the Provinces, (namely, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape), meetings were used as a method of monitoring and evaluating LTSM processes. Amongst others, the purpose of these meetings was to ensure that the delivery deadline of LTSM was met by both the supplier and publisher. These meetings were attended by various stakeholders including LTSM Project Matrix Management Team, suppliers, and publishers.

The inspection teams further established that three Provinces (38%), (namely, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Free State), were uncertain how LTSM processes were monitored and evaluated.

*(k) Are there any problems encountered and / or gains in implementing the recommendations of the PSC LTSM Report?*

The inspection teams found that in 38% of the Provinces, (namely, Gauteng, Northern Cape and Free State), almost all District Offices that participated in the inspections indicated that they had never seen the PSC report on LTSM. The Free State further mentioned that discussions on the report, at least at District Office level, had also not been entered into, despite requests by several District Offices to do so. The Provincial Head Office later confirmed to the inspection



team that the Province had not given any attention to the recommendations. Officials at the Province indicated that the present review of District Offices by the National Office prevented them from implementing the recommendations. However, officials mentioned that they would have to re-look the recommendations and see which ones they were able to implement.

## 2.2.2 Guideline on School District Management

### *(a) Empower districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

The PSC recommended in its report on the *Guideline on School District Management* that District Offices should be empowered to render all support functions to schools from the appointment of staff to the procurement of school facilities and learning materials. The findings of the inspection teams on District Offices' empowerment with regard to appointment of staff indicated that only 38% of the Provinces, (namely, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga and Limpopo) had some level of delegation in this regard. In the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng Provinces (38%), the inspection teams were informed that human resources functions were not delegated to District Offices, whilst in the Northern Cape and North West (25%), no mention was made of the role of District Offices with regard to staff appointment.

In relation to procurement of school facilities, it was found that only 50% of the Provinces, (namely, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and Northern Cape) had delegated this responsibility to their District Offices. For instance, in the Eastern Cape it was mentioned that the limit ranged between R150 000 and R200 000 per annum and were said to be dependent on the financial capability of the District Manager. In Gauteng Province, it was mentioned that the District Director had limited powers to purchase stock up to the amount of R250 000. However, approval must be sought from the Provincial Head Office before the money could be spent. Each District Director also managed a petty cash of R500. In Limpopo, the inspection team was informed that the District Offices had only set delegation to authorise payments to the amount of R250 000 on goods and services and the no-fee school allocations. All other powers were held at Provincial Head Office level.

Furthermore in the Northern Cape Province, it was mentioned that section 21 schools had been delegated the function of ordering LTSM and the Districts only had a monitoring function. However, non-Section 21 schools still did not have the power to order their LTSM as this was still the responsibility of the District Offices.

### *(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices*

In its report on the *Guideline on School District Management*, the PSC recommended that proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices should be established by routing communication through the office of the District Manager. Findings of the inspections show that 100% of the Provinces could not elaborate on the role played by their District Managers in ensuring effective communication between Provincial and District Offices as per the recommendation. However, the inspection teams found that 63% of the Provinces, (namely, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape Provinces) had established communication mechanisms based at the Provincial Head Offices in the form of a cluster approach and a designated Chief Directorate responsible for liaison with District Offices. Additional mechanisms for communication between District and Provincial Head Offices included meetings, e-mails, memos, circulars and telephone.

Although institutional arrangements appear to be strong at Provincial Head Offices level, lack of such arrangements at District level, like routing communication through the office of the District Manager had created problems for the District Offices. The inspection teams found that as a result of lack of communication and protocols, District Directors were often invited by different Provincial Head Office directorates to different meetings on the same day at the same time. Another example was that circulars would be sent to schools directly without even copying the District and Circuit Offices.

### *(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the district*

The PSC report on the *Guideline on School District Management* recommended that for District Offices to be managed effectively and efficiently, it should have the delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District. The inspection teams found that in all Provinces, District Offices were experiencing limited financial delegations. For instance, in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng and Mpumalanga, District Offices had been delegated signing powers of R100 000 and not exceeding R250 000. Officials in all Provinces expressed dissatisfaction with the current financial delegations which was believed not to be enough, thus resulting in a slow pace in service delivery.

Although Provinces were experiencing limited financial delegations, it was encouraging for the inspection teams to note that 38% of the Provinces, (namely, Eastern Cape, Free State, Mpumalanga) had established structures and systems in the form of Finance and Budget committees, a Risk treatment plan and Bid Evaluation and Adjudication committees to ensure the effective and quality financial management at District level.

### *(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

The PSC recommended in its report on the *Guideline on School District Management* that District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management. In general, it was found that all District Offices in the Provinces do make an effort of visiting schools to strengthen school management. Some Districts Offices have a clear schedule adhered to, whereas others do not follow their schedules properly.

It was also found that the visits to schools are conducted by a delegation of various stakeholders which includes, amongst others, education specialists from the Regional Office, officials from the Provincial Head Office, Circuit Managers as well as Learning Area Managers. Some of the areas of focus during the visits include basic functionality, leadership, management, curriculum, quality of teaching and learning, educator development, learner achievement, school safety, school infrastructure, teaching and learning, inspection of LTSM, policy implementation and general school support.

### *(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at district, circuit and school levels*

In its report on the *Guideline on School District Management*, the PSC recommended that the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) should be managed at District, circuit and school levels. The inspection teams found that in all Provinces, the EMIS was not managed either at District, Circuit or school level. Although in most instances, the EMIS was still centralised at the Provincial Head Office, it was however, noted that currently, 25 % of the Provinces were using the South African School Administration and Management System (SA SAMS).

The issue of capacity on the EMIS was further highlighted by District Offices as a challenge that prevented schools from using the EMIS. For instance, in the Free State, District Offices informed the inspection team that there was no trainer dedicated to EMIS training. Again in KwaZulu-Natal, the inspection team noted that EMIS in the regions and Districts was not resourced and capturing of information was done at Head Office. In Mpumalanga, it was mentioned that officials at Regional Office level had not been trained on EMIS.

## **2.3 UNANNOUNCED INSPECTIONS**

The key findings on the unannounced inspections focused on the Departments' compliance with and implementation of *Batho Pele* principles. The focus of the inspections was on the following: observing facilities, access to information, observing staff, talking to both staff and to citizens and general observations.

### (a) Observing facilities

In assessing the facilities, the following criteria were used: availability of outside and inside signage, reflection of business hours, condition of the building, availability of ramps for disabled people and cleanliness. The inspection team observed that 75% of the service points visited had an acceptable outside signage, and that 88% of the service points did not have inside signage. However, at the National Head Office, all District Offices and schools, staff was not available to assist clients in terms of way finding.

The inspection team also observed that whilst the National Department had a ramp to ensure easier access to the building by people with disabilities, this was not the case in most District Offices and schools. The inspection teams noted that in the rural and township schools visited, the issue of ramps was less of a priority due to other pressing demands such as class rooms and furniture.

The inspection teams observed that the majority of the service points (77%) were clean, neat and satisfactory. However, it was also observed that toilets in 23% of the service points were in a poor state. These toilets belonged to schools in Gauteng, Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Province.

### (b) Observing access to information

The *Batho Pele* principle of access to information requires information to be readily available to customers in order to empower them and address their needs. During the inspection, the inspection teams found that in 95% of the service points, Service Delivery Charters were not displayed. Such Charters would provide customers with information on the level of service they can expect from the Department. Although the inspection team in the Eastern Cape Province observed that there were Service Delivery Standards in some of the service points, it was, however, found that they were mostly written in English. Since IsiXhosa is the predominant language used in the area, it would be expected that efforts would have been made to write Service Standards also in IsiXhosa in order to ensure wide readership and understanding by service users.

In order to elicit feedback from citizens on the services they receive, Departments are also expected to have complain boxes. The inspection teams observed that in 95% of the service points visited, there was no display of complain boxes. Complain boxes are important in engendering a participatory approach in service delivery and encourage openness and transparency on the part of the department. This practice is in line with *Batho Pele*. The absence of complain boxes at the National Department, District Offices and schools shows non-compliance with the *Batho Pele* principle of Consultation.

### (c) Observing staff

To promote accountability, openness and transparency, staff should always wear their name tags whilst at work. Wearing name tags or badges fosters a spirit of transparency, openness, accountability and accessibility. It further enables citizens to know with whom to follow up on cases, should a need arise. The inspection teams observed that in 98% of the service points visited, staff did not wear nametags or badges.

Different reasons were provided to the inspection teams for staff not wearing their name tags. For instance, in one of the District Offices in Gauteng, the inspection team was informed that although they had been allocated name tags, they usually did not wear them as they were boring and damaged their clothes. A Head Master at one of the schools in the same Province indicated that for security reasons, he did not encourage staff to wear name tags. Also in KwaZulu-Natal, the inspection team was informed District officials had been waiting for name tags from Head Office for about a year, whilst in the Northern Cape, the inspection team was informed that name tags were available but that personnel forgot to wear them.

It was, however, encouraging to note that in 98% of the service points visited, staff was friendly, demonstrated professionalism and appeared to be knowledgeable about their work.



(d) *Talking to staff*

The morale of personnel plays an important role in effective service delivery. To ensure that the morale of personnel is high and conducive for quality service delivery, personnel concerns should be listened to by those officials in management positions and effective measures should be taken to address their concerns. Equally important are inputs from staff to bring about innovation and improve service delivery. In this regard, staff in 98% of service points raised various concerns which include staff shortages emanating from failure to fill vacant posts and poor communication with Head Office. Staff also mentioned that Departments subjects them to a lot of paper work and that this inhibits their progress in terms of their core function, and that documents get missing in transit as a result of the long chain of command from the District Office to the Service Center, the Regional Office and eventually Head Office.

With regard to the understanding of *Batho Pele* principles, the inspection teams observed that staff in most service points visited have a conceptual understanding of *Batho Pele* principles, however, practical application of and exposure to the concept does not exist. In some instances staff confessed to have never heard of *Batho Pele* principles.

The inspection teams were also informed about the use of illegal substances in the communities, the rate of rape of learners on their way to and from school as well as the hunger experienced by learners from child headed households. Staff reiterated that these challenges impacted negatively on the learning environment.

(e) *Talking to citizens/service users*

Citizens as consumers of the services provided by the institutions are in a better position to give feedback on the state of service delivery. Their views and comments are important in any effort meant to improve service delivery. In 98% of the service points visited, the inspection teams were not able to meet with service users. This could be attributed to the fact that the inspections took place during examination time and most teachers were busy at schools and did not visit the District Offices. At some schools the inspections were conducted during school hours and the inspection team could not meet with parents who came to fetch their children from school.

(f) *General observations*

The inspection teams noted that some District Offices and schools did not have parking space both for officials and service users. The inspection teams further observed that in some service points there was an insufficient supply of water.



# Chapter Three

Provincial Department of  
Education: Eastern Cape

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the inspections conducted in the Eastern Cape Department of Education. The findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected District Offices and schools.

## 3.2 SITES VISITED

In the Eastern Cape, the inspections were conducted on the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2007. Two District Offices and four schools (two in each District Office) were visited by the inspection team. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 3: Eastern Cape Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Mthatha District Office	12 November 2007	Qokolweni Senior Secondary School	12 November 2007
		Zamukulungisa Senior Secondary School	12 November 2007
East London District Office	13 November 2007	Sikhulule Senior Secondary School	13 November 2007
		George Randell Senior Secondary School	13 November 2007

## 3.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

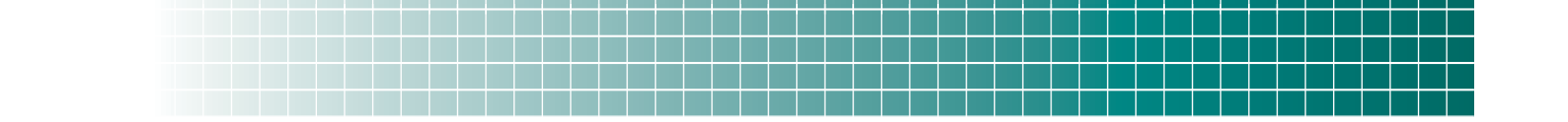
### 3.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the announced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

#### 3.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material

##### (a) *Improve LTSM budget controls and management*

The inspection team was informed that budgeting for the LTSM is based on the quintile system. According to the inspection findings, the quintile system has some gaps in that decision making is apparently based solely on the geographical criterion to the exclusion of the income levels and poverty packs of individuals. For example, a school at an affording suburb of Beacon Bay in East London gets equated with a school of an informal settlement with low income earners, whereas a farm school 5 kilometers away, ends up falling in quintiles 1 and 2. As a result this school is treated as a higher quintile in terms of geographic location. The key informants felt that the quintile system was hugely unfair because it focuses narrowly on geographic criterion and not socio-economic issues. It is the view of the inspectors that a complete review of the system would help in ensuring an equitable and even allocation of resources to uplift the standard of education in the Province.



It was also reported that a school budget is revised on an annual basis, and that a District budget is based on the needs of individual schools. Currently, budgeting is done at District Office level informed by schools needs. The Districts utilise the Departmental norms and standards of one textbook per learner. However, allocations by the Head Office of the Department of Education have never been needs based as there are unilateral budget cuts. Budgetary constraints are always cited as reason for such budget cuts.

*(b) Centralise payment of suppliers*

Both Districts visited reported that payment of LTSM suppliers is centralised at the Provincial Head Office. Provisioning of LTSM, which includes preparation of tendering document, procurement and payment of suppliers is centralised at Provincial Department of Education. Payment is based on the Proof of Delivery (POD) document.

The East London District Office viewed the centralisation of the LTSM as acceptable because of the bad experience at the time the system was handled at its level. It was stated that the centralisation of payment to suppliers relieved staff of the burden of ensuring tight controls and monitoring. On the contrary, this view was not fully supported by all as some of these officials reported that this approach was perceived as not promoting empowerment of District personnel and they felt that with optimum capacity, the District could carry this responsibility. It was further indicated that only established suppliers were selected and that the arrangement was not contributing towards the promotion of emerging small and medium suppliers in line with BEE provisions. The latter group of officials expressed a strong belief that the District Office would ensure effective management, systematic reporting and improved accountability if it was assigned the responsibility for payment of suppliers.

The study inquired about District Offices and school's capacity to deliver in both human and financial management. It was found that with regards to LTSM, there was no uniformity generally on how this function is managed in schools and District Offices. The co-ordination, monitoring and control were happening in a fragmented manner. For example, in a certain school the receiving and certifying of supplied goods was left at school level (principal's) where the supplier lets the principal sign the proof of delivery document and the supplier takes the copy to Provincial Head Office for payment. In this arrangement, there is no quality control at District Office level. When records were requested, the response was that the matter was between the school and the supplier. The challenge with this arrangement is that there is no tight control to minimise the possibility of collusion between the principal and the supplier regarding the quality of material delivered. The uneven co-ordination and management of supplies of material in schools was viewed in a very serious light as the practice opens doors to collusion and corruption.

On the other hand, the Mthatha District Office was not in favour of centralisation as it was argued that it delays the process and was not promoting any growth at the District level. There was a sense that the District Office has enough capacity to manage the function. It was also reported that centralisation does not promote interaction between the supplier and District Office and as a result service delivery is hampered. Payment time of suppliers eventually ranges between 60 to 90 days which is against the standard norm of 30 days. The interviewed officials expressed that the Provincial Administration needs to look at the best options for the provisioning of LTSM to ensure compliance with the applicable prescripts.

*(c) Improve book retrieval system*

Both Districts visited indicated that an asset register, which includes book retrieval, is used and monitored regularly. It was further reported that there is no uniform system regarding retrieval of books by schools, and that book retrieval is left at the discretion of schools themselves to devise their own strategies.

At the East London District Office, the inspection team was informed that at the beginning of the academic year, e.g. two weeks before schools start, inspections are conducted by the Circuit Managers to assess the number of books returned. However, there is no systematic community mobilisation plan to raise awareness of parents regarding proper preservation of books at District level. The monitoring process at the schools by the Circuit Office is regarded as weak. The Mthatha District Office also reported that community mobilisation to raise awareness among parents regarding proper preservation of books is weak.

*(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

The inspection team was informed that a committee consisting of Provincial Head Office representatives, Subject Advisors, and expert educators exist and it is responsible for selection of appropriate LTSM. Committee members are prepared for selection of LTSM through proper training.

*(e) Review LTSM requirements*

The two Districts visited reported that any curriculum reviews are stated well in advance and training of educators is done. However, timing is a challenge as these changes involve engagement with stakeholders and training of educators in preparation for the new curriculum. LTSM should be reviewed in accordance with curriculum changes.

*(f) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM*

The Districts visited indicated that monitoring of the LTSM quality is done at the level of principals at schools. This responsibility is incorporated in the principals' IQMS signed by the individual principals and the Circuit Manager. However, no quality check is done at the District level and trends cannot be determined and as a result, consolidated LTSM quality reporting is not done. It was further reported that the quality of delivered stationery is still a big challenge. There is also a possibility of quoting higher quality while delivering poor quality stationery. This means that suppliers could be paid for what they did not deliver.

*(g) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

The inspection team noted that the Department of Education, as part of its programme, makes provision for a top up system. This was explained as a process of filling gaps in cases where there was under-budgeting/ under-provisioning of LTSM and the Department would then make this provision in anticipation of such increases in learner numbers and unforeseen circumstances. Whilst this was viewed as a positive step, it appeared that it was not commonly understood within one District Office and between the District Offices. There were people interviewed who did not see any need for a training programme solely focusing on top up system and felt that this programme could be incorporated in the budget cycle training. Clarity, orientation and exposure to the top-up concept are lacking at District level.

*(h) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

The two Districts visited reported that LTSM provisioning task teams have been established. Roles and responsibilities of these task teams are clearly defined. It was further reported that there has been a noticeable improvement in the distribution of LTSM since these task teams have been established. However, these task teams need to be closely monitored as there is a potential for corruption in some activities relating to LTSM provisioning e.g. tender allocation.

*(i) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

The two Districts visited reported that school visits are done by a multi disciplinary team comprised of Supply Chain Management, Curriculum Unit, and other related committees. In the East London District, it was reported that excess stock gets transferred to other needy schools in terms of the Matric Intervention Programme. In the Mthatha District, the inspection team was informed that there is no excess stock because the stock is always short supplied.

*(j) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes*

Both Districts visited indicated that suppliers enter into Service Level Agreements (SLA) with the Provincial Supply Chain Management (SCM) personnel. There has been a noticeable improvement this year (2007) as the majority of LTSM for 2008 has already been delivered at schools. Such improvements in prompt delivery to schools can be attributed to the established management structures/ task teams and improved communication. However, late placement of orders was



reported as crippling the LTSM management. LTSM coordinators both at District and school levels are not informed of the deliveries by the suppliers.

### 3.3.1.2 Guideline on School District Management

#### *(a) Empower Districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

Recruitment and employment of staff - During inspections, powers allocated to School Governing Bodies (SGB) relating to employment of educators were also looked at in terms of their effectiveness in ensuring good management and provision of quality education. It was found that processes relating to the employment of educators get done at SGB level. The process ranges from interviews up to submission of recommendation for appointment by the Head of Department of Education. This arrangement was found to have possibilities of being manipulated in that the SGB members are normally community members who may not be clear about what constitutes a good manager at principal level. It was also pointed out that members of the SGB may also be influenced by self interests rather than organisational requirements. Indications in the discussions were that there is a need to review existing policy regarding the appointment of principals by SGBs.

It was also found that the District Managers were empowered to recruit and appoint teachers as well as approve the appointment of a principal recommended by the SGBs. Regarding the employment of Public Service Act employees, there was no uniform approach but approval was done at Provincial Office level.

The appointment of Subject Advisors - to schools in terms of the norms and standards for staffing was also looked at. During engagement with both the District Office personnel, principals, School Management Team at school level, an inquiry on the effectiveness of the Subject Advisors in the current arrangement was probed. It was found that the subject advisory service personnel is not accorded the status it deserves. As a result, the feeling was that the available subject advisors are overloaded.

Financial Delegations - It was found that financial delegations in respect of District Managers were not uniform and that District Managers themselves were not aware of this uneven financial limit. The limits ranged between R150 000 and R200 000 per annum and were said to be dependent on the financial capability of the District Manager. District Offices are tasked with the responsibility of coordinating and managing human and material resources in excess of millions of rands without any close monitoring and advice. On inquiry as to whether the internal audit component housed in the Provincial Department rendered satisfactory service in this regard, it was found that in both District Offices, this didn't seem to be the case. Indication was that the Provincial Audit personnel only visited the Districts when there were allegations of maladministration. It would appear that there is capacity needed at the District Offices to perform this function full time.

For a Department charged with billions of rand, it stands to reason that monitoring on the spot, advice-giving, regular inspections at Provincial Office, District Offices and school levels are critical. Therefore, a full time allocation of internal audit resource at District level to be in charge of the District and its institutions should be considered as a matter of priority. This should contribute to strengthening controls over resources throughout the Department.

#### *(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial District Offices.*

Both Districts visited reported that communication occurs through the Cluster Teams from the Provincial Head office to the Districts, from the Circuit Offices up to school levels. Circulars, e-mails and other modes are used as means of communication. It was further reported that even though the cluster approach is regarded as an important tool of communication, it seems to delay the decision-making process. Meetings are not integrated and officials are expected to attend many meetings at the same time.

*(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District*

At the East London District, it was reported that the District is responsible for an overall budget of R870 million. However, delegations of only up to R200 000 spending by the District Director have been effected. A District Finance Committee and Budget and Procurement Committees have been established to manage and monitor all financial and procurement decision-making processes at District level. Officials expressed their dissatisfaction with the current financial delegations which are believed not to be enough resulting in a slow pace in service delivery. It was strongly indicated that the current capacity should be increased. The staff also indicated that the Internal Audit function on a full time or deployment basis is critical for providing assistance from the District Office down to the school level. At the Mthatha District Office, the inspection team was also informed that financial delegations had been effected although they were limited and hampered the rate of service delivery. The need for increased capacity was emphasised.

*(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

At the Mthatha District Office, inspectors were informed that multi-disciplinary teams visit schools on a monthly basis. Also at the East London District Office, an indication was given that there are multi-disciplinary teams which visit schools on a monthly basis too. Furthermore, at the East London District Office, IQMS is used as a performance management and monitoring tool. Summative reports on individual employees are written.

*(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at District, circuit and school levels*

Both Districts visited informed the inspection team that EMIS is centralised at the Provincial Head Office level. Efforts to have District Educational Management Information System (DEMIS) in place are in progress.

### 3.3.2 Unannounced inspections

*(a) Observing facilities*

In assessing the facilities, the following were looked at: outside and inside signage; reflection of business hours; condition of the building; availability of ramps for people with disabilities; and cleanliness.

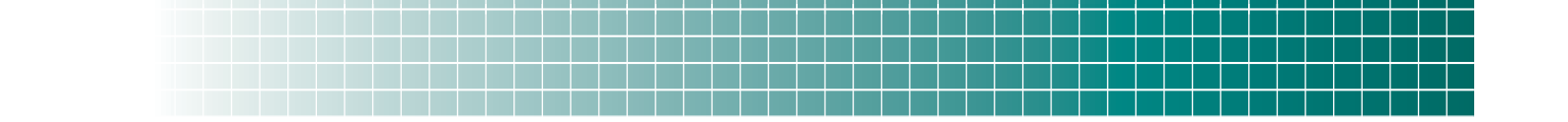
In all institutions visited, both inside and outside signage were not reflected except for George Randell High School which had clearly reflected signage. The buildings were in a fairly good condition and the building of one District Office was undergoing renovations. Ramps for people with disabilities in two District Offices and two schools visited were inadequate. An observation made was that in the rural and township schools visited, the issue of ramps and signage was less of a priority due to other pressing demands. Budgetary constraints also posed a vital challenge in not achieving some of the *Batho Pele* principles requirements.

Air conditioning systems were only adequate at District Offices and Section 21 schools (former model C). Only fans and opening of windows were a source of fresh air in the rural and township schools. Access to water by the learners was also inadequate particularly in the rural and township schools.

There seemed to be adequate parking areas for both officials and the public. There were demarcated parking spaces except at Mthatha District which is under immense pressure for parking to accommodate all Departments housed in Botha Sigcawu Building.

*(b) Observing access to information*

It was found that in the two District Offices, there were no staff members who guided and directed people on arrival. Only one school had a reception area which is visible for anyone to make enquiries.



It is expected that citizens should be told the level and quality of public services they will receive so that they know what to expect. However, it was observed that where service standards existed, they were mostly written in English. As IsiXhosa is the predominant language used in the area, it would be expected that efforts would have been made to write service standards also in IsiXhosa in order to ensure wide readership and understanding by service users.

The inspection team also observed that there was generally a lack of on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complains, queries and suggestions. There were no suggestion boxes or complains registers at some of the visited service points. It is essential that such facilities be provided in order to facilitate expression of service user concerns regarding services rendered including making recommendations where appropriate. Of all the visited areas, only George Randell Senior Secondary School had the best services and this school could be a reference in terms of good practices.

### *(c) Observing staff*

To promote accountability, openness and transparency, staff should always wear their nametags whilst at work. Wearing name tags further enables citizens to follow up on cases should a need arise. The inspection team observed that staff members did not wear nametags at all institutions visited. It was only learners who wore name tags and this arrangement was found to be in the schools' programme.

It was encouraging to note that at all visited service points, staff appeared friendly, professional and knowledgeable.

### *(d) Talking to staff*

Whilst there is a conceptual understanding of *Batho Pele* principles in most sites visited, practical application of and exposure to the concept does not exist. It would seem therefore that training and awareness campaigns are essential in order to inculcate a sense of ownership and practice of the principles.

### *(e) Talking to citizens/service users*

At the time of visits to the areas, there were no service users waiting to be attended and this area was not probed any further.

### *(f) Consultation*

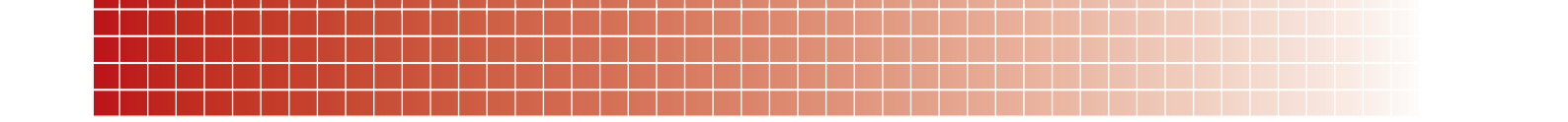
In all schools visited, it was discovered that parents engage in the operations and activities of schools and this is done in various forms, such as, parents' meetings, and SGB meetings.

## **3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations given below are based on the inspections findings and observations.

### **3.4.1 Announced inspections**

- The Department should seriously consider the establishment of an Internal Audit Component or full time deployment of dedicated Internal Auditors who will be responsible for ensuring that there is effective financial control and discipline at all District Offices.
- It is strongly recommended that the quintile system be reviewed taking into account not only geographic location but also other socio-economic criteria.
- Regarding payment and distribution of and payment for LTSM, it is recommended that a tighter monitoring and co-ordinating mechanism be developed.
- Consideration should be given to ensuring that capacity is developed at District level as a necessary condition for decentralising management and co-ordination of LTSM provisioning. This should include proper briefing and guidance



on the LTSM top-up system so that there can be common understanding.

- It is further recommended that the existing policy on appointment of principals by SGBs be reviewed in order to ensure that all administrative and management dimensions of the position are taken into account when appointing.
- It is recommended that serious attempts be made to appoint subject advisors according to the norm of the Department given the indisputable importance of their function in the ongoing development of educators.
- The Department needs to tighten its controls e.g. develop a policy regarding absenteeism of educators. If there is an existing policy, measures for implementation should be taken.

### 3.4.2 Unannounced inspections

- Complain registers and suggestion boxes should be made available at all the institutions for officials, learners and service users to be able to lodge their complains and make recommendations on service delivery improvement.
- Since the Department interfaces directly with the public at all levels, all employees should wear nametags while on duty.
- The Department should ensure that all its institutions have proper outside and inside signage. Such signage should provide important information in languages predominantly used in that area.
- All institutions should ensure that there is staff to guide and direct citizens to relevant work stations on arrival.
- It is essential that all institutions of learning should have adequate ramps for people with disabilities.



# Chapter Four

## Provincial Department of Education: Free State

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the inspections conducted in the Free State Department of Education. The findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected District Offices and schools.

## 4.2 SITES VISITED

In the Free State, the inspections were conducted between the 24<sup>th</sup> of October and the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2007. Four District Offices and nine schools were visited by the inspection team. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 4: Free State Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Thabo Mofutsanyane District Office	24 October 2007	Kholathuto Secondary School	24 October 2007
		Letlotlo Primary School	24 October 2007
		Akofang Senior Secondary	25 October 2007
Motheo District Office	25 October 2007	Vulamasango Senior Secondary	26 October 2007
		Pelonomi Primary School	30 October 2007
Fezile Dabi District Office	30 October 2007	Matlwangtlwang High School	31 October 2007
		JMB Marokane Primary School	31 October 2007
Lejweleputswa District Office	29 October 2007	Boitekong Primary School	1 November 2007
		Bahale Secondary School	1 November 2007

## 4.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

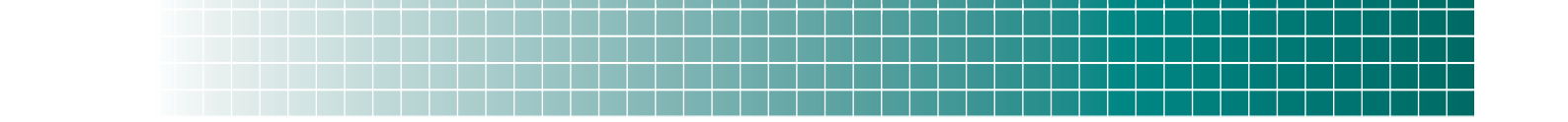
### 4.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the announced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

#### 4.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

##### (a) *Improve budget controls and management*

During the inspection all District Offices reported that the Free State Department of Education revises the LTSM budget once a year in September. LTSM allocations to schools from this budget are done according to National Norms, which



inform a bigger allocation to schools in impoverished areas. Allocations to schools are based on a costed business plan based on a reportedly unknown benchmark. The quintile within which a school is located would inform the amount to be allocated to it. For example, quintile 1 schools receive a total allocation of R755.00, with 50% (R387.50) being allocated for LTSM, 1% for maintenance and 49% for recurrent costs.

However, the inspection team was informed that there seemed to be a problem with the criteria for allocating the budget. It was claimed that technical schools, which use more expensive equipment and machinery are given the same allocation as academic schools. This reportedly led to some of the technical schools dropping technical subjects for academic ones. Another disparity mentioned was an example on urban and farm schools in Lejweleputswa which received the same allocation of R387.50 per learner, despite the farm school having only 10 learners and the urban one 785. Thus, it appeared that the norms and standards set were not entirely followed. In probing this apparent anomaly with the Provincial Head Office, it was acknowledged that the National norms and standards have certain deficiencies. The Provincial Head Office also contended that the issue of school funding should also be looked at holistically, because it includes specific programmes aimed at poor and farm schools. In the end, the final allocation to schools is way beyond what the quintile approach provides. According to District Offices, schools believe that the LTSM allocation is inadequate.

#### *(b) Centralise payment of suppliers*

During inspections, District Offices reported that the payment for LTSM is centralised at the Provincial Head Office. It was further reported that District Offices receive requisitions from schools, which they sometimes assist in filling out. Service providers have to submit delivery notes (invoices) to the Provincial Head Office for payment, which is done within 30 days. The Provincial Head Office has set for itself the service standard of 14 days for the payment of service providers. However, delays are often experienced, and as a result service providers inundate the District Offices with requests to check on their payments.

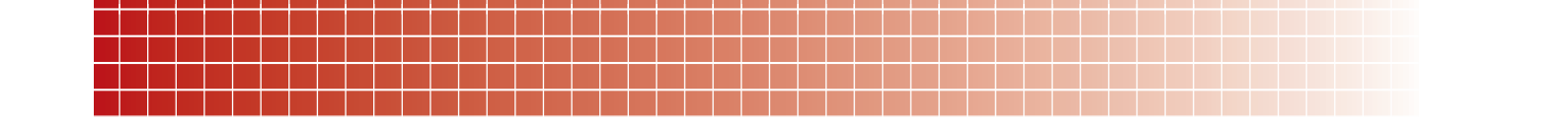
#### *(c) Improve book retrieval system*

During the inspections, District Offices indicated that while the Provincial Head Office does not have a standard system of retrieving books, schools are expected to do this. Retrieval systems at schools are generally manual and paper-based. The Provincial Head Office conducts periodic visits to check LTSM registers. Schools on their own talk to learners about the importance of books and how to take care of them. These talks are usually done by school based librarians. Parents are informed about the book retrieval system and the implications thereof. The Provincial Head Office contends that the Department has developed a School Administration and Management System (SAMS), where book retrievals can be recorded. According to this system, the Provincial Head Office is able to access records of all schools electronically. On further probing the matter, it became apparent that District Offices and schools were not trained on how to use the system.

#### *(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

During the inspections, District Offices indicated that the Provincial Head Office has set procedures on the selection of appropriate LTSM. Firstly, publishers submit books to the Provincial Department to be considered for possible selection. A committee based at the Provincial Head Office comprised of subject advisors and Learning Facilitators (LFs) screens the books. The LTSM Directorate then develops a catalogue, which is released by September of the year proceeding the new academic year. Workshops are then conducted with educators by LFs who point out the strengths and weaknesses of each book. Educators then indicate which books would best cover their learning areas. Furthermore, publishers often come to schools to display their books and to give promotional copies to school libraries.

However, there was general dissatisfaction about the delay related to the publication of the catalogue by the Provincial Head Office as it sometimes hemorrhages the whole LTSM provision in the Districts and schools. This has a negative impact on the timeous delivery of books, as well as on the procurement of top-ups for the new academic year. It was also felt that educators should also be involved in the initial screening of LTSM. This can be done through educators with



considerable experience in relevant learning areas brought on board by representatives during the selection process. The Provincial Head Office indicated that teachers, officials from the Free State Department of Education, Directorates of Education and Curriculum, conduct training for teachers and Learner Facilitators appointed on contract to screen LTSM.

*(e) Review LTSM requirements*

During the inspections, District Offices reported that revised National Curriculum Statements are made well in advance due to the huge impact they would have on LTSM in particular, as well as the general organisation of education in the country.

*(f) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM*

During the inspections, it was reported that warehouse personnel in the Districts receive and check the quality of LTSM. However, it was reported that there was no actual training given to the warehouse officials, especially training on ensuring that the quality of the LTSM is of an acceptable standard. There was no evidence of the existence of guidelines for checking the quality of received LTSM. In essence, the warehouses checked whether what was ordered was indeed delivered. The Provincial Head Office conceded that no actual training is given to warehouse staff on checking the quality of LTSM. The only checking done is a random one on whether “pens write and books do not fall apart”. Schools and District Offices are actually the ones that are able to access the quality and to return any LTSM material that does not meet required standard. However, District Offices complained about limited human resource to ensure the speedy delivery of LTSM to schools. At present, there is an average of 3 persons serving this purpose. This results in late delivery of LTSM to schools.

*(g) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

It was reported during the inspections at Lejweleputswa District that they have a heavy workload due to limited capacity. For example, each of the three LTSM personnel at the said District has to deal with about 90 memos from schools. Added to this, one District Office has to deal with payments to service providers of goods and services provided to schools by the particular District Office. This function of taking responsibility for goods and services was given as a directive earlier this year to two District Offices, allegedly as part of a pilot by the Provincial Head Office to gauge the capacity of the particular District office to deliver such services. There was however, no documented intention of the alleged ‘pilot’. The Provincial Head Office later conceded that there was no plan to incrementally extend the delegations to procure goods and services to other District Offices.

*(h) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

When the inspection team followed up on the issue of LTSM regional task teams, the District Offices indicated that they were not aware of any LTSM Task Team at Head Office. However, sectional Heads at the Head Office have formed a team that monitors and co-ordinates LTSM. The idea of such a task team was however fully supported, as it would assist in dealing with some of the bottle-necks experienced with LTSM. It was proposed that District Offices be fully involved in the selection and procurement of LTSM, with the Provincial Head Office setting guidelines and standards for supervision and support to District Offices. The Provincial Head Office did not indicate the existence of such a task team, although in a written input, it asserted its existence. It only mentioned the coordinating role of sectional Heads as mooted by the District Offices.

*(i) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

The District Offices visited reported that they do not have a schedule of visits to schools to check for excess stock. However, visits are done at least once in two months, to check, among others, LTSM registers and surplus material. Excess stock is allocated to schools which need more books than others. The District Offices also conceded that they did not discuss or implement PSC recommendations pertaining to school visits.

#### *(j) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes*

It was noted during the inspections that the District Offices were not aware of any monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system for LTSM processes. However, the Head Office develops and implements an annual LTSM Delivery Management Plan in collaboration with District Offices. Compliance to this plan is closely monitored by the Provincial Head Office.

#### *(k) Are there any problems encountered and / or gains in implementing the recommendations of the PSC LTSM Report?*

When this question was asked, it became apparent from the District Offices responses that the Provincial Head Office has not given due regard to the implementation of the PSC report. Discussions on the report, at least at District Office level, have also not been entered into, despite requests by several District Offices to do so. The Provincial Head Office later conceded that they have not given any attention to the recommendations. They indicated that the present review by National office of District Offices prevented them from implementing them. However, they would have a re-look at the recommendations and see which ones they are able to implement.

### **4.3.1.2 Guide on School District Management**

#### *(a) Empower Districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

During inspections, District Offices reported that they once had extensive powers in relation to the following human resource areas:

- Appointments, transfers and promotion of public school educators at levels 1-3 as well as public school principals at levels 4-5;
- Appointment of temporary educators;
- Issuing of state guarantees; and
- Transfer of staff within District Offices.

However, District Offices reported that these delegations were withdrawn within two weeks of their introduction. No reasons were given for the withdrawal. In essence, there are no delegations to District Offices related to human resource matters. It was noted that delegations were in any case not accompanied by the necessary support with regard to more human resources being deployed to support District Offices. The District Offices, therefore, have no Human Resource (HR) related delegations. Head Office reported that the delegation of HR functions was withdrawn because they fostered an unmanageable situation where accountability and procedures relating to appointments were questionable. The Head Office also admitted that they were not aware of any guidelines on delegations from the *Batho Pele Handbook* when they were asked about whether they had followed these when delegating duties and functions.

#### *(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices*

According to the District Offices visited, there are no set communication protocols with the Provincial Head Office. Sometimes principals have direct communication with the Provincial Head Office, especially with regard to LTSM. Service providers for the delivery of LTSM also contact the District Offices if there are delays in their payments, even when the latter did not participate in the contracting out of such services. As a result of lack of communication and protocols between the District Office and the Provincial Head Office, District Directors are often invited by different Head Office directorates to different meetings at the same time. This means there is no co-ordination at the Provincial Head Office.

In order to deal with the challenge of lack of clear communication channels and other related matters, District Directors proposed that all communication meant for District Offices should be routed through the Chief Directorate at the Provincial Head Office responsible for District Office. The Provincial Head Office indicated that communication was

indeed routed through the suggested Chief Directorate, but would follow up if there was any deviation from this. However, the Provincial Head Office conceded that there was no set integrated plan to ensure non-overlapping of meetings and activities between District Offices and Head Office.

*(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District*

During the inspections, it was reported that financial delegations to the District Offices are acutely limited. However, the District Offices have the overall responsibility of ensuring effective and efficient financial management in the allocated areas of responsibility. These include ensuring that there are adequate internal financial controls, including risk management. A "Risk Treatment Plan" for Lejweleputswa and Fezile Dabi respectively is included. District Offices check expenditure levels once a month with the finance committee and make the necessary adjustments where applicable. The Lejweleputswa District Office "Risk Treatment Plan" was under review at the time of the visit. The District Offices however felt that there was a need for more dedicated training on financial management for the staff, especially in light of the responsibility for the procurement of goods and services. As indicated earlier, the present staff seems not to be coping with the additional financial responsibilities.

When the issue of capacity of District Office was put before the Provincial Head Office, the latter indicated that this was "relative" since LTSM related work increased mostly towards the end of the financial year. On average, the Provincial Head Office contended that the staff component in District Offices was capacitated to deal with the work at hand.

*(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

During inspections, District Offices reported that they have schedules of school visits according to which township secondary and primary schools are visited thrice or twice per month respectively. Farm schools are visited only twice per quarter. Non-performing or "problematic" schools get an additional visit per month. A Whole School Evaluation Team, which is constituted of officials from the Provincial Head Office, assesses school performance at least once a year. The basis for the assessment is the School Development Plan, which may also be used for self-assessment.

*(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at District, circuit and school levels*

When the issue of EMIS was raised during the inspections, the District Offices reported that principals needed intense training in EMIS. At present, there is no trainer dedicated to EMIS training. It was strongly felt that EMIS was not fully utilised by schools, especially in planning. Schools rely on student numbers for planning, and these are often inflated to gain extra resources and bigger budget allocations.

### 4.3.2 Unannounced inspections

*(a) Observing facilities*

The inspection team observed that at most of the service points the reception areas were clearly identified with the outside signage visible. Most buildings were generally in good condition but others need to be renovated. It was also pleasing to observe that most buildings were clean inside and outside. Such conditions promote better learning and staff morale.

However, some schools had broken windows and no playgrounds for the learners. Business/school hours and costs of services rendered were not displayed. There were no directing arrows identifying the administration block and other buildings within the school premises.

### *(b) Observing access to information*

All the institutions visited did not display service charters or the relevant or appropriate material at the information desks. Neither did they have a complains register or a suggestion box for the public.

### *(c) Observing staff*

In all the institutions visited, none of the staff members were wearing name badges. However, the staff was friendly, helpful and appeared to be knowledgeable.

### *(d) Talking to citizens/consultation*

There were no citizens or parents to talk to at the time of the inspections.

### *(e) Talking to staff*

The staff indicated that their lunch breaks are taken without disrupting the flow of the service. Problems of staff shortage emanating from failure to fill vacant posts were raised. It was reported that there are good relations between the schools and the District Offices.

### *(f) General observations*

There is no adequate parking at most schools with the exception of the Pelonomi Primary School. Scarcity of water is a cause for concern in schools visited in the Fezile Dabi District. At Vulamasango Secondary School, the Home Economics Centre and the Science Laboratory are poorly furnished. The learners in these subjects are not receiving the expected service delivery and the teachers on the other hand seem to be extremely demoralised.

## **4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **4.4.1 Announced inspections**

It is recommended that the Free State Department of Education should, within 6 weeks of the request to do so, give a full account of its failure to implement recommendations from the two reports (on LTSM and the Management of District Offices).

### **4.4.2 Unannounced inspections**

- The practice of *Batho Pele* principles should be encouraged at all service points to speed up service delivery.
- The help desk/reception area should be stocked with appropriate forms and material for easy access by users.
- All schools must ensure that toilet facilities are in a good condition and regularly repaired and cleaned.
- For poor learners from remote areas subsidised transport should be considered for the purposes of easy access to education facilities and learning.

# Chapter Five

## Provincial Department of Education: Gauteng



## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings of the inspections conducted in the Gauteng Department of Education are presented in this chapter. Such findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected service delivery sites such as District Offices and schools.

## 5.2 SITES VISITED

In Gauteng, the inspections were conducted on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October 2007. Two District Offices and four schools (two in each District Office) were visited by the inspection team. Another six District Offices also participated in the study by way of responding to a questionnaire, however, no visits were made to these Districts. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 5: Gauteng Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Sedibeng West District Office	16 October 2007	Bafokeng Primary School	16 October 2007
		Tharabollo Secondary School	16 October 2007
Johannesburg East District Office	17 October 2007	Braynston Primary School	17 October 2007
		Braynston High School	17 October 2007

The following District Offices completed inspections questionnaires but were not visited:

- Tshwane West District
- Tshwane North District
- Gauteng East District
- Johannesburg North District
- Sedibeng East District
- Ekurhuleni South District

## 5.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

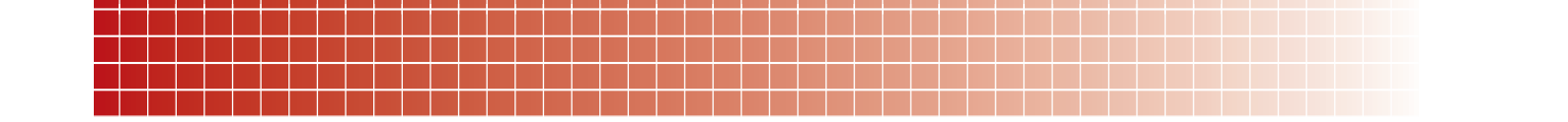
### 5.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the announced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

#### 5.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

##### (a) Improve budget controls and management

During the inspections, it was reported that school budgets is revised annually, during the budgeting period. The budgeting



process is informed by the needs of schools. The Provincial Head Office would provide District Offices with the total school budget which the District Offices allocate according to various quintiles under which the schools are classified. For instance, schools falling under quintiles 1 and 2 (those that are poverty stricken) receive the largest portion of the budget, whereas those falling under quintiles 4 and 5 (falling within the most affluent areas) receive the least. According to the Provincial Head Office, budget splits are based on the schools poverty index which classifies schools into quintiles. Quintiles 1 to 3 are the poorest schools and those falling under quintiles 4 and 5 are the most advantaged ones. The other budget split is based on the implementation roll-out plan of the National Curriculum Statement according to grades and is known as the Special Provincial Grant. There is yet another budget that is informed by the National Priorities such as Qids-Up and Dinaledi programme.

The schools budget is drawn in accordance with the *South African Schools Act, 1996* as amended and the National Curriculum Statement as well as the Norms and Standards for School Funding. It is broken down into percentages and the allocation for LTSM is ring-fenced. LTSM receives an allocation of 55% of the total school budget. The rest is spent on running costs such as services (telephone, water and electricity) and maintenance. The approach that is followed in budget allocation differs between the Sections 20 and 21 schools. At the beginning of the financial year all public schools are given budget certificates to show how much has been allocated to them. This process is followed by the transfer of the allocated amounts into the bank accounts of the Section 21 schools. The allocated amounts for the Section 20 schools are not transferred into the schools accounts. The Department manages these budgets for them.

Schools falling under quintiles 4 and 5, also known as Section 21 schools do not receive much from the Department as they generate their own income, and they invest some of the money that they receive. Section 21 schools are to a large extent autonomous and run their own finances.

Those that fall under quintiles 1 and 2 do not have any budgetary functions allocated to them. They are also referred to as Section 20 Schools (those that depend on Departmental allocation). These schools order the LTSM directly from a company called Edu-Solution which has been contracted to supply the Department with such material. Subsequent to ordering of this material, Edu-Solution submits invoices to the Department or the Gauteng Shared Services Centre (GSSC) for payment. It is, however, the duty of the District Office to verify that Edu-Solution has indeed delivered what it purports to have delivered.

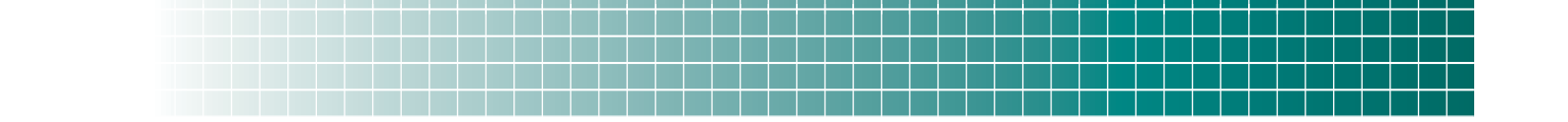
All Districts agree that LTSM budget is revised annually by Head Office. They however, provided varying responses with regard to the bases of the budget. Three Districts indicated that this is a Head Office responsibility, one did not respond to this and the other two indicated that the bases of the budget are resource targeting. This shows that there is no certainty among District Offices regarding the bases of the LTSM budget.

The respondents were also asked about the availability of norms and standards governing the amount allocated per learner for LTSM. The Provincial Head Offices indicated that such norms do exist. This statement was corroborated by the Gauteng East, Johannesburg North and Sedibeng East District Offices, which also indicated that 55% of the schools budget is allocated to LTSM.

The Tshwane West District indicated that the school allocation for South African public ordinary primary and secondary schools were established through the 1998 public school funding. In view of the responses provided by the Provincial Head Office, Sedibeng West and Johannesburg East District Offices above, it can be seen that Tshwane West District is not on the same footing with the rest of the District Offices. The Tshwane North District feels that allocations of LTSM budget is a Head Office function and Ekurhuleni South did not provide a response in this regard.

#### *(b) Centralise payment of suppliers*

The inspectors were informed that most payment of service providers and suppliers is centralised at Head Office. This depends on the type of budget that is dealt with. For instance, the budget for Resource Targeting Table, Special Provincial Grant and programmes such as, Qids-Up, Early Childhood Development and Dinaledi are Head Office's responsibility. The Adult Basic Education and Training budget for LTSM is centralised at District level.



The budget for non-Section 21 schools is not centralised at Head Office. In order to avoid delays in delivery of LTSM, schools are given deadlines within which to make requisitions and payment is done through the Gauteng Shared Services Centre (GSSC).

Schools order the LTSM directly from Edu-Solution. Edu-Solution then submits invoices together with proof of delivery records signed off by the District Director's Office to the Department or the GSSC for payment.

Payment to service providers is supposed to take place within 30 days from the date on which a service has been rendered or material had been delivered. The Provincial Head Office confirmed that the payment of service providers is done within 30 days through the GSSC. The turnaround time for payment of suppliers is three days provided all records are in order. The Department strives to meet the turnaround time and delays are only as a result of service providers not sending all the required documentation on time.

### *(c) Improve book retrieval system*

During the inspections, it was reported that the Department has developed a policy and strategic document that provides guidance and procedures on how to deal with book retrieval at school level. It has also established LTSM Teams in the Districts and school levels, which are Headed by District Directors and principals respectively. These teams have been trained on how to deal with issues of book retrieval.

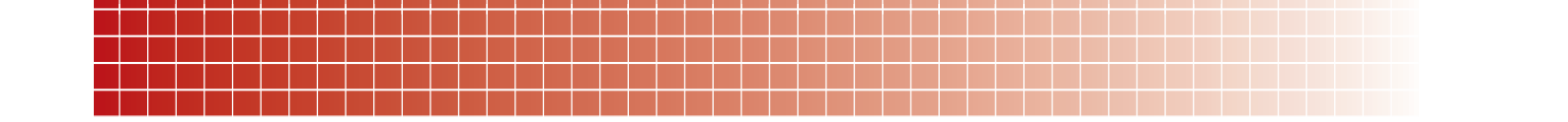
The strategies of improving book retrieval differ from one District to another. For example at Tshwane North monitoring of textbooks is conducted quarterly at schools, whereas at Johannesburg North books are returned at every school recess. At Tshwane West audits are conducted during the course of the year and the retrieval system is wound up on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January each year. Return of textbooks is made on the examination day for a particular learning area and there is a safe storage where retrieval records and management procedures are kept. All schools are responsible for the implementation of the Department's retrieval policy. District Offices manage this process.

All District Offices, except for Ekurhuleni South have embarked on an educational campaign to educate learners and parents about preservation, maintenance and care of text books. At the Sedibeng West District, workshops are conducted at the beginning of the year to all LTSM teams. The schools are also given workshop packs/manuals that explain the retrieval process and are expected to compile retrieval reports on a regular basis and there is constant monitoring of the process. As a result of this campaign the Sedibeng West District experiences 96% retrieval rate. In Tshwane West this has yielded profound awareness, caring and ownership of the process. Johannesburg East is, however, complaining that parents are still not playing their part in this regard. According to the Departmental Head Office the Provincial retrieval rate is on average 90 to 99%.

The devolution of powers to School Management Teams (SMTs) has brought about a positive impact with regard to book retrieval. The success of book retrieval depends on the effectiveness of these SMTs. The proximity of schools to the residential areas of the learners also has a positive impact on the success of book retrieval. It is positive in a sense that when learners do not have books on them during retrieval, they are sent home to fetch them immediately. This eliminates unnecessary delays.

The Johannesburg East District indicated that the system in respect of Section 20 schools is still weak, whereas in the Section 21 schools retrieval rate stands at 70%. Another challenge that the District is faced with is that the budget allocated is too small to facilitate book retrieval. The strategy that is used to improve book retrieval is that schools submit quarterly reports on book retrieval. Parents are also made to replace lost books or pay a certain amount which is refundable subject to the book being returned. Another strategy that is considered as an option is that of holding on to a learner's report until they return the books. It is, however, difficult to implement this strategy since the current legal system prohibits its practice.

To ensure that books that have been retrieved are usable by other learners in the following year, learners, especially at foundation phase are encouraged to wash their hands before they use the books, not to tear pages and not to write on the books.



The Johannesburg East District has also indicated that they have special concessions from the publishers. They have been given copyright to reproduce language books for the Grade 12s. They were also provided with master copies for this purpose.

*(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

The inspectors were informed that there are various stakeholders involved in the selection of LTSM. These are the National Department of Education, the Curriculum Directorate, publishers, educators themselves, parents, NGOs, learning area facilitators as well as Head office facilitators. University lectures are also invited to evaluate the learning materials. The learning area specialists conduct the quality assurance.

There are evaluation instruments that are used for the assessment of the LTSM that the schools select for various phases. These instruments are developed by the Head Office's Curriculum Directorate as well as the National Department of Education and include guidelines, reporting format and the criteria for the evaluation and selection of LTSM. The criteria for the assessment of LTSM include, *inter alia*, the language used and compliance with the Constitution. Extensive exhibition sessions are held in Tshwane West to enable educators to evaluate the LTSM.

The schools are also encouraged to have LTSM committees who should check if a particular book serves the purpose for a specific learning area. If it does not serve the purpose they should recommend another one. Educators are also trained and given guidance on what text books and material to select for specific learning areas.

The Johannesburg East District office visits at least two schools per week for monitoring purposes. They tend to visit needy schools more often. They also have a different focus for each school depending on the LTSM phase. The visits also serve as an opportunity to monitor the budget that has been allocated to a specific school.

Educators in the Tshwane West and Tshwane North are trained by curriculum experts on the screening and selection of LTSM. The other Districts simply indicated that educators are trained and given guidance on what textbooks and material to select. Ekurhuleni South feels that this is a Provincial Head Office's task.

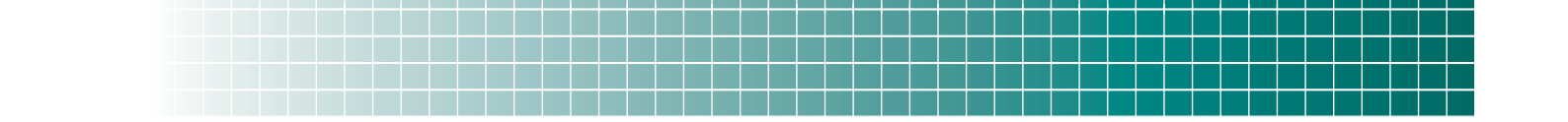
*(e) Review LTSM requirements*

The Johannesburg East, Sedibeng West and Johannesburg North District Offices reported that the National Department of Education announces the revised National Curriculum Statement before the fifth year for the implementing grades. The evaluation and selection is then conducted a year before the actual implementation. The evaluation instrument is then changed in accordance with the National Curriculum Statement. The Provincial Head Office was not specific about the period, but indicated that the curriculum change is not announced annually. It however agrees with the two District Offices that as and when the curriculum changes, publishers are requested to align their material with the new changes and the due process of review of such material is done.

The Tshwane North and Ekurhuleni South District Offices referred the inspection team to Head Office regarding the question about the period during the year at which the National Department announces revised National Curriculum Statement, as they did not have an answer to this.

*(f) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM*

The inspections team was informed that schools are supplied with a list of approved catalogues for text books, stationery and other material. Material that has been approved by the Department is displayed at exhibitions by publishers. Through these exhibitions, educators are able to evaluate the material on the basis of content and durability. The catalogues contain book prices which are used as a basis for costing. However the problem faced by schools is that they would place orders for books on the basis of the prices provided in the catalogue, but when the books are delivered, it is found that the prices have escalated.



The Johannesburg East District requires schools to submit their LTSM requisitions to the District office for monitoring of policy compliance.

The Ekurhuleni South District indicated that it does not get involved in monitoring the quality of LTSM received by schools. An interesting finding was made from the Tshwane West District, which indicated that it visits manufacturers and conducts inspections on all printed text books and involves curricular experts in the screening and evaluation of LTSM through all the grades. Schools LTSM committees conduct quality assurance in Tshwane North, Johannesburg North and Sedibeng East. Gauteng East uses facilitators to do quality assurance for their respective learning areas.

*(g) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

The inspection team was informed that the school LTSM coordinators are trained on how to conduct needs analysis in order to determine the material that needs to be purchased and/or topped-up. However the Provincial Head Office indicated that it does not train educators on top-up. This is a managerial process of needs analysis. No training is required for this purpose. Top-up should occur if there is shrinkage or change in number of learners. Training of educators on the implementation of the top-up system is conducted by District Offices in a form of workshops and school visits, focusing on procurement processes, budgets, need analysis and prioritisation. The Tshwane West District has databases established at schools, which contain relevant information to address inadequacies where they occur. This system is also linked to the retrieval system of text books and stakeholders are made aware of this.

*(h) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

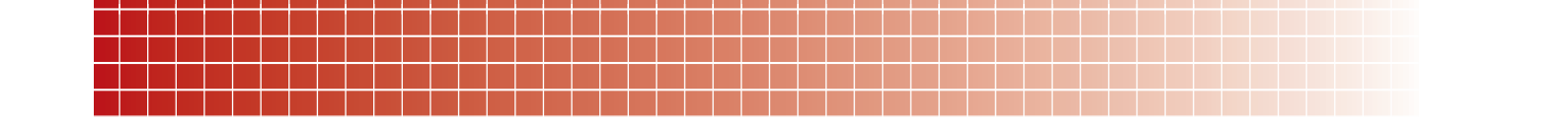
During the inspections, it was reported that the Sedibeng West District does not have a task team on LTSM provisioning. The Johannesburg East, Tshwane West and Gauteng East Districts indicated that they do have such teams. These District Offices also corroborate the Provincial Head Office's statement that the Department has established an LTSM Project Matrix Management Team, which comprises of the following team members:

- Director: Multimedia-LTSM as the Project Manager.
- Director: Administration and Procurement.
- Director: Finance Reporting, Funding and Subsidies.
- Director: Legal Services.
- Director: Intervention and Governance Monitoring.

Furthermore, it was indicated that noticeable changes have occurred since the establishment of this Project Management Team. For instance, communication between service providers and publishers has improved. At District level the District Offices are able to function better and to hold schools accountable for their own budgets. Another aspect of improvement is that due to different levels of expertise within the respective teams, the team members are able to assist one another.

*(i) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

The inspection team was informed that the Provincial Head Office is not responsible for the checking of the excess stock. This is the District Offices' responsibility. The Department did not develop guidelines to assist schools on how to deal with excess stock. The Sedibeng West District Office does not conduct frequent visits to schools to verify and check what excess stock is available. All the respondents except for Tshwane North District Office (which blames this on lack of capacity and clear Provincial policies regarding obsolete material) indicated that they do conduct school visits to verify and check available excess stock. These visits have a positive impact in terms of building awareness on the care of materials and safekeeping of records. The schools are also through this process encouraged to procure material according to their needs and to have storages.



Most of the schools at Johannesburg East are Section 21 schools. These schools are encouraged to purchase the required amount of LTSM material. They are discouraged to buy materials that are not going to be used immediately due to frequent burglaries and unavailability of suitable storage. The District is facing a challenge with regard to processes of declaring certain books obsolete and the logistics related to this matter. For instance there is no certainty in institutions as to what should be done with books that are relatively old or worn out. The District Office is of the view that managing LTSM is not only about receiving stock, but institutions need to have an understanding of what to do with old stock that cannot be used anymore. At Sedibeng West, schools are advised to donate surplus material to schools experiencing shortages.

*(j) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes.*

During the inspections, it was reported that in order to ensure that the LTSM meets the delivery deadlines from both the supplier and publisher, a task team has been established at Head Office consisting of LTSM Project Matrix Management Team, contracted service provider and Publishers Association of South Africa (independent publishers). This task team meets every Tuesday to discuss about the delivery of books to schools. The Johannesburg East District encourages schools to make requisitions for the following year before the end of October each year. Section 21 schools are expected to submit delivery reports on a quarterly basis, whereas non-Section 21 schools' reports are submitted by Edu-Solution frequently. Unfortunately, Sedibeng West District does not conduct any monitoring in this regard.

The improvement on the general management of the LTSM programme occurs through regular visits to schools, cluster meetings to empower schools' LTSM coordinators, workshops, the evaluation of the LTSM at school level and the LTSM processes. Schools that encounter problems during implementation are assisted immediately. The Provincial Head Office has converted the LTSM Management Plan into a Project Plan that provides time frames, responsibility, activities and monitoring process.

The Districts that participated in the inspections are not aware that they should record the delivery of LTSM within the said timelines between 2004/05 to 2006/07. These records should be kept to determine whether performance is deteriorating or improving in terms of the set timelines. The names of suppliers should also be attached to these records. However, according to the Provincial Head Office the record in the delivery of LTSM within the set time lines can be summarised as follows:

- 2004/2005 = 98% by January
- 2006/2007 = 93% by January
- 2007/2008 = 84 % by January

The Districts have not recorded any problems or gains as a result of implementing the recommendations of the PSC LTSM Report.

The Gauteng East and Johannesburg North indicated respectively that they procure LTSM as early as August and that schools are provided with a process map which specifies processes and time frames. The Tshwane West and Tshwane North Districts only indicated what they would like to see happening, and not what they have already implemented. Sedibeng East indicated that it receives monthly and weekly monitoring reports and that they enter into service delivery contracts with suppliers. Ekurhuleni South sees this as a Provincial Head Office's function.

The Ekurhuleni South District indicated that it has put monitoring systems in place to improve on the general management of the LTSM. It did not indicate what the nature of those systems are. Most of the District indicated that the steps taken to improve on the general management of the LTSM programme relate to the training of educators, LTSM committees and the school management teams.

Some of the concerns raised relating to the record of delivery of the LTSM within the set timelines between the financial years 2004/05 and 2006/07 are that Head Office does not transfer schools budget into schools accounts on time, books are delivered late or are unavailable and the service has deteriorated, mostly with regard to non-Section 21 schools.

### *(k) Problems encountered and/or gains achieved in implementing the recommendations of the PSC LTSM Report*

Almost all District Offices that participated in the inspections indicated that they have never seen the PSC LTSM Report.

#### **5.3.1.2 Guidelines on School District Management**

##### *(a) Empower Districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

During the inspections, the inspection team enquired about:

- E-learning.
- Institutional Development and Support.
- Curriculum Development and Support.

The inspection team was informed that the Human Resources and Financial Administration functions are not delegated to the District Offices. The employment of staff is approved by the Provincial Head Office. The process followed is that the SGB, after conducting interviews, recommends three preferred candidates to a particular post in the school to the District Director. The District Director would then motivate for the appointment of the most suitable candidate. The final decision on who to appoint lies with Provincial Head Office. Subsequent to the said approval, the GSSC effects the appointment. The District Director may, however, appoint temporary clerks without seeking the approval of the Provincial Head Office.

The District Director has limited powers to purchase stock up to the amount of R250 000. However, approval must be sought from the Provincial Head Office before the money can be spent. Each District Director also manages a petty cash of R500.

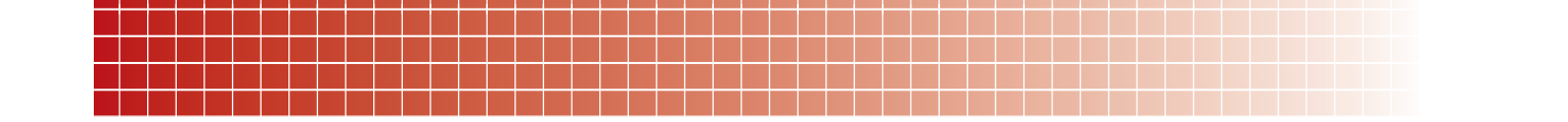
##### *(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices*

The inspection team was informed that communication between the District Offices and the Provincial Head Office occurs on a regular basis. There are weekly and monthly meetings, and Management Team meetings are held every term. Branch meetings are also held monthly by officers on the ranks of Deputy Director-General and below. E-mails, memos and circulars are also used as means of communication between the Head Office and the District Offices. The problem experienced with communication is that the Intranet does not have enough information and the Provincial Head Office has many structures, which lead to Districts being over-burdened with meetings. If powers were devolved, there would not be a need for many meetings. Sometimes circulars are received late and there is no proper communication.

The Sedibeng West District Office indicated that there is an open line of communication to enable educators to lodge complains. It was discovered, however, that primary school educators are reluctant to complain about their principals, whereas the secondary and high school teachers are outspoken and not afraid to raise their concerns. There is also a Hotline at Provincial Head Office where complains can be lodged anonymously. Educators are also free to lodge complains directly with the MEC's Office, or phone the District Director or submit walk-in complains. Subsequent to receiving these complains, investigations are conducted.

The other District Offices indicated that communication takes place through letters and meetings. There is also a Chief Director for Districts who act as liaison between the Head and District Offices. One District reported that although the communication mechanisms are effective, Districts are never given enough time to respond to information satisfactorily.

The current communication channels have strengths and weaknesses. The strengths thereof lie in the fact that they are effective as meetings are held on a regular basis. The problems though, lie in the fact that at some Districts such as Tshwane West, there is no proper telephone system. The District Office relies on the post, resulting in late receipt of



information. Although meetings are called on a regular basis, some of these meetings do not materialise as a result of conflicting schedules. These meetings are in some cases reactive rather than proactive.

The communication and reporting level, can, in the opinion of the District Offices, be improved through better communication strategies, such as e-mail, Short Message System through cellular phones and sending minutes of meeting to all directors.

*(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District*

It emerged during the inspections that although officials at District level have the necessary capacity to manage the financial affairs of their Districts, the District Offices do not have sufficient financial delegations.

While the Sedibeng West District Office indicated that it does not have a District Office committee established to solely ensure quality financial management, the Johannesburg East indicated that it has units such as Financial Management, Provisioning and Office Service Pool as well as Procurement.

The Johannesburg East, Sedibeng West, Gauteng East and Johannesburg North District Offices indicated that financial management responsibilities that have been delegated to them are signing powers of up to R250 000. The Sedibeng East District only indicated that the financial responsibilities are given in accordance with the Departmental delegations. This points to uncertainty as to the financial responsibilities that have been conferred upon the District Director.

The inspection team noted with concern that the Ekurhuleni South District does not seem to be on top of its game. This District Office indicated that it has delegated authority over transaction of below R100 000. The Tshwane West District Office is not aware whether the District's financial division is involved in paying schools their allocations. According to the District Offices, they have the necessary capacity to manage the financial affairs of the Districts. The Gauteng East District even has an Executive District Management Team and a Finance Committee.

*(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

During the inspections, it was reported that the District Offices that were visited do not have a schedule for school visits except for itineraries that are done on a weekly basis should the need arise. It was reported that the Provincial Head Office encourages District Directors to hold meetings with teachers and other stakeholders such as parents to provide a platform for engagement and to raise complains when necessary. The District Offices hold Principal District Management Team Meetings which are constituted by two representatives per cluster. At these meetings, complains can be lodged. Complains are responded to within five days of receipt thereof.

The other District Offices indicated that they do have scheduled visits to schools. Such visits are normally done by the Institutional Development Support Officers, subject facilitators and curriculum specialists. The regularity and purpose of these visits vary from one District to another. For instance at Johannesburg South the visits happen on quarterly basis and focus on learning, teaching, LTSM, physical buildings and policy implementation. At Sedibeng East, the visits take place weekly to high risk schools. Two cluster meetings are held per term to focus on specific learning areas and portfolio development. Only two of the District Offices, Gauteng East and Johannesburg North are aware of the standard framework that is used for school performance assessment. It is called the Whole School Evaluation Policy. This information did not come out clear during the meetings with the District Offices that were visited.

*(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at District, circuit and school levels.*

The inspection team was informed that the District Office uses the South African Schools Administration and Management System (SA SAMS) to collect information from schools. This information feeds into EMIS. The SA SAMS is, however, not yet operating smoothly to feed into the EMIS. There is also a District Information and Management System which





houses information about schools. The information ranges from learner information, child-headed families to HIV/AIDS statistics.

The educators in the Gauteng East, Johannesburg North and Sedibeng East District have been sensitised and trained in the use of EMIS. However the District Offices did not indicate how this training assisted in enhancing performance at schools. At Sedibeng East all public schools which do not have an administrative system, have recently completed training on the utilisation of the SA SAMS. The physical resource module, which deals with areas of control of LTSM is part of SA SAMS.

### 5.3.2 Unannounced inspections

#### (a) Observing facilities

The inspection team observed that the outside signage at all institutions that were visited was found to be acceptable, except for the Johannesburg East District Office, which does not have any signage outside. The general conditions of the buildings are, except for two institutions (Sedibeng District Office and Bafokeng Primary School), generally acceptable. The inspection team was informed that the Sedibeng District Office was being relocated to better premises at the former Sebokeng College of Education Campus. The two District Offices did not have ramps for people with disabilities and none of them displayed a list of rendered services and business hours. All schools that were visited have ramps for people with disabilities.

Section 21 schools have better facilities such as playgrounds and ablution. However Section 20 schools have no playgrounds except for Tharabollo Secondary School which has a soccer ground outside the school premises. Toilets at Tharabollo are untidy and it can be seen that they are not cleaned regularly.

There is no sufficient parking at schools. Parents have to park outside when they come to collect their children from school.

#### (b) Access to information

During the inspections, it was found that all the institutions have a staff member at reception, who directs visitors on arrival to appropriate service points. With an exception of Sedibeng District Office, there are information desks that are stocked with appropriate forms and material. However, none of the institutions displayed a service charter that would inform the citizens of the type of services that they should expect from the relevant institutions. There were no complains register or suggestion boxes in all institutions to enable the general public to comment about the services they receive.

#### (c) Observing staff

It was noted that there is a general trend at all institutions that staff do not wear their name tags while at work. The Head Master at one of the schools indicated that for security reasons, he does not encourage staff to wear name tags. The staff at one of the District Offices indicated that although they have been allocated name tags, they usually do not wear them as they are boring and damage their clothes. Only a few staff members wore their name tags at the Sedibeng District Office.

#### (d) Talking to staff

Generally, the staff at most institutions knows and understands the principles of *Batho Pele*. However, staff at the Section 21 schools indicated that they have never heard about the *Batho Pele* principles. While most educators seem dedicated to their work, the morale at one of the schools (Tharabollo Secondary School) seems to be very low. They are very negative about the school.

Most of the educators complained that the Department subjects them to a lot of paper work. This inhibits their progress in terms of their core function, which is teaching.

#### (e) *Talking to citizens*

The inspection team was unable to meet with the clients of the institutions that were visited. With regard to District Offices, it could be attributed to the fact that the inspections took place during examination time and most teachers were busy at schools and did not visit the District Offices. At some schools the inspections were conducted during school hours and the inspection team could not meet with parents who come to fetch their children from school.

## 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

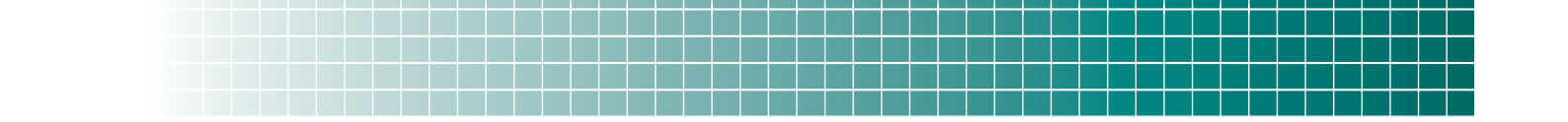
### 5.4.1 Announced inspections

#### 5.4.1.1. KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

- The Department should consider establishing a coordinating structure and developing a business plan for LTSM provisioning. The business plan should culminate in the establishment of a task team consisting of key Departmental role-players who are directly involved in the provisioning of LTSM. The task team should assume responsibility for the LTSM processes.
- All Districts Office should consider implementing a monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM process. This will ensure *inter alia* that the LTSM meet the delivery deadlines, improve on the general management of the LTSM programme and enable the District Offices to track the record of service delivery over the years.
- The District Offices should verify the delivery of LTSM before authorising GSSC to effect payment to the suppliers.
- The Department must develop guidelines to assist District Offices with the management of excess/obsolete material.
- District Offices should conduct frequent visits to schools to verify and check if there is excess stock available, and advice schools on what to do with the excess stock available.
- District Offices should monitor and evaluate the LTSM process, in order to ensure that the LTSM meets the delivery deadlines from both the supplier and publisher.
- Records of delivery should be kept to determine whether performance is deteriorating or improving in terms of set timelines. Names of suppliers should be attached to these records.
- The Department should negotiate with suppliers to ensure that price increases do not affect material that has already been ordered as this has an adverse effect on budgeting processes.
- The Department should improve its communication strategy to ensure that important information such as PSC recommendations reaches all its components including District Offices.

#### 5.4.1.2 Guideline on School District Management

- The District Directors should be allowed to apply their discretion in managing the funds that have been allocated to them. The fact that they have been afforded signing powers of up to R250 000 but still have to seek approval from the Head Office each time they buy something seems to be counter productive. However, there should be some checks and balances on the spending trends of District Directors to ensure accountability.
- District Directors should be encouraged to familiarise themselves with all relevant prescripts, Departmental policies and delegations, particularly financial delegations in order to address uncertainties about their roles and responsibilities.
- The GSSC should be alerted about the inconveniences that it causes to the Department due to delays in processing the appointment of staff. This causes under-spending on personnel expenditure. The delay has a negative effect on the turn-around-time in the filling of vacancies in the Province.
- The District Offices should ensure the appointment of temporary staff whenever there is a vacancy.

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- This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visit at the Provincial Head Office and selected service delivery sites of the Eastern Cape Department of Education.
  - The Department should develop a standard framework for the evaluation of school performance in order to ensure consistency, and that it should be evaluated on a regular basis by all District Offices.
  - In order to improve on schools and Districts management, it is suggested that Districts Offices should familiarize themselves with the following documents published by the PSC:
    - The Consolidated Report on the KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material, 2006.
    - Report on a Guideline on School District Management, 2006
    - A Guideline on School District Management, 2006.

#### 5.4.2 Unannounced inspections

- The Department should encourage the practice of the *Batho Pele* principles at both District Office and schools to fast track service delivery.
- Complain registers or suggestion boxes should be used for the convenience of service users. They should be located where they can be easily accessed by the service users.
- Management, both at school and District level should ensure that toilets are always clean and in proper working condition.
- All institutions should have information desks which are stocked with appropriate forms and materials for easy access by the service users.
- Paper work for educators should be limited to the absolute minimum. Educators should be afforded the opportunity to focus on their primary call, which is teaching.

# Chapter Six

Provincial Department of  
Education: KwaZulu-Natal

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the inspections conducted in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. The findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected service delivery sites and schools.

## 6.2 SITES VISITED

In KwaZulu-Natal, the inspections were conducted between the 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2007. Five District Offices and fourteen schools were visited by the inspection team. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 6: KwaZulu-Natal Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Amajuba District Office	23 October 2007	Thembalentsha High School	22 October 2007
		Zibambeleni High School	22 October 2007
		Ekuhlakanipheni Primary School	23 October 2007
Obonjeni District Office	25 October 2007	Babazani Primary School	25 October 2007
		Kufezekile Secondary School	25 October 2007
		Asiphikelele Secondary School	25 October 2007
Empangeni District Office	24 October 2007	Nsezi Primary School	26 October 2007
		Bhejane Primary School	26 October 2007
		Gwejobomvu Junior Secondary School	26 October 2007
Empangeni District Office	24 October 2007	Nsezi Primary School	26 October 2007
		Bhejane Primary School	26 October 2007
		Gwejobomvu Junior Secondary School	26 October 2007
		Hluma Secondary School	26 October 2007
Vulindlela District Office	15 October 2007	Nkwezela Primary School	31 October 2007

## 6.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

### 6.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the announced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

### 6.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

#### *(a) Improve budget controls and management*

The inspection team was informed that budgeting for LTSM is a Head Office competency under the control and management of the CFO. It is revised annually on the basis of Post Provisioning Norms (PPN) as well as quintiles that indicate levels of poverty of the area in which the school is located.

With respect to whether the budget allocation for each school is adequate or not, it was found that while Districts felt that the budget was enough, some schools revealed that their budget allocation had been reduced without a concomitant reduction in the learner population and, without any explanation from the Department. This creates problems at two levels namely, school administration (for the principal and SGB) and, education and learning (for the learner).

Principals of affected schools were not aware if they have made mistakes in the learner population statistics that they forwarded to the Department or not. As a result, three or more learners have to share a book instead of at most two learners sharing one book. The net effect is that learner performance in class is hampered giving rise to the possibility of increased failure rate in the schools.

#### *(b) Centralise payment of suppliers*

The inspection found that the payment for procurement and delivery of LTSM to schools is centralised at Provincial Head Office. On receipt of LTSM, schools check the consignment against the copy of the order that was forwarded to the Department. If the delivery is correct, the Stock Officer signs the invoice acknowledging receipt of the material. The signed invoice is forwarded to the District Office, then to the Service Center and ultimately to the Head Office for payment.

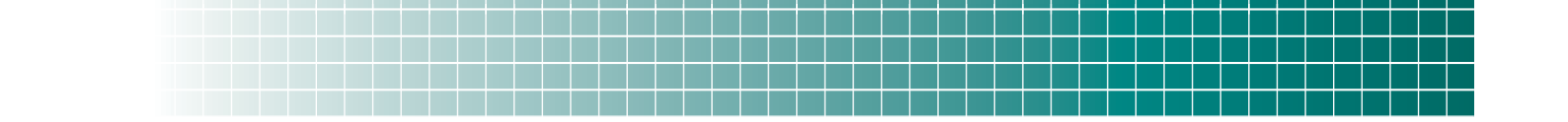
While schools and Districts were in concert that they forward all invoices to Head Office within reasonable time of their arrival and processing, it could not be established with certainty that the Department complies with its policy of processing payment within 30 days. Suppliers could not be contacted on account of time constraints to verify the Department's assertion in this regard.

#### *(c) Improve book retrieval system*

Information received by the inspection team in this regard indicated that the Department does not have a policy regarding book retrieval. Documentation that the inspection team obtained from the Department only mentioned that schools must be encouraged to develop and implement a book retrieval policy. No information could be seen indicating that the Department provides guidance in the development of the policy. Neither could information be gleaned to show that the Department is assisting schools in addressing the problems experienced by schools in retrieving books. It was mentioned that the Province has a theme referred to as "Mazibuye Izincwadi" which is meant to motivate and encourage parents to ensure that learners return the books at the end of each year. Unfortunately the slogan is not documented and therefore not operationalised except that schools are required to design a policy on the management of LTSM at school level.

However, District Offices indicated that ward managers are responsible to encourage and create partnerships between parents and schools through the establishment and training of School Governing Bodies (SGBs). Given that these structures are responsible for the smooth running of schools, it is part of their duty to encourage parents to ensure that the school and school books are community assets that require their protection and safekeeping. The SGBs are responsible to educate parents about the importance of safekeeping of school books for as long as is humanly possible so that funding received from the Department can be directed towards other more important areas of the school other than on school books.

At a school level it was found that the performance regarding the development and implementation of book retrieval policy was uneven. Some schools do not have a policy but make attempts to retrieve school books at the end of the year.



The rate of retrieval was unknown because no records were kept to indicate the number of books that are retrieved at the end of each year.

Other schools had a simple policy that made parents equally responsible for ensuring that learners return school books at the end of each year. At Thembalentsha High School books are numbered and stamped. Parents append signatures in a form supplied by the school to an undertaking and assume partial liability for books supplied to learners. These schools were found to have high book retrieval rates (between 80 – 90%) as a result of the policy accompanied by immaculate record keeping by educators.

In other schools, books are kept by the school and learners are provided with photocopies of the particular section that forms part of the lesson for each day or week. It is evident that this approach is fraught with problems at two levels. Firstly, the quality of teaching and learning is negatively affected because when the photocopies are not available for whatever reason, it means that learners are denied learning material. Secondly, by making photocopies the schools may violate the Copy Right Act. The PSC recommended that the Department should conduct training sessions on the Copy Right Act in order that schools are aware of the serious implications that are involved in photocopying books and parts thereof without permission.

*(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

The process of selection of LTSM was outlined as consisting of the following sectors:

- Publishers and Agents
- Approval by Publishers' Association of South Africa (PASA)
- Screening by officials from the curriculum section
- Book displays at Provincial and District levels.

The Department invites publishers to submit material for the implementation of a new/revised curriculum for an initial period of two years. Thereafter the opportunity to submit material to add to the existing list takes place on a cyclical basis of three years. All requirements of submitting such scripts are laid out in a circular to publishers.

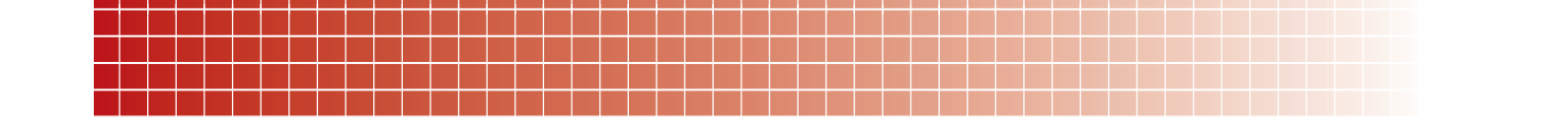
A selection panel composed mainly of Departmental officials, union representatives and subject advisors is convened. This panel is selected from appropriate levels of the particular field of teaching and learning. Its job is, *inter alia*, to appoint evaluators to conduct the evaluation of the books/manuscripts in terms of a standardised evaluation form that is usually provided. Clear criteria of successful candidates are set out in a circular that invites eligible persons.

The chairperson of the screening committee receives copies of each new title to be screened, evaluation forms and a list of the material to be screened.

The screening committee compiles a list of approved books at the conclusion of the process. After the evaluation process is completed the reports are approved, conditionally approved or rejected. The provisional list is made available to publishers. Resubmissions of conditionally approved or rejected books for the year's approved list is done within 14 calendar days of the date of notification.

After the completion of the re-evaluation process, reports on books and the draft of a final list of approved books is made available to publishers. Any corrections to the draft approved list must be forwarded to the Department within 7 calendar days of the date of notification. Publishers are not allowed to make corrections once the list is finalised.

The final approved list of LTSM is presented to the Superintendent General for his approval. The Provisioning Section of the Department prepares a catalogue of approved books. Even at this stage the Department still reserves the right to remove from the list, any material that is subsequently found not to meet the Department's requirements.



For verification purposes each publisher is required to submit a copy of a selection of its final printed material appearing on the Catalogue. If there are serious discrepancies, it is brought to the attention of the publisher and further samples of that publisher's material is requested for further verification. Serious discrepancies from the originally approved material, results in books being removed from the catalogue. In the event of any publisher being dissatisfied with the process of selection of LTSM, the Department has an appeal process which can be used to register such dissatisfaction.

*(e) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM*

The inspection team found that monitoring of LTSM by the District Office occurs at the beginning and end of the school term. All schools perform stock taking and the District conducts a broad sample based survey to determine the status of LTSM in terms of promptness of delivery and quality of the material.

*(f) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

Although the Department informed the inspection team that it conducts on-going training to schools regarding top-up, no evidence could be provided to support and authenticate this assertion. Classification of schools as Section 20 and Section 21 is fundamental in the manner in which capacity in provisioning LTSM prevails among schools. While Section 21 schools have been granted autonomy, the Department has begun a capacity building experiment in terms of which Section 20 schools are permitted to procure stationery independently in the 2008/09 financial year.

*(g) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

The inspection team found that the task team in the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal is composed of different directorates namely, Education Management and Information System (EMIS), Norms and Standards, General Education and Training (GET), Further Education and Training (FET), Curriculum Services, and Finance. Regional and District Offices are not involved. It was further found that a motivation was supported by the Superintendent-General for the creation of a directorate to take full responsibility for LTSM, procurement and delivery. At the time of the inspections, approval for the creation of the directorate was awaited from the Department of Public Service and Administration which, once received, would necessitate a request for funding from Provincial Treasury. The Department informed the inspection team that it aimed to have 90% delivery of LTSM to schools by November 2007. Almost all the schools that the inspection team visited had already received their allocated LTSM consignment.

*(h) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

It was found that the Department monitors the issue of excess stock through its Districts that solicit reports on excess stock from school principals. These reports are forwarded to the Regional Office for forward execution to Head Office. The Department denied that excess stock of LTSM posed a serious problem. In the schools that the team visited no excess stock was found.

*(i) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes*

The inspection team found that the Departmental task team meets every fortnight to monitor progress with regard to the procurement and delivery of the LTSM using as basis the LTSM management plan. The Manager: GET is, amongst other things, in charge of procurement and delivery of LTSM. This directorate solicits progress reports on a weekly basis from Districts, and publishers with respect to the status of delivery of the LTSM. It was reported that year on year since 2004 there has been a remarkable improvement in meeting LTSM targets. Citations in this regard were heard in all the schools visited.



### 6.3.1.2 Guidelines on School District Management

- (a) *Empower Districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

The inspection team was told that the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal has the following organisational arrangement:

**Table 7: Organisational Arrangement of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education**

REGION	DISTRICT CLUSTERS
Ethekwini	Ilembe, Pinetown, Umlazi
Pietermaritzburg	Umgungundlovu, Port Shepstone, Kokstad
Ukhahlamba (Midlands)	Amajuba, Othukela, Umzinyathi
Northern (Zululand)	Empangeni, Obonjeni, Vryheid

It was found that some of the old Regional Offices such as Empangeni, Ulundi, Ukhahlamba, were transformed into service centers. Each of them has two directors, one who Heads the finance component, and the other responsible for human resources. Furthermore, some of the Districts are demarcated into wards. Each ward has a Ward Manager who is responsible for overseeing a number of schools.

- (b) *Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices*

The inspection team found that the Department is still involved in an on-going transformation and organizational re-alignment, the results of which will, *inter alia*, lead to streamlined and efficient communication. However, with the transformation of the old Regional Offices into service centers, documentation to and from the Provincial Head Office still gets delayed and sometimes missing. Head Office itself has staff occupying different buildings in Pietermaritzburg. However, to reduce communication blockages each District cluster, for purposes of accountability and lines of communication is assigned a cluster general manager who is stationed at Head Office.

At District level, the District Manager is the entry point for the Department at the District level. The District Office highlighted that the management of the Turnaround Strategy has been delegated to the District level. The District Office is in charge of the District Plan which is aligned to the Departmental Strategic Plan. There is a monitoring tool and a programme of monitoring. Monthly cumulative reports assist the District Office to keep track on progress in the implementation of the District Plan. The District Manager accounts to the Provincial Head Office in this regard.

Amajuba District Office appeared to have well structured structures that facilitate better communication. Information is disseminated through a number of institutionalised measures such as regular MANCO meetings. District circulars are issued. Nodal points have been identified which are used for purposes of facilitating communication with schools. Information is channeled to these nodal points.

The team found that, at District level the Department encourages its District Offices to work in collaboration with Farmers' Associations. These associations assist to convey information to remote rural schools and communities.

Some Districts have EXCO meetings which are an all inclusive forum. They consist of School Principals, SGB representatives and various stakeholders from the private sector.

While certain patterns of this communication arrangement were found in the Lower Umfolozi District, none of it could be found in Vulindlela except principal's meetings as and when the need arises.

*(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District*

The inspection team was informed that the Provincial Head Office of the Department of Education allocates funds to each District in line with District needs. For proper financial management, each District is supported by a service centre finance director who is responsible for the financial management side of the District. He/she keeps the District Manager informed of the financial performance of the District but reports to the General Manager: Financial Support. The service center finance director is delegated with approval of requests for services to the Districts not exceeding R200, 000.00.

It was further found that LTSM funds are reflected in the District budget only as a book entry. The actual control and management of disbursements in relation to LTSM budget are centralised in the Provincial Head office. Furthermore, it was noted that District Managers forward their requests for procurement of services for the District Offices to the Provincial Head Office of the Department of Education for approval. Generally, District Managers are only delegated with administrative duties such as approval of itineraries of trips for staff in the District.

*(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

It was found that although it is the intention of District Managers that Ward Managers should visit each school, at least once in two weeks, the reality was that some schools get one visit in a quarter, while others get one in six months. The reason is lack of resources added to which is the National directive for ward managers to provide support to schools that obtained less than 50% pass rate in Grade 12.

While information pertaining to scheduled visits to schools was readily available in Districts, lack of consolidated information regarding school visits was lacking in some Districts. Yet some schools (Zibambeleni under Amajuba District) which had a dismal pass rate in the previous year in Grade 12 indicated that they had not been visited by anyone from the District and or Circuit Offices for almost a year.

*(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at District, circuit and school levels.*

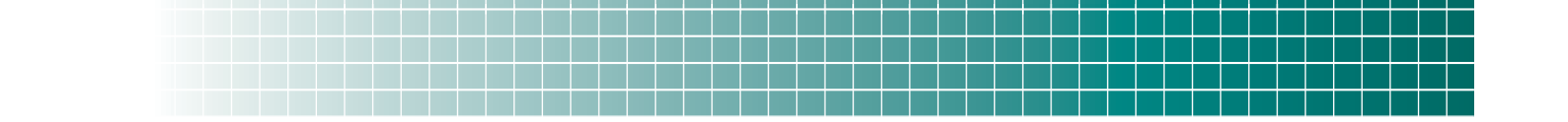
The inspection team noted that EMIS in the Regions and Districts is not resourced. Capturing of all information is done at Head Office. As a result it takes 6 to 8 months for service centers and Districts to be served with information pertaining to education management information in the area. Managers complained that by that time, such information is outdated because many changes have occurred in the interim. It was further found that in some Districts e.g. (Amajuba) vacant funded posts for EMIS have not been filled for the past two years. Enquiries in the Provincial Head Office as to the reason for not filling the vacant posts for this length of time have yielded no positive response. Note was also taken that District Offices lack the necessary infrastructure such as GPRS reading machine and cameras. This equipment is critical in reporting such things as storm damages in schools.

### 6.3.2 Unannounced inspections

*(a) Observing the facilities*

Citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are constitutionally entitled. One measure of ensuring such accessibility is to adapt and improve the physical conditions of delivery sites. Access also includes catering for people with special needs such as the illiterate and monolingual citizens. Office hours have a direct bearing on the extent to which services are accessible to the public.

At the District level, the facilities were generally clean and well maintained. Reception areas were clearly identifiable as the first point of call as you enter the buildings. However, the Empangeni Service Center, which was previously a regional office, has two entrances into the building. The entrances are not well defined in terms of roles and functions until one enters and enquire at the reception. No business hours and list of services rendered are displayed in the reception areas.



Generally signage inside the building is poor. Both the reception areas were unattended during the arrival of the inspection team given that it was still lunch time. However, the team observed that it took over 30 minutes for the receptionist in the senior management reception area in this service center to return from her lunch.

Business hours were unavailable in all District Offices making it impossible for the public to know business hours. Except for the reception areas, all District Offices that the team visited, besides Lower Umfolozi District, do not have dedicated help desks. Even at Lower Umfolozi District the team found that the help desk is not conspicuous to the public. One has to first approach the reception desk to be directed to the dedicated help desk.

In Pietermaritzburg, the staff of the District Office occupies different buildings which cause challenges in communication. The District Office of Majuba, is way out of town (Newcastle) and public transport to it is a challenge. As a result it is not easily accessible to the public unless one is mobile.

Signage from town to the actual District Office is non-existent. To get to it the team depended on good Samaritans for directions to the place. Signage outside is however, clearly displayed.

The Amajuba and Empangeni District Offices pose a real challenge to people with disabilities. No ramps could be found to indicate user-friendliness of the facility to wheelchair users. On the contrary, the Vulindlela District Office was adapted for wheelchair users and therefore accessible to all.

At school level, almost all schools had their names clearly painted on the side of the approach to them. However, administration blocks lack clear signage within the school differentiating the classrooms and the administration block.

The conditions of school buildings and class rooms ranged from the best to the worst. About 80% of the schools, mostly at the secondary and high school level that the inspection team visited, were up to the accepted standard. Some of them are fairly new while others are not so new. However, 20% of school buildings are in dire need of maintenance. It was found at Babazani Primary School, that floors have holes and the cracks stretch from one side of a classroom to the other.

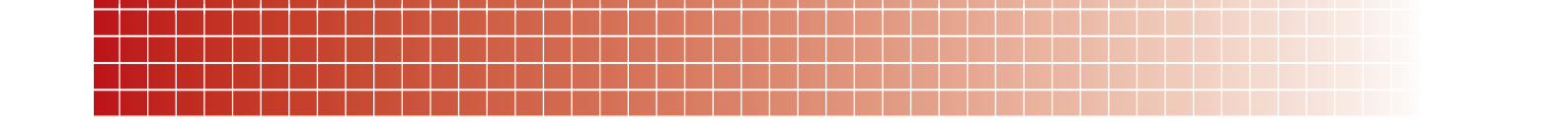
While classroom construction shows visible progress, the conspicuous lack of proper ablution facilities in almost all schools (except Hluma, Bhejobomvu, and Bhejane and Thembalentsha) was noted during the inspections. It was noted that, for some inexplicable reasons, the school construction programme seems to prioritise the building of classrooms over the construction of ablution facilities. It is difficult to imagine how classrooms can be built without the accompanying number of toilets for the learners that are expected to receive teaching and learning in the school.

The building programme in some schools (Bhejane Secondary School) was found to have been incomplete for the past three years. Ablution facilities for educators are not adequately provided. As a result educators share ablution facilities with learners. The school is constructed on a dump site which is water logged. This makes it inaccessible to both learners and educators after heavy rains. Enquiries by the principal of the school to the Department on construction issues have yielded no response.

Learners and educators at Asiphikele Secondary School use ablution facilities of a nearby primary school because the former has no ablution facilities. Enquiries by the school principal in this regard to the Department have also yielded no response.

At Ekuhlakanipheni Primary School ablution facilities of both learners and teachers are located outside the school premises which pose a serious security threat.

Generally schools, specifically primary ones, have poor ablution facilities that pose a health hazard to both the learners and educators.



Schools are generally well secured in terms of fencing but security personnel were found only in 3% of the schools that the inspection team visited. As a result the copper element of the Telkom telephone line at Asiphikelele Secondary School is often stolen, leading to inability of the Department to communicate with the school and vice versa.

All schools are not adapted to allow access and mobility within the school for people with disabilities. There are no ramps for wheelchair users.

### *(b) Observing access to information*

The *Batho Pele* principles of *Access and Information* require information to be readily available to customers to empower them and address their needs. All District Offices but Lower Umfolozi (Empangeni District Office) have security check points at the gate. The inspection team did not experience the effectiveness of the presence of the security. As a result the inspection team's vehicles were not searched and particulars of the drivers were not taken at entry into and exit from the facility.

The display of service standards provides customers with information about the services they can expect and promotes engagement for improved service delivery. This should be communicated in a language that is predominantly used in the area. While the service charter was displayed at the Vulindlela and Amajuba District Offices, it was not found in Lower Umfolozi District Office and Empangeni Service Centre.

Suggestion boxes were not available in all the District Offices that the team visited. This means that members of the public are not given the opportunity to make an input into the manner in which each of these Offices provides services to the community.

It was also found that a help desk exists in Lower Umfolozi District Office but is hidden away from the public eye. There is no sign post to indicate where the help desk can be found by the public unless one enquires from the reception area. Whilst some schools exhibited clear evidence of access to information such as policies of the Department being displayed on the notice boards, others did not have that because of lack of space to install such notice boards. In this regard urban schools tended to be better equipped to facilitate access to information and facilities compared to rural schools.

All schools did not have suggestion boxes. They also did not have formal communication channels with parents except SGBs. While school Principals conceded that the presence of these communication tools would enhance the interaction between the schools and the communities in which they are located, they also observed that parents are free to come to the schools to express whatever problems they either noticed or heard of. School Principals indicated that parents directly approach the Principal should they notice that things are going wrong at the schools.

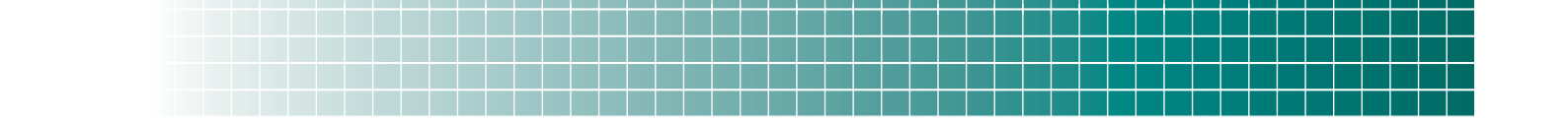
Evidently, consultation in the different schools ranges from good where the SGB seems to be effective, to worse where there appears to be no interaction between the school and the community.

Communication infrastructure such as telephones, fax machines and e-mail was found to be unevenly available among the schools visited.

### *(c) Observing staff*

Wearing name tags or badges fosters a spirit of transparency, openness, accountability and accessibility. None of the staff that the inspection team saw were wearing name tags. When staff at Vulindlela was asked about the reason for not wearing their name tags, they informed the inspection team that they have been waiting for them from Head Office for about a year.

Generally, officials in all the Districts were helpful except in the Empangeni Service Centre. In this centre a spirit of lethargy was evident because an ordinary exchange of greetings was hard to obtain from all the staff that went past the reception area as the inspection team was waiting for the receptionist to return from lunch. Gloom and moroseness



seemed to be the order of the day amongst staff at the centre even as the inspection team was looking for someone to talk to and bring to their attention the unacceptable and demoralising observations that they had noted.

It was evident that the management of lunch breaks and tea times is lacking due to the fact that while reception areas at the center were unattended to during lunch time, telephones were left off the hook to give a false impression to the public that calls the office during that time that the line is engaged.

Staff at each school site was generally friendly and helpful. They also displayed a spirit of cooperation and dedication to teaching. They were open and free to respond to any questions as well as contribute to the discussion during the meetings. However, all staff that the team met and interacted with did not wear name tags.

#### *(d) Talking to staff*

Generally staff was satisfied with their work. In Amajuba it transpired that the building in which the District is housed is not adequate. Maintenance poses a challenge as it is, in terms of the contract, the responsibility of the landlord. It takes an inordinate amount of time for the landlord to attend to breakages of ablution facilities and windows. This impacts negatively on the working conditions of staff as well as their ability to provide the required service at the required level. It was also revealed that the filling of posts takes more than six months for reasons that are not known to the staff. As a result some of the workers find themselves overloaded with work that should otherwise be done by two people.

Some staff felt that communication still remains a battlefield especially on issues of processing of documentation pertaining to application for medical boarding of staff that are unfit for continued employment. Documents get missing in transit as a result of the long chain of command from the District Office to the Service Center, the Regional Office and thereafter, Head Office.

The inspections also revealed and confirmed, through interviews with staff in certain schools, the rising challenge of child headed households. Learners from such homes were a constant feature in both primary and high schools. A difference in community approach to this phenomenon was also noted between urban and rural communities. In the latter communities it was found that neighbours to such households informally adopted such learners whereas in urban areas learners were occasionally given assistance by neighbours in their own home. In the latter approach learners suffered hunger more than in the rural one because they would sometimes go to school without a meal for up to three days (e.g. Thembalentsha).

The current feeding scheme eliminates learners who graduated from primary school because it (feeding scheme) does not cater for learners in secondary schools.

Although the use of illegal drugs by learners was not a prominent feature in the schools that the inspection team visited, it was found to be a serious problem at Zibambeleni Secondary School.

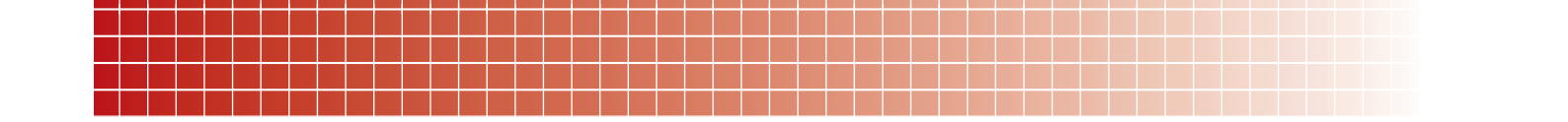
While discipline was found to exist in some schools (Thembalentsha), in others, evidence of vandalism of school buildings (Zibambeleni) indicated a total collapse of respect for community property and self discipline of learners.

#### *(f) Talking to citizens/service users*

Time constraints could not allow for interaction to take place between the inspection team and this particular sector.

#### *(g) General observations*

The Department must conceive a strategy to deal with classrooms in schools that are under utilised as a result of diminishing PPN such as the case with Zibambeleni High School. Unused classrooms showed signs of deliberate vandalism. The ceiling were pulled down and electricity lines also broken. It was also found that use of illegal substances in the community is affecting the school adversely. Learners are sometimes brought back to school from some nearby house highly inebriated as a result of substance abuse.



Furthermore, it was also reported that the current acting school manager at Zibambeleni has been acting for over three years. The school manager was suspended on allegations of corruption and mismanagement over three years ago. Although the case was set and finalised, sanctions imposed were later withdrawn, and the school manager has not returned to his work station and no one knows the reason for this state of affairs. Except in this particular school, this phenomenon was not traceable to any of the other sites that the team visited.

Educators reported that the rate of rape of learners on their way to and from school is cause for concern. In certain areas it was found that SAPS provide the necessary support in terms of arrests and prosecutions while in others, the services of the police is lacking.

Sixty percent (60%) of the schools that were visited do not have playing grounds. This affects negatively the Department's intention to ensure that the education impacts positively to all the three facets of the learner, namely the body, mind and spirit. Physical development is lacking.

The inspections also revealed that most of the schools do not have reticulated water. Most of them depend on water tanks (jojo water tanks) that are used to collect rainwater. It was reported that during the winter months water tanks run dry and more often learners have to carry water with plastic bottles from their homes to school.

## 6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.4.1 Announced inspections

#### 6.4.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

- The Department should finalise the structure of the LTSM component in Head Office in order to provide the required support to the procurement and distribution of the books in the Province.
- The Department should ensure that all schools develop a policy framework for retrieval of school books from learners at the end of each year.
- The Department should expedite the decentralisation of recruitment, selection and placement of staff to ensure that posts at District level do not take inordinate amounts of time to be filled.

#### 6.4.1.2 Guideline on School District Management

- Communication between Districts Office and the Provincial Head Office requires streamlining to ensure that delays in the processing of documentation does not affect service delivery in a negative manner.
- Basic communication infrastructure such as telephones and fax machines must be provided to facilitate communication between District Offices and schools.
- MANCO meetings that include principals of schools should be made mandatory in all Districts to provide the required support in communicating critical information.
- The human resource base at District level, with particular focus on ward managers, should be increased. This will ensure that schools are provided with the necessary support through scheduled visits, to improve their performance. School visits should not be occasioned by surprising developments such as conflicts or low failure rate.
- The Department should ensure that the IQMS directorate provides feedback to the Districts in respect of schools in which integrated quality management system has been implemented.
- The Department should delegate the EMIS functions to the Districts together with the required capacity.
- Signage to Districts and at some District Offices needs serious attention to improve accessibility by the public to the District Offices.

## 6.4.2 Unannounced inspections

- Schools should improve the signage in their buildings to ensure that members of the public who enter the facility at any time know where to go for assistance.
- The Department must ensure that in its school and classroom construction programme norms and standards are adhered to with respect to the inseparable relationship in the erection of class rooms together with the required number of ablution facilities for teachers and learners.
- The Department should ensure that all staff is provided with name tags that they should wear as an official obligation in line with the *Batho Pele* principles of transparency, openness and accountability.
- An annual assessment of quintile rating of schools should be conducted to ensure that administrative errors of wrong rating that end up disadvantaging learners, are avoided.
- The Department should embark on a campaign of public education aimed at ensuring that schools are seen as part of community assets. This will reduce the practice of vandalising schools by rogue elements from nearby communities.
- Display of business hours in a conspicuous area in the Department's institutions should be mandatory.
- Information must be displayed in the dominant languages spoken in a particular area.
- While the Department ensures that compliance with conditions of service is upheld, it should ensure that switchboards are attended to at all times to ensure that the public is not disadvantaged when they want to access the Department by telephone. Managers of the Department's institutions must ensure that alternative arrangements are made to have switchboards attended to throughout business hours.
- Security check points at schools need to be improved with community participation to ensure that learning and teaching are not disturbed by wrong elements.
- All institutions of the Department should have suggestion boxes and adequate stock of paper or suggestion forms and pens to create linkages between themselves, the public and clients.
- Integrated service delivery between teachers, social workers and psychologists at school level must be encouraged in order to deal with problems of learners of child-headed and poverty stricken households.

# Chapter Seven

## Provincial Department of Education: Limpopo



## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 7 presents the findings of the inspections conducted in the Limpopo Department of Education. The findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected District Offices and schools.

## 7.2 SITES VISITED

In Limpopo, the inspections were conducted between the 19<sup>th</sup> October and 8<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Three District Offices and six schools (three in each District Office) were visited by the inspection team. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 8: Limpopo Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Capricorn District Office	19 October 2007	Molautsi Secondary School	26 October 2007
		Pietersburg Comprehensive School	26 October 2007
Waterberg District Office	16 October 2007	Segooa-Kgala Primary School	30 October 2007
		Somavhunga Secondary School	30 October 2007
Sekhukhune District Office	19 October 2007	Laerskool Burgersfort	2 November 2007
		Mogolo Secondary School	8 November 2007

## 7.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

### 7.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the announced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

#### 7.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

##### (a) *Improve budget controls and management*

During the inspection it emerged that the budget on the LTSM is a responsibility of the Provincial Head Office and that it is revised annually. The budget is informed by the needs of both teachers and the learners. A Quintile System which indicates levels of impoverishment and budget allocation is used in revising the budget for LTSM. It was also indicated that there are norms and standards governing the amount allocated per learner. However, these are sometimes exceeded due to the changes in the National Curriculum Statements. At the District level, it was confirmed that the budgeting process for LTSM is indeed dealt with at Provincial Head Office and as such, Districts are not involved.

### *(b) Centralise payment of suppliers*

During the inspection, it was reported that payment of suppliers is centralised at Provincial Head Office level and that suppliers submit their invoices to District Offices together with the delivery notes of the LTSM. The District Offices would check for the correctness of the consignment and if satisfied, the relevant functionary would sign the invoice and forward it to Provincial Head Office for payment. It was indicated that payment of invoices takes place within 30 days in line with procurement or supply chain management policy. Districts visited during the inspections confirmed that the payment of suppliers is centralised and is done at Provincial Head Office level. The inspection team was informed that Provincial Head Office pays the suppliers within 30 days. It was also indicated that the centralisation of the payment of suppliers is currently effective.

### *(c) Improve book retrieval system*

During the inspection, it was reported that there is a standardised system designed for utilization by schools in managing the retrieval of books. Every school in the Province has a register whereby every learner who receives a book is entered. At the end of the year, learners are required to return the books they were given at the beginning of the year. The inspection team was shown a sample of a book retrieval register. District and Circuit Offices are entrusted with the responsibility to monitor the book retrieval process. As part of improving book retrieval, parents are encouraged to play an active role in ensuring the return of books. There is also a penalty fee levied in the case of a lost or damaged book, and parents have been informed about this.

The District Offices informed the inspection team that while the Provincial Head Office has ensured the implementation of a retrieval system for proper care and maintenance of textbooks, the actual implementation is undertaken by schools. District and Circuit Offices conduct inspections to ensure that this is done. Schools in consultation with their School Governing Bodies (SGBs) develop their own policies (textbook policies) around book retrieval systems to ensure the return of books. Schools also educate learners and parents on the maintenance and care of textbooks during meetings and through written communication. Only the Capricorn District Office submitted evidence of a register indicating the rate of retrieval of books for 2006. Based on the register provided, it was clear that the rate of retrieval for the year 2006 in the Capricorn District was 80% on average. This means that the system was working effectively. However, there was on average still 20% room for improvement to retrieve books at 100%.

### *(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

During the inspections, it was reported that the selection of the LTSM is done at National level, although the Provincial Department is afforded representation during the selection process. The stakeholders include curriculum advisors, labour unions and educators. As the process is centralised, individual educators are not involved in the selection process. The National Department usually announces revised National curriculum statements during the last quarter of the year, which allows sufficient time for the selection of LTSM.

### *(e) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM received by schools*

Regarding this recommendation, the inspection team was informed that the quality of LTSM is controlled at District level where the consignment received is checked against the requisition forms. After verification, the books are then delivered to schools. The District Offices informed the inspection team that they are the ones that were responsible for monitoring the quality of the LTSM when they are delivered by the suppliers at the respective schools.

### *(f) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

The Provincial Head Office informed the inspection team that budgetary constraints have necessitated that the Department prioritise the top-up of LTSM on new enrolments only. Educators have been informed about this position. It was further reported at the District level that the top-up of LTSM is not taking place as effectively as it was planned due to budgetary

constraints. The requisition process only allows for the books that are budgeted for. This is one of the mechanisms applied to ensure that schools enforce the book retrieval system.

*(g) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

The inspection team was informed that the provisioning of LTSM is done at National level and the Provincial Department is afforded representation during the screening process. District Offices are not involved in the provisioning of the LTSM as it is done at National level with Provincial representation.

*(h) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

At the Provincial Head Office, the inspection team was informed that District and Circuit Managers are responsible for conducting assessments with regard to LTSM stock levels. Where there is excess stock, measures are taken to move such stock to schools experiencing shortages. It was noted that with the ever increasing movement of learners to cities or towns, there have been instances where rural based schools have experienced excess stocks. The flip side of this was also the question of city/town based schools experiencing less stock due to increased demand resulting from the increased learner enrolment. District Managers told the inspection team that the Provincial Department of Education was working on a system to manage the redistribution of the LTSM excess stock. It was hoped that the system will be functional in the 2008/09 financial year. Furthermore, to improve the delivery of LTSM, the Department has decided to deal directly with publishers and this approach has since removed long-standing bottlenecks.

With the exception of the Waterberg District that indicated that it is responsible for conducting assessments with regard to LTSM stock, the inspection team was informed that the schools were the ones responsible for the process of checking excess stock. The Waterberg District Office showed the inspection team a Year Programme for 2007 which indicated a schedule of visits to schools by its officials, with clear responsibilities and areas of focus. During the visits, the assessments include verifying stocks and monitoring learner and teacher attendance. The Waterberg District Office maintained that where excess stock was found, arrangements were made to move such surplus to where there is a greater need.

The inspection team noted that there were common experiences amongst the three Districts with regard to the process of LTSM, and these experiences were found to be consistent with the responses of the Departmental representative at the Provincial Head Office.

### 7.3.1.2 Guidelines on School District Management

*(a) Empower Districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

The inspection team observed that the District Offices have only set delegation to authorise payments to the amount of R250 000.00 on goods and services and the no-fee school allocations. The District Offices may also utilise these funds for the appointment of temporary or substitute educators. All other powers are held at Provincial Head Office level. The District Managers have indicated that the delegations provided to them assist in improving performance of Offices as well as the provisioning of equipment.

*(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices*

The inspection team noted that reporting between the Districts and the Provincial Head Office has been an area of concern in that District Managers did not seem to have a clear indication as to whom to report to. It was also indicated that communication lines were often not followed as managers would not be consulted with regard to nomination of their staff to attend courses, only to be made aware by the staff themselves. Another example was that circulars would be sent to schools directly without even copying the District and Circuit Offices. These created problems for the managers in terms of planning and monitoring performance. The managers indicated that a clear process is in place to ensure

effective communication and reporting such as written submissions, memoranda and by telephone. However, these were not always properly followed. There were lengthy delays in responses to correspondence sent to the Provincial Head Office. This means that the response rate from the Head Office is slow. The managers attributed the problem to lack of coordination from the Provincial Office occasioned by the vacant post of the relevant senior official responsible for District coordination.

*(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District*

The financial responsibilities of District Offices are limited to goods and services, and the appointment of temporary staff. The Sekhukhune District Office indicated that the posts of financial manager and deputy financial manager have been vacant for more than a year and the management of its financial affairs has been negatively affected. Generally, the District Managers indicated that they do not have the necessary capacity to deal effectively with their financial affairs and other pertinent responsibilities. The high vacancy rate and the centralisation of many key powers were cited as the reasons. The inspection team was also informed that the size of Districts presented challenges in that the span of control was too wide. It was suggested that the size be reviewed and reduced to allow effective management. It is important to note that the District Offices participate in such committees as Transport Committee (dealing with subsidy vehicles) and Bid Committee at Provincial level.

*(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

During the inspections, it was found that the visited Districts do visit schools. The District Offices provided schedules of visits to schools. It was indicated that lack of capacity often hampers with the frequency of visits. These school visits take place monthly. There have been instances where formal meetings were held with school principals. By the end of the second quarter, the Sekhukhune District Office had visited at least 63 schools while the Capricorn District Offices visited 21 schools. The Capricorn District Office submitted a report indicating that of the schools visited, the majority performed below 50%. The District Office has also held meetings with 938 school principals over a period of three months. The Waterberg District Office submitted a Year Programme for 2007 indicating the planned school visits which covered a whole range of activities including inspection of LTSM, school support and examinations. Responsible officials and dates of visits were clearly indicated. It was indicated that most schools have been visited; however, this could not be substantiated.

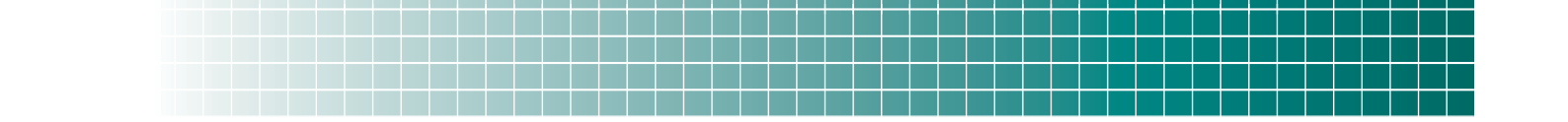
*(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at District, circuit and school levels*

It was noted that the EMIS is managed at the Provincial Head Office. However, updated information is provided to educators regularly. The Provincial Head Office confirmed to the inspection team about the delegation of powers that were given to the District Offices. It was indicated that the powers delegated to the District Offices allow the Head of the Department to remain as the Chief Accounting Officer. The Provincial Head Office indicated that should District Offices have an issue to raise with them there is a line of communication they can use. The Provincial Head Office also indicated that they are working on a feedback mechanism that will facilitate communication between itself and the District Offices.

### 7.3.2 Unannounced inspections

*(a) Observing facilities*

The inspection team observed that all three District Offices did not have inside and outside signage indicating way-finding. There were also no directions to reception areas. In all Offices, business hours and services rendered were not displayed. Of all the three visited Districts, only the Waterberg District Office had facilities to ensure easier access to people with disabilities.



All the inspected sites at both Waterberg and Capricorn District Offices were clean inside and the physical conditions of the buildings were good. Reception areas at all the District Offices were clean and the chairs and couches appeared comfortable. It was, however, a matter of concern to notice a pile of refuse next to the entrance used by the Capricorn and Sekhukhune District Offices. Although these Offices may not be responsible for the littering, such a pile of refuse right at the entrance reflects negatively on their image.

Out of the six schools inspected, it was observed that only two (2) schools, namely, Pietersburg Comprehensive School and Laerskool Burgersfort had both inside and outside signage with business hours clearly displayed where citizens would easily notice them. This represents 33% of the schools inspected that fully comply with this requirement. It is important to emphasise that signage makes it easier for the citizens to access delivery points. These schools are based in urban areas and are regarded as serving the most affluent communities in the District. They are accordingly rated as Quintile 5. These schools are located within close proximity of the Central Business Districts (CBD) of their towns. Molautsi Secondary School and Somavhunga Secondary School, had outside signage only. These schools are both rural based. The other schools had no signage at all with Segooa-Kgala Primary School and Mogolo Secondary School indicating that the outside signage was previously provided, but it has since disappeared

In observing access to buildings by people with disabilities, it was noted that 3 (50%) schools had made provision for this and they are Pietersburg Comprehensive School, Segooa-Kgala Primary School and Mogolo Secondary School. Lack of compliance in other schools was ascribed to lack of resources. However, non-compliance may create the perception that these schools are insensitive to the needs of people with disabilities.

Most schools (4) had computers and other labour saving devices. In this information age computers are a critical source of knowledge which can no longer be regarded as a luxury, especially as computer skills are currently classified as scarce skills. Therefore, availing computers to learners provides the prospects of building a reservoir of these needed skills.

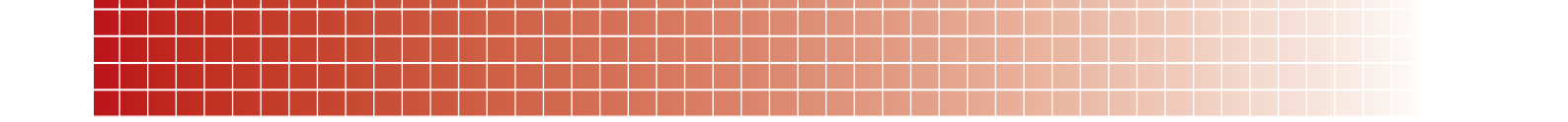
The inspection team noted that only two (2) schools, namely, Pietersburg Comprehensive School and Laerskool Burgersfort, displayed services rendered and the related cost. This may have provided them with an opportunity to emulate practices of businesses which are customer friendly.

The physical condition of buildings at all the schools was good, although at one school it was noted that the premises were soiled due to the unpaved grounds. The inspection team observed that the principal of Molautsi Secondary School did not have a proper office and furniture. Instead, a classroom was also used as an office especially when teaching was not taking place. The school did not have a clerk either, which meant that the principal had to do clerical duties as well. The facilities for storing/filing key documents were also not of a satisfactory standard.

### *(b) Access to information*

During the inspection it was noted that the three inspected District Offices had security check-points. However, these check-points were not equipped to guide and direct people on arrival to the relevant service points. The service charter/standards were not displayed in any of the three District Offices. The display of service standards provides customers with some information on the level of service they can expect and promotes engagement for improved service delivery.

The Capricorn District Office had a suggestion or complain box located in the reception areas. However, the District Manager indicated that since his appointment (4 months at the time of the inspections) the box has not been opened and he did not know who was responsible for the box. This suggests that the office does not take seriously the inputs made by citizens. Waterberg District Office did not have a suggestion box or complain register. Suggestion boxes and complain registers are important in engendering a participatory approach in service delivery and encourage openness and transparency on the part of the Department. This practice is in line with *Batho Pele* principle. The absence of suggestion box and complains register shows the Districts' non-compliance with the *Batho Pele* principle of Consultation.



With regard to how complains are handled, the three District Managers indicated that customers were free to approach them personally and they would always listen to their complains and respond swiftly to address the raised issues. However, there was no well developed redress system made known to service users by the District Office.

It was observed that three schools, namely Pietersburg Comprehensive School, Laerskool Burgersfort and Mogolo Secondary School, displayed their service standards. Out of the schools inspected, only Laerskool Burgersfort had a suggestion box. Although the box was opened regularly, it was, however, noted that it is rarely used as parents preferred to personally meet with the principal or educators to discuss areas of concern.

Most schools (4) did not have adequately resourced libraries. Lack of adequately resourced libraries deprives learners of access to valuable information. Libraries are often a repository of key information on life skills which learners need for development.

### (c) *Observing staff*

Wearing of name tags or badges fosters the spirit of transparency, openness, accountability and accessibility. The inspection team observed that staff members at the three District Offices visited did not wear nametags or badges. Wearing of name tags is important especially when a need arises for citizens to follow up on particular cases. One is able to identify the person who served him/her. It was however observed that the staff members were friendly and demonstrated professionalism and knowledge regarding their work at the District Offices. They also appeared informed about the importance of the practice of the *Batho Pele* principles in the Public Service.

None of the school staff appeared to realise the importance of wearing name badges. Although the principal of Molautsi Secondary School wore a name badge at the time of inspection, he acknowledged that such name badges are only made for staff who invigilate during examinations. However, the staff at all the schools appeared to be knowledgeable, efficient and professional in their interaction with the inspection team. It was encouraging to note that they were open and friendly when sharing information about their working conditions with the inspection team.

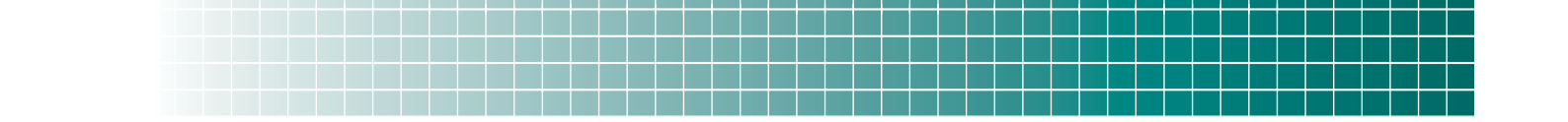
### (d) *Talking to staff*

The morale of personnel plays an important role in effective service delivery and staff concerns should be listened to and effective measures should be employed to address their concerns. Equally important are inputs from staff to bring about innovations and improve service delivery. Generally, the staff was satisfied with their offices, although at the Waterberg District Office, staff indicated that additional computers were needed. However, it was noted that at all the Districts inspected lunch is from 13:00 to 14:00 and at this time the offices are closed. It should be mentioned that organisations that espouse customer friendly arrangements would ensure that staff alternate in taking breaks to allow smooth rendering of service. Such rigid practices as observed at these offices clearly impede the implementation of *Batho Pele* principles and District Managers need to consider changing these arrangements as well as inculcate in the staff the culture of “*We care, We belong, and We serve*”.

Further engagement with staff indicated that there is a need for regular staff meetings to discuss practical problems such as the work ethic and possible improvement on work processes. The staff at the Waterberg District Offices indicated that internet access was not available and this deprived them of sourcing valuable information for self-improvement and for work purposes.

All the schools indicated that formalised lines of communication with Circuit Offices were effective. However, it was noted that challenges were experienced at District Office level and these challenges were attributed to the fact that District Managers were new in posts. Some of them still needed to adapt to their positions. Schools indicated that they often do not receive feedback on their Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) assessment reports.

There were differing views amongst schools regarding the LTSM with two schools experiencing shortages which were



attributed to delays in provisioning by the Provincial Head Office. Generally, the schools were of the view that very little consultation takes place regarding procurement of the LTSM. The majority of schools indicated that they have sufficient educators despite having several vacant posts. This was probably due to the fact that temporary or substitute educators were appointed in those vacancies. While the appointment of temporary educators has facilitated service delivery at the school level, it is important to ensure stability by filling vacancies with suitably qualified personnel. It was also disconcerting to note that in three schools, namely Molautsi, Somavhunga and Mogolo, posts of deputy principal have been vacant for more than six months at the time inspections were conducted. The inspection team also noted that Molautsi and Mogolo, which are based in rural areas, experienced a shortage of classrooms and as a result some classrooms were congested with 50 to 74 learners. This number of learners in one classrooms far exceeds the acceptable norm of teacher/learner ratio of 1 is to 40.

Five of the schools had adequate water facilities and toilets. Only Mogolo, which is based in rural area, was using the old pit toilets which do not have flushing facilities. There were also no basins for washing hands after using the toilets which posed serious health and hygiene risks at this school.

Most schools had relatively safe environments reporting minimal criminal activities in and around their schools. Pietersburg and Burgersfort schools which are urban based indicated that they always have their gates locked and access is gained through a security check point which enhances the safety of the schools.

#### *(e) Talking to citizens/service users*

Citizens as consumers of the services provided by the institutions are in a better position to give feedback on the state of service delivery. Their views and comments are important in any effort meant to improve service delivery. The inspection team had an opportunity to speak to some service users at the Waterberg District Office and they appeared dissatisfied with the treatment they received on the day at the hands of the District Manager. The interviewed citizens indicated that they were not happy with the slow response in service delivery. They indicated that the amount of time spent waiting before being served is often unreasonably long. Citizens go to District Offices to enquire about issues ranging from teaching and learning opportunities, tender documents to examination related enquiries and to submit application for employment forms. There were no citizens at the other District Offices on the day they were visited.

#### *(f) Consultation*

All the schools reported that consultation with parents is extensive and occurs at a macro and micro level. At the macro level, parents are consulted through the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and annual parents meetings at the beginning of the year. At the micro level, individual letters are sent to parents on any developments regarding the learners, including disciplinary issues. Parents are also encouraged to visit schools whenever they wish to raise issues around their children. Laerskool Burgersfort indicated that it has a weekly newsletter which communicates events and activities of the school to parents.

Consultation with learners in primary schools included individual meetings with educators and the principals, where applicable. In the case of secondary schools, structures such as Learner Representative Councils (LRCs) play an active role in communicating with learners. Written communication and school assembly meetings are used as consultation processes.

Most schools indicated that efforts are being made to involve the local police, clinics and social workers in providing learners with life skills. Organisations such as Love Life and Heaven of Hope were cited as key players in providing guidance to learners in dealing with their teenage years as well as learning more about dealing with issues of crime and HIV/AIDS.

Learners with learning difficulties are often referred to educational psychologists at the parents' cost. However, parents are sufficiently consulted on the matter and their permission is solicited for their children's referrals.

### (g) *General observations*

It was encouraging to observe that all the schools displayed their vision and mission statements where they can be easily noticed. Vision and Mission statements are road-maps for schools to direct their everyday activities and ensure that they are not distracted from their set goals.

Parking facilities appeared sufficient, although in rural based schools such parking was just an open field.

In an attempt to ensure that school grounds are utilised in a profitable manner, the inspection team observed that Segooa-Kgala and Somavhunga schools encouraged local communities to plant vegetable gardens on unused grounds. This innovative idea not only helps to maintain clean school grounds, but also has the potential positive spin-off of addressing poverty in those communities. This is a commendable practice.

## 7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.4.1 Announced inspections

#### 7.4.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

- The Provincial Head Office must consider to employ resources to monitor the effective implementation of the book retrieval system, and ensure that the District and Circuit Offices actually carry out the inspections and report on the trends.
- District Managers' lines of reporting must be clarified and the conclusion of performance agreements of senior managers at District level be expedited. The post of General Manager for District co-ordination should be filled to ensure stability.
- The feasibility of decentralising the selection and recruitment processes of staff at District level should be explored.

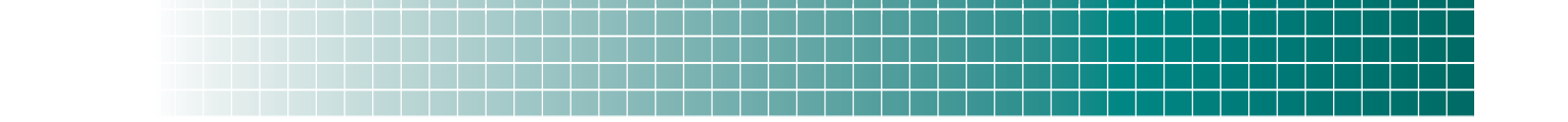
#### 7.4.1.2 Guideline on School District Management

- The Provincial Department must explore the feasibility of delegating further powers to District Managers including the power on appointment of their staff and increased financial responsibilities.
- Improved communication lines between the Provincial Head Office and the Districts should be put in place to enhance effective dissemination of information and ensure better performance monitoring.
- The Provincial Department must consider creating sub District Offices to reduce the span of control as well as to align its service boundaries by taking into account the boundaries of the other levels of government especially category B municipalities.
- District Offices should commit to programmes of school visits and record incidents with a view to develop strategies to manage them. Regular feedback should be provided to the Provincial Head Office for both noting and appropriate action.
- The Provincial Department must ensure that feedback on IQMS is provided timeously to enhance morale amongst educators and provide timeous intervention where development is needed.
- The Provincial Head Office must seriously consider making available functions of the EMIS at school District level. Capacitating staff on the management and utilisation of EMIS should be ensured.

### 7.4.2 Unannounced inspections

- The Provincial Department must ensure that District Offices and schools have proper inside and outside signage awareness. Proper signage assists service users in finding service points with ease.



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- There is a need to consider building ramps at the Capricorn and Sekhukhune District Offices to accommodate people with disabilities. The same should be considered with schools which do not have ramps to accommodate people with disabilities.
  - Service charters/standards need to be displayed to provide customers with a clear indication of the type of service rendered at a particular service point.
  - Suggestion boxes and complains registers need to be provided, placed where they can be easily seen and inputs and complains handled timeously.
  - Staff should wear name badges to enhance transparency, openness and accountability. These also make it easier for customers to identify the person who has served them.
  - Staff at District Offices need to be acquainted with the *Batho Pele* principles and the Code of Conduct to ensure an improved work ethic. During lunch breaks staff members should alternate to allow effective service delivery and efficient.
  - There is a need to review and streamline the recruitment and selection process so that filling of vacancies can be expedited.
  - The provisioning of proper sanitation at Mogolo Secondary Schools need to be given priority. Rigorous engagement with the local municipality may be necessary. Otherwise, alternative measures should be devised to promote hygiene.
  - To enhance safety of learners and teachers at schools, security check points may need to be improved.
  - There is a need to consider instilling discipline in schools and stamping out absenteeism as well as abuse of leave of absence by educators. The Disciplinary Code and Procedures and/or relevant legislation must be invoked where ill-discipline is experienced. Conducting workshops on the Code of Conduct may be considered.

# Chapter Eight

Provincial Department of  
Education: Mpumalanga

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings of the inspections conducted in the Mpumalanga Department of Education are presented in this chapter. Such findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected Districts Offices and schools.

## 8.2 SITES VISITED

In Mpumalanga, the inspections were conducted between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007. Three District Offices and six schools (two in each District Office) were visited by the inspection team. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 9: Mpumalanga Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Ekangala Regional Office	3 October 2007	Hloniphani Secondary School	3 October 2007
		Tjhidelani Primary School	3 October 2007
Ehlanzeni Sibande Office	8 October 2007	Sitintile High School	8 October 2007
		Msogwaba Primary School	8 October 2007
Gert Sibande Regional Office	15 October 2007	Reggie Masuku Secondary School	15 October 2007
		Ermelo Primary School	15 October 2007

## 8.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

### 8.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the announced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

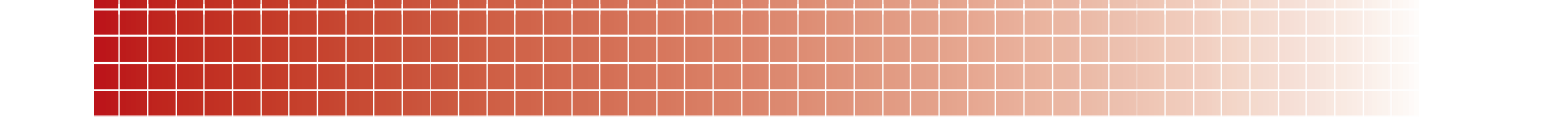
#### 8.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

##### (a) *Improve budget controls and management*

During the inspections, it was reported that the LTSM budget controls and management function have been centralised at the Provincial Head Office. This means that budget control and management are done at the Provincial level and not at the District Offices. This was indeed confirmed by the District Offices that participated in the inspections. The Provincial Head Office also reported that the previous years' LTSM budget guides the following year's budget.

##### (b) *Centralise payment of suppliers*

The inspection team was informed that the payment of service providers is centralised at the Provincial Head Office. The



District Offices only receive invoices to verify the delivery of goods. They then sign and stamp the delivery notes which are sent to Provincial Head Office for payment within the stipulated time of 30 days. It was reported that a 30 days system was generally working although at times there were delays on the processing of the invoices.

*(c) Improve book retrieval system*

During the inspections it was reported that the schools have systems in place for the retrieval of textbooks and that a circular was issued in 2006 to all principals of schools requesting them to retrieve books. The Provincial Department of Education and its Education Districts were not directly involved in the management of the book retrieval system. Parents were also aware of the systems and were aware of the implications. For example, if a child has lost a book, his/her parents know that they would have to pay for the replacement of the book.

*(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators.*

The inspection team was informed at both Provincial and District level that educators, curriculum implementers from the Districts Offices and curriculum developers from the Provincial Head Office meet and discuss the selection of the LTSM. The Provincial Head Office is responsible for issuing and approving the catalogue of all textbooks. The catalogues with books to be ordered are issued to schools at the beginning of April and meetings with principals and circuit managers are held thereafter. Orders with publishers are done by July of each year. Publishers have three months i.e. August, September and October to print and deliver the books which normally takes place in November of each year.

*(e) Review LTSM requirements*

The inspection team was informed that selection of the LTSM according to the revised National Curriculum Statements is the responsibility of the Provincial Head Office. However, it was mentioned in one District Office that curriculum change is announced one year in advance and this was confirmed at the Provincial Head Office.

*(f) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM*

During the inspections, District Offices reported that it is the responsibility of the Provincial Head Office to monitor the quality of LTSM received by schools. However, it was reported that principals are the ones who are expected to check the quality of the LTSM supplied and return to the suppliers any LTSM material of poor quality. District Offices confirmed that they co-ordinate quality checks with principals.

*(g) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

The inspection team was informed that an extensive training on LTSM top up system is conducted for principals, stock-controllers and circuit office Chief Clerks on a yearly basis. District Managers are responsible in ensuring that their District Offices have appropriate capacity on LTSM top up.

*(h) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

District Offices reported that this function falls under the responsibility of the Provincial Head Office. Provincial Head Office is also responsible for the capturing of book requisitions from schools, and the verification of requisitions is conducted with school Principals by the District Offices.

*(i) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

During inspections, it was reported that Asset Management divisions of the District Offices are responsible for conducting frequent school visits to verify and check obsolete textbooks. Surplus books are taken to other schools where there is great need. Indeed, District Offices agreed that it was their responsibility to ensure that extra books were taken to needy schools.

*(j) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes*

During inspections, two District Offices reported that the delivery of LTSM by both the suppliers and publishers was on time. However, one District Office reported that the requisition is submitted timeously to Provincial Head Office for capturing and placing of an order. The requisition of books is done before the end of June of each year. The inspection team was also informed that during the delivery of books the capacity of the warehouses where books are kept is considered.

### 8.3.1.2 Guidelines on School District Management

*(a) Empower Districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

District Offices indicated that Provincial Head Office has delegated to them the appointment of office staff on salary levels 1 to 10, and educators on salary levels 2 to 4. The Provincial Head Office reported that the decentralisation of the appointment was meant to fast-track the filling of the posts without delay.

*(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices*

The three District Offices visited reported that there is an established communication channel with the Provincial Head Office. There is a designated Chief Directorate which is responsible for all communication between the District and the Provincial Head Office. In addition to line function communication, the Gert Sibande District reported that it is also using a matrix communication system at Provincial level. This entails communication among sectional Heads within the Provincial Office. The advantage of matrix communication at regional level is that it is faster and any potential problems are sorted out without delay. However, the line function communication remains an effective channel of communication between District Offices and the Provincial Head Office.

*(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District*

All the three District Offices visited are content with the delegated financial responsibilities. However, they still feel that more powers should be given to them. District Offices can only make payments for goods or services of less than R100 000. District Offices indicated that they do have the capacity to improve financial management. The following committees have been established to ensure quality financial management: IT, Disposal Specification, Bid Evaluation, and Adjudication committees. The Provincial Head Office reported that the issuing of more delegated power has not been considered yet.

*(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

Officials reported that Regional Offices have developed a school visit programme. District officials use the school visit programme as the guide when they conduct school visit. During school performance assessment, school visit programme helps schools to know as to when they will be visited by District officials. For each school, there is a school Assessment Team comprising the principal (as chairperson) and education specialists from the Regional Office. The role of the school Assessment Team is to review school performance and advise accordingly. Regional Offices conduct moderation sessions as part of continuous assessment and monitoring.

*(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at District, circuit and school levels*

During inspections, it was reported that the education management information system is available only at the Provincial Head Office level and no officials at Regional Office level have been trained on it. This was confirmed by the Provincial Head Office.

## 8.3.2 Unannounced inspections

### (a) Observing facilities

All Districts Offices visited had poor outside signage except for Gert Sibande Region which was clearly marked and gave proper information. The reception areas at District Offices visited were not clearly identifiable and it was difficult for the inspection team to locate the service points.

Business hours were not displayed in all visited District Offices. The costs of service as well as the type of services being rendered were also not displayed. This goes against the spirit of the *Batho Pele* principles since the service users are being kept in the dark regarding the cost and the type of services being rendered at these service delivery sites/offices.

The conditions of the furniture and buildings were fairly good although there is a need for rehabilitation of the buildings. Some of the buildings of the District Offices are fairly new but they are not being properly maintained. Furthermore, all visited sites had no ramps for people with disabilities. In general, all District Offices were in a clean and welcoming condition. Even toilets were well maintained.

All visited schools had acceptable outside signage. The outside signage was clear and gave proper information. Only two (2) of the visited schools did not have proper inside signage giving direction to appropriate service counters.

The condition of buildings and classrooms were found to be in a good condition although some of the schools were old and looked dilapidated. In all schools, the ramps for disabled people were visibly not there.

Most visited schools were found in a clean condition except in Ehlanzeni where the Msogwaba Primary School was not clean. Bricks that seemed to have remained after construction, together with building sand, were all over the yard making it impossible for learners and educators to move freely around the school yard.

### (b) Access to information

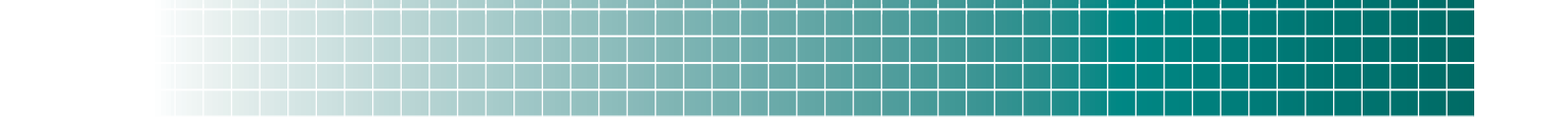
The inspection team noted that in almost all visited sites there were no staff members guiding people to the right points of service on arrival. This makes it difficult for the public to find their way around the building and therefore members of the public are likely to spend time unnecessarily in wrong queues. The service points had few staff manning the help desks.

The Service Standards were not displayed at all service points. Some of the officials have indicated that each directorate has its own service standards hence they were not displayed. It is vital for government institutions to display their service standard as citizens should be told what level and quality of service they will receive so that they know what to expect. The available directorate service standards are not in local languages which could disadvantage people who do not understand English.

The inspection team could not locate information or help desks in almost all District Offices visited. Forms and materials that are needed by members of the public are neither adequate nor appropriate in cases where there are help desks.

The inspection team also observed that there was generally a lack of on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complains, queries and suggestions. There were no suggestion boxes or complains register at District Offices. This undoubtedly makes it difficult for citizens to express their concerns with the quality of service delivery or even give recommendations for the improvement of service delivery.

The inspection team noted that in almost all visited schools, there were reception offices which were not visible to members of the public. These reception areas are staffed with officials, but only 50% of these reception areas are stocked with appropriate forms and material.



The situation regarding functionality of school libraries also differ from one school to another. Some schools do have libraries with a few books, while others are using mobile libraries. Libraries are important for teaching and learning, therefore, it is necessary to have relevant books used at schools.

The inspection team also observed that there was generally a lack of on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complains, queries and suggestions as schools. There were no suggestion boxes. The only noticeable complains mechanism in place was the register that was placed at the reception. This really has far reaching consequences as far as delivery of services is concerned because the citizens are denied an opportunity to express their concerns regarding the quality of service they receive.

### *(c) Observing staff*

In all the three District Offices the officials were not wearing name badges. In one District an indication was made that the name badges are available but there is no commitment from staff to wear them. This compromises the whole issue of promoting accountability, openness and transparency. Wearing of name badges also enables citizens to follow up on cases should a need arise.

The inspection team observed that staff at all District Offices was quite friendly, helpful, knowledgeable and very professional. This is likely to go a long way in enhancing the image of public service in delivering service to the communities. At school level, the inspection team observed that staff members did not wear their name tags at most visited schools. Wearing nametags should be encouraged as it enables citizens to follow up on cases should a need arise.

In all schools visited, the inspection team noted that staff members were friendly, professional and knowledgeable. This is very encouraging as it represents a very important element of the public service commitment.

### *(d) Talking to staff*

Conversations with staff at District Offices revealed that computers and other equipment at counters were adequate but the challenge was connectivity. They indicated that sometimes a week passes without having services such as e-mail available. The team was informed of the pending move to have modems installed at these sites. Staff also indicated that lunch and other breaks are taken without disrupting the flow of service.

Constraints that impede on the implementation of *Batho Pele* principles were also highlighted. It was reported that lack of funds to construct ramps at District Offices was a major challenge. Staff reported that they were happy with the back-office as it was conducive and supportive of efficient service delivery. They were of the opinion that the current back-office support is adequate.

When talking to staff at the schools visited, it was reported that schools have a sufficient number of educators compared to the learners they have. This means that the teacher/learner ratio is acceptable. Most staff and educators are well aware of the existence of policies such as a code of conduct, admission policy and school finance policy.

The inspection team found that some schools invite motivational speakers with the purpose of motivating and encouraging learners to work hard on their studies. Most schools visited have policies where academic achievements are being rewarded with trophies. Teachers are also rewarded for good work.

At almost all the schools staff reported that they are happy with the back office environment as it was conducive and promotes efficient service delivery. They felt that there was enough back office staff to take care of duties like filing and sending documents to relevant places.

Most schools visited reported that there are formalised lines of communication between the schools and the Regional Office. The principals of schools are the ones that interact with the Regional Offices. There are regular meetings where

principals represent the schools and where necessary telephonic conversations are used.

Although the inspection team was initially told by school representatives that they are familiar with the *Batho Pele* principles, further probing proved that this was not the case.

#### *(e) Talking to citizens/ service users*

The interface with members of the public at service delivery sites differed from one area to another. In some areas there was little contact with members of the public because by the time of visit there was no one at the service point. The majority of people using District Offices services delivery are mostly educators hence it was difficult to meet them during working hours. The number of people interviewed expressed satisfaction with the quality of service delivery.

#### *(f) Consultation*

Almost all visited schools have a well maintained schedule regarding consultation with parents. The schedules differ from one area to another. Some schools meet parents on a quarterly basis.

There is a number of committees established where the schools interface with the parents such as financial committee, project committee and development committee.

#### *(g) General observation*

In almost all Districts Offices visited, the inspection team found that the air conditioning or heating system was functioning well. It is only in KwaMhlanga where the air conditioning system had not been functioning for quite sometime. District officials reported that they had tried to engage the Department of Public Works, but nothing positive has come of such engagement.

In all schools visited there were water taps available for members of the public visiting the schools. At Hloniphani Secondary School the inspection team discovered that the water taps have no running water. However, the inspection team was informed that it was due to a burst pipe in the area. Toilet facilities were clean and in working order, although it was reported that sometimes the toilets were inadequate for the school with huge enrolment of learners. In Ehlanzeni District, the learners were still using pit toilets while the school has running water on the premises. Almost all visited schools do not have facilities for the disabled. Ramps were conspicuously absent. However parking area was sufficient.

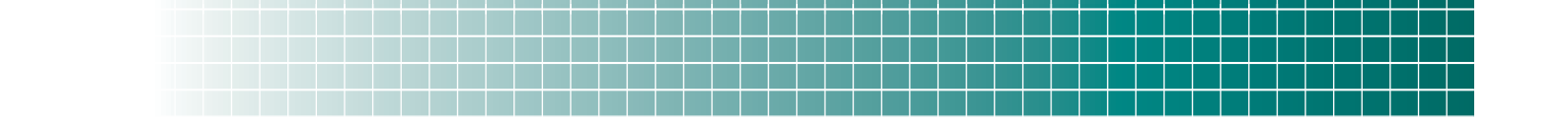
All visited schools were fenced and the majority of school representatives feel safe in their school yards. There was only one school in Ehlanzeni where teachers felt they were not safe. The inspection team found that the fence was cut by criminals. Although the school has a guard at the entrance, the back side of the school was left unguarded thus putting the safety of learners and teachers at risk.

## 8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.4.1 Announced inspections

- The Department should make sure that a Task Team on LTSM provisioning based on the Proudfoot recommendations consist of the CFO, Head of Supply Chain Management, Head of Curriculum Services, the Head of IRRISS and the Head of ABET.
- The Department must fast-track the appointment of service providers of suppliers and publishers and deliveries at schools.
- According to the Regional Offices, there has been a tendency of simultaneous delivery of both stationery and LTSM by suppliers and publishers from October to November which results in storage challenges. It is therefore quite crucial for the Department to liaise with service providers to schedule their deliveries in accordance with available storage.



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- The Department should try to improve communication and reporting mechanisms between Head Office and the Regional Offices by accelerating the whole process of connectivity as only 70% of Offices at regional level have intranet. Installation of network points and provision of cellular phones to curriculum implementers will go a long way in addressing these challenges.
  - The Department should delegate Education Management Information System (EMIS) at Regional, Circuits and School levels. It has been established that this function is still the competency of Provincial Head Office. In other words, the educators in the regions should be sensitised and trained in the use of EMIS.
  - The Department should put a clear policy in place regarding quality control on received LTSM by the Regional Offices.

### 8.4.2 Unannounced inspections

- Service standards should be displayed at all service points. District Offices and schools should be assisted in developing service standards, and thereafter be closely monitored with compliance.
- Complains registers and suggestion boxes have to be made available at all service delivery points for people to be able to immediately lodge their complains and put forward their suggestions.
- All service points should have staff to guide and direct citizens to correct counters on arrival.
- The sensitisation and implementation of *Batho Pele* principles in all service delivery points should be intensified so that service delivery could be accelerated. The Department should put mechanisms in place to implement the *Batho Pele* principles.
- The Department should make sure that disabled people are also catered for by constructing ramps or lifts at all public institutions.
- The use of modems for the operation of computers at remote service delivery points should also be considered as alternative source of communication.

# Chapter Nine

Provincial Department of  
Education: Northern Cape

## 9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the inspections conducted in the Northern Cape Department of Education. The findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected District Offices and schools.

## 9.2 SITES VISITED

In the Northern Cape, the inspections were conducted between the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October 2007. Two District Offices and five schools were visited by the inspection team. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 10: Northern Cape Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Frances Baard District Office (Kimberly)	22 October 2007	Kimberly Junior Primary	22 October 2007
		Tshireleco High School	22 October 2007
		Emmanuel Junior Secondary School	22 October 2007

## 9.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

### 9.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the announced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

#### 9.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material.

##### (a) *Improve budget controls and management*

During the inspections, the inspection team was informed that the LTSM budget is revised annually by the Provincial Head Office. District Offices do not play any role during the budgeting process. The following principles are utilised to guide the budgeting of LTSM:

- The number of learners and curriculum priorities;
- The required textbooks and stationery; and
- Poverty level of schools per quintile.

The other problem that was raised by District Offices regarding budgeting is the fact that the Departmental financial year only commences on 1 April whilst the school year starts early January when the school academic year starts. Being ten (10) months into the financial year when a school year starts, schools often have to deal with a variety of unforeseen challenges carrying financial implications. The unavailability of funds at that stage to cover such expenses inevitably brings

about the utilisation of funds allocated for LTSM which obviously leads to a shortfall of the required support material.

*(b) Centralise payment of suppliers*

During the inspections, it was reported that the payment of service providers is decentralised at District Office level for non-Section 21 schools, but payments are captured at Provincial Head Office level. For payment purposes, service providers must submit certified copies of delivery notes accompanied by certified copies of the original invoice to non-Section 21 school principals. Payments are only processed on original certified invoices. Certification is done by way of the principal's signature and an official school stamp. Section 21 schools affect their own payments to service providers, but must also first ensure that delivery notes and invoices are certified. Payments are only effected once original invoices are received. Payments are done within 30 days as required by the PFMA. It was reported at both Provincial Head Office and District Office that the centralisation of payment of LTSM suppliers proves to be a good practice as payment is made within 30 days and delivery is verified.

*(c) Improve book retrieval system*

During the inspection, it was reported that although a book retrieval policy has been established and a Departmental circular is provided to Districts and schools annually, a system of recording book retrievals is effectively non-existent. However, it was indicated that parents are aware that they have to sign for books allocated to their children and when books are lost, parents are expected to pay for them. There are no other strategies in place to improve book retrievals. Retrievals are only guided by the individual lists issued to the pupils and signed by the parents.

It was further indicated that staff shortages seem to pose serious challenges to the Department and Districts in as far as a comprehensive monitoring of book retrieval is concerned. The non-filling of approved and funded posts on the Department's establishment since 2005 has contributed to the poor position in which it currently finds itself. Educational campaigns with learners and teachers on textbook management have not been launched as yet although the matter has been discussed at school-parent meetings.

*(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

During the inspections, it was reported that the selection of LTSM is done by various stakeholders. These stakeholders include the selection of appropriate LTSM by Provincial Book Selection Committee. The Provincial Book Review Committee is responsible for the evaluation of book samples provided by publishers. Screened and evaluated book samples are catalogued and forwarded to schools so that they can use them to order books. The training of educators on what textbooks and material to select is conducted annually by the Curriculum Unit at the Provincial Head Office. Although it was reported that training of educators at National or Provincial Head Office on the selection of appropriate LTSM is regarded as important to ensure that curriculum relevant material is obtained, it was not possible to determine or to verify the exact nature thereof. Both Provincial Head Office and District Office agreed that the Provincial Book Selection Committee is the one responsible for the selection of LTSM.

*(e) Review LTSM requirements*

The Provincial Department reported that revised National Curriculum Statements by the National Department of Education are not made timeously within a specific timeframe. However, irrespective of such statements, the Provincial Department reviews all books annually in March and October with catalogues being finalised in March.

*(f) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM received by schools*

During the inspections, an indication was given that the only quality control measures for textbooks are currently upon delivery of books. Schools can only order books from the official catalogue. Specifications for notepads, stationery and paper do exist in the bidding process. All deliveries are done by the suppliers directly to the schools which inform the

Department of late deliveries, poor quality or non-compliance of suppliers. This implies that the monitoring of LTSM inevitably becomes the responsibility of the school principals. This point was confirmed by the school principals and it was indicated that the support received from the District Office on this matter was adequate.

*(g) Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM*

The Inspection Team was informed that school principals and school representatives are work shopped annually on the management plan to effect the provisioning of LTSM. The workshops have not been evaluated to determine whether they indeed have the desired impact. However, amendments on the provisioning of the LTSM are brought about regularly to ensure relevance.

*(h) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

During the inspection it was reported that the directors of curriculum, logistics and of supply chain management co-ordinate the process of provisioning at the Provincial Head Office. The inspections team was further informed that an informal LTSM task team was established at the Provincial Head Office. The task team comprises of the director of corporate services (as Chairperson), Finance, Curriculum and Supply Chain Management. The Provincial Head Office indicated that there is a noticeable change as a result of setting up the LTSM provisioning task team and there is an obvious improvement in delivery of LTSM. On the other hand, the Frances Baard District indicated that the task team is not performing very effectively because some units fail to adhere to the management plan. Stakeholders do not always honour the set delivery dates. The Provincial Head Office reported that it was addressing the challenges that were brought to its attention.

*(i) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

At the Provincial Head Office, the inspection team was informed by the HoD that the Provincial Department currently monitors stock shortages or excess material via Learning Area Managers (LAMs) and Circuit Managers who visit schools regularly. However, both District Offices indicated that school visits are hampered by staff shortages and the unavailability of official transport. These challenges affect the process negatively.

*(j) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes*

The Department annually disseminates its LTSM management plan to schools, suppliers and publishers indicating timeframes for *inter alia* orders and final deliveries. This is followed by monthly meetings which involve LTSM officials at District level, suppliers and publishers. At these meetings progress is reported in detail. Deliveries are continuously monitored by District officials who report on a weekly basis to the Provincial Head Office on developments. No steps have as yet been taken to improve the current management of the LTSM process as it is still regarded to be efficient and effective. The following table reflects the delivery record of LTSM over the past three financial years.

**Table 11: Delivery record of LTSM over the past three (3) financial years**

The above table shows that there were certain challenges encountered in the delivery of LTSM over the past three

Indicated by the Provincial Head Office		Indicated by France Baard District		
Section 21 Schools		Section 21 Schools		
Year	Percentage	Year	Percentage	
			Textbooks	Stationery
2004/2005	98.5%	2004/2005	97.18%	100%
2005/2006	96.9%	2005/2006	89.65%	100%
2006/2007	96.9%	2006/2007	77.59%	100%



Non-Section 21 Schools		Non-Section 21 Schools		
Year	Percentage	Year	Percentage	
			Textbooks	Stationery
2004/2005	99.5%	2004/2005	100%	100%
2005/2006	98.5%	2005/2006	100%	100%
2006/2007	98.2%	2006/2007	100%	100%

financial years. It was reported that the challenge in meeting the set time frames of the delivery of the LTSM material was due to the late release of the approved book catalogue with the results that the orders were placed late.

*(k) Were there any problems encountered and/or gains achieved in implementing the recommendations of the PSC LTSM Report*

The Head Office and the two District Offices indicated that they were not aware of the PSC LTSM Report.

### 9.3.1.2 Guidelines on School District Management

*(a) Empower Districts to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff*

During the inspections it was reported that section 21 schools have been delegated the function of ordering LTSM and the Districts only have a monitoring function. However, non-Section 21 schools still do not have the power to order their LTSM as this is still the responsibility of the Districts.

*(b) Establish proper communication channels between Provincial and District Offices*

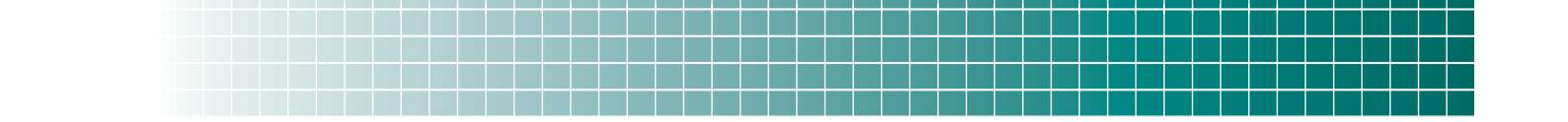
The Inspection Team was informed that communication and reporting processes between District Offices and the Provincial Head Office are structured, and practiced by means of weekly progress reports and monthly meetings. All reports and submissions are channeled via the relevant Chief Director at the Provincial Head Office to other involved stakeholders. Additional mechanisms to ensure communication and reporting processes are by means of e-mails, telephone and personal interaction with Learning Area Managers (LAMs). Although the Provincial Head Office is of the opinion that the current mechanisms are "very effective", Districts are of the opinion that the system requires revision, and that officials should be provided with laptops and official mobile phones. More frequent meetings have also been proposed as a possible solution to current challenges.

*(c) Ensure that there is delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District*

During inspections it was reported that some financial management responsibilities have been delegated to the District Offices. On the question whether District Offices have the necessary capacity for the management of their financial affairs, Provincial Head Office affirmed the existence of financial units. However, the District Offices indicated extreme challenges because of personnel shortages. Although posts were advertised in 2005, none of them have been filled as the revised organogram for the Department has not yet been approved by the MEC. Regarding the establishment of committees to ensure quality financial management, the Head Office indicated the Internal Audit Unit was functioning effectively. However, the District Offices reported that the above Unit was not in a position to render an ongoing service as required and that they were unable to establish the necessary structures themselves because of the staff shortages.

*(d) District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management*

During the inspections, it was reported that Circuit Managers as well as Learning Area Managers visit schools regularly. The visits take place on a monthly basis according to a predetermined school visit schedule. In addition, according to



the Department, the Whole School Evaluations (WSEs) are done once every five years whilst both Districts indicated that it is done annually. The nine (9) focus areas of WSEs are basic functionality; leadership; management; curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; educator development; learner achievement; school safety; and school infrastructure. The WSEs are done either through School Self Evaluation (SSE) or externally by a committee consisting of Head Office supervisors.

*(e) Educational Management Information System should be managed at District, circuit and school levels*

The Inspection Team was informed that a Circuit Manager, based at the Provincial Head Office, has been appointed to sensitise and train educators in the Province in the use of EMIS. Of the 602 schools in the Province, 213 schools have already been trained on the South African Schools Administration Management System (SASAMS).

### 9.3.2 Unannounced inspections

*(a) Observing facilities*

Whilst the Pixley Ka Seme District Office has no outside signage, the information displayed at the Frances Baard District Office refers to “Education, Training, Arts and Culture” which is totally outdated and obsolete as it refers to the name of the former Department. Neither of the Offices has proper inside signage providing direction to service delivery points making the location of specific counters or officials cumbersome.

Business hours, services on offer as well as the cost of rendered services were not displayed in either of the District Offices. However, the condition of the furniture and buildings was found to be good at both premises. Ramps for people with disabilities were available as well as fire escape exits.

Both District Offices were clean, neat and well attended to. Air conditioning, access to water and other social amenities were available and appropriate. Although visitors' waiting rooms were adequate, the designated areas have not specifically been designed for the disabled or the elderly.

Parking facilities appeared sufficient whilst the surrounding gardens were well maintained and looked after. Both District Offices are easily accessible for those using public transport and are located in safe areas.

All visited schools had outside signage, which was clear and gave proper information. However, the inspection team observed that 80% of the visited schools did not have proper inside signage providing direction to appropriate service points. Availability of information at Emthanjeni School is commendable. The vision, mission, purpose and clients of the institution were clearly displayed at Emthanjeni School.

In general, the condition of the buildings and the classrooms were found to be satisfactory in most of the schools. However, the Emmanuel Junior Secondary School consists predominantly of prefabricated buildings with asbestos roofing which is a health risk. As the school was built on clay soil, walls were cracking and ceilings were dropping. Some windows and downpipes were broken. Of the sites visited, the majority had no ramps for people with disabilities.

The majority of schools were found to be in a clean and welcoming condition. However, the condition of the toilets at Tshireleco High School in particular was found to be in a poor state. This suggested that these toilets were not maintained at all. Special arrangements were in place at some schools regarding the availability of keys to the ablution blocks. This was necessary not only to prevent pupils from using the facilities to shun classes but to limit vandalism as far as possible. Facilities at the Emmanuel Junior Secondary School have been embellished by educators from their own pockets. At the same school, the inspection team was informed that pupils were paid by teachers to have their classrooms cleaned as the support staff was not performing satisfactorily.

### *(b) Access to information*

Both District Offices have adequately resourced help desks operating also as information and security offices. Upon arrival clients are guided and directed to appropriate service points or to personnel with whom they have appointments. However, clients cannot be accompanied as the help desk will then be left unattended. This in a sense compensates for the inadequate signage pointed out above.

None of the Offices displayed a service charter or service standards. It is imperative that citizens and clients are informed of the level and quality of the public services they will receive at a particular service point. This should be done in a language predominantly used in the area.

It was observed that there were no complains registers at either of the Offices for addressing dissatisfactions, queries or complains. A suggestion box for staff members only was in use in the Pixley Ka Seme District Office. The absence of such facilities not only makes it difficult for clients to express their concerns but it deprives the Department of suggestions that could lead to its service improvement.

The inspection team noted that with the exception of Tshirileco High School there are secretaries and/or support staff members guiding clients to the right points of service on arrival. This makes it easier for parents to find their way around the administration offices and class rooms. The reception areas or secretaries' offices were adequately staffed and stocked with appropriate forms and materials. Kimberley Junior Primary School and Orion High School have libraries which are well stocked with resource material. Whilst Tshireleco High School and Emmanuel Junior Secondary School both have libraries, they have no appropriate resource material and are, therefore, not utilised. Emthanjeni Primary School has no library and no resource material.

Although complains registers and suggestion boxes were only found at the Emthanjeni Primary School, it was in all instances established that the other schools maintained "open door policies" as far as parents, pupils and visitors were concerned. The principal is the point of entry, and thereafter the guardian teacher<sup>8</sup> would be involved (where applicable). Business hours are limited to normal school hours unless alternative arrangements are specifically made in advance, for example, an appointment by parent(s) to meet with the teacher(s).

### *(c) Observing staff*

Wearing name tags or badges fosters a spirit of transparency, openness, accountability and accessibility. The Inspection Team observed that staff members did not wear name tags or badges. Names and/or designations did not appear on the doors leading to the offices of support staff.

At both District Offices, staff appeared friendly, professional and knowledgeable. Front-line staff represents an important element of the public service delivery chain as they interface directly with clients. Perceptions and opinions about public service delivery are developed at this interface.

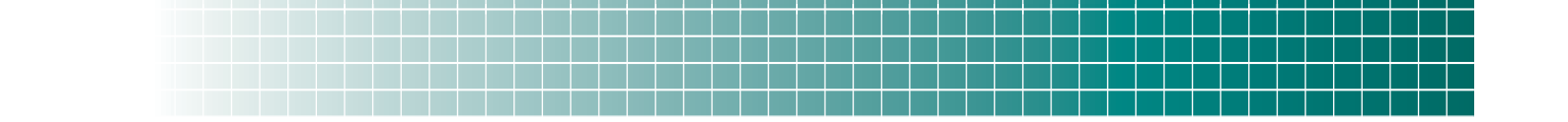
At school level, the Inspection Team observed that the office staff did not wear name tags. It was mentioned that nametags were available but that personnel forgot to wear them. At all visited schools, staff appeared friendly, professional and knowledgeable. Front-line staff as well as educators represents an important element of the public service delivery chain as they interface directly with parents and the public. Perceptions and opinions about public service delivery are developed at this interface.

### *(d) Talking to staff*

In talking to staff at District Offices, an indication was given at most service points that lunch and other breaks are taken without disrupting the flow of service rendering. Tea breaks are taken at their desks to ensure continuous availability of staff. However, during the inspection some officials were eating at the front desks and this gave an unacceptable

<sup>8</sup> A "guardian teacher" is a teacher responsible for the specific item or issue about which a complain/suggestion is made.





impression to the recipients of the services. The situation requires rules to guide personnel on the matter. During the inspections only one staff member out of five was available at the Frances Baard District Office at the Conditions of Service Section (on leave – 2; doctor's appointment – 1; whereabouts unknown – 1).

The following are concerns that were raised by staff at District Offices:

**Inadequate computers and other equipment** - Staff members unanimously reported that their computers and other electronic equipment were outdated and inadequate. Access is limited to PERSAL only with no other programmes such as Windows available (Frances Baard). At the Pixley Ka Seme District Office, two to three staff members were sharing a single computer which limits their ability to render speedy and quality services. IT support is totally inadequate as there is only one knowledgeable staff member available to attend to the numerous queries.

**Shortage of staff** - Severe and serious staff shortages were reported at both District Offices. At Frances Baard, it was indicated that of the HR staff complement of 16, there are currently only 8 filled posts. The redeployment of personnel to urgently meet unexpected needs in the Department was mentioned as the main reason for the current shortfall of staff. The Inspection Team was directed to stacks and stacks of unprocessed leave forms waiting to be captured and finalised. Staff shortages, makes it impossible for the leave forms and other demands to be addressed speedily.

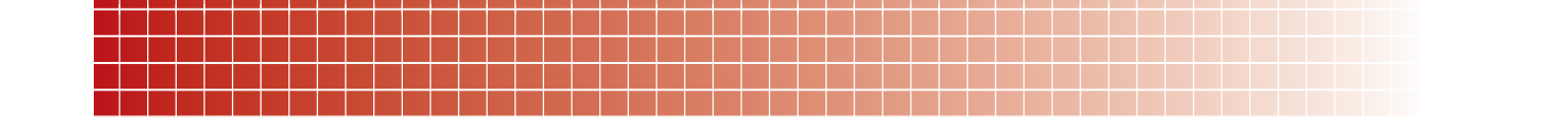
**Posts left vacant for a long time** - Although numerous vacancies were advertised late in 2005, not a single post has yet been filled because the MEC has not approved the revised organisational structure for the Provincial Department of Education. Personnel are continuously expected to act in higher positions because of the staff shortages, however, without being appropriately appointed and remunerated. The staff interviewed appeared demoralised and despondent. The aforementioned situation holds extreme repercussions for the Department. Not only is service delivery seriously compromised, but support systems, work standards and sound management practices are being eroded and undermined.

**Inadequate back office support** - at both District Offices, staff indicated that they were not satisfied with the back office environment as it was not conducive and supportive for efficient service delivery. Over and above the mentioned staff shortages, the general lack of transport as a result of the unavailability of vehicles for official trips, is seriously impeding staff members to continuously interact with schools (which is an important key responsibility). The sharing of offices by staff members is also compromising the confidentiality principle as staff is required to leave their offices and work stations when personal and confidential matters of clients are discussed. Lack of consultation rooms and sufficient office space in general is another constraint impeding service delivery.

**Non exposure to the *Batho Pele* Framework** - The majority of staff members indicated that although they were aware of the *Batho Pele* principles and the White Paper on the Transformation of Service Delivery, they have not been exposed to any formal training or development in this regard.

**Communication** - at the Frances Baard District it was reported that interaction between stakeholders and District Office personnel appeared to be unsatisfactory and at times some clients and stakeholders tend to interact with the Provincial Head Office directly on issues such as salaries, leave, subsidies and pension.

During interaction with staff at schools, there were varied responses on the issue of whether there were sufficient staff/educators at schools. Shortages of educators were mainly experienced in mathematics, economics and management science, arts and culture, and chemistry and physical sciences. Classes are much too large and the Department continuously pleads budgetary constrains to the appointment of additional educators. Although the Kimberley Junior Primary School is in the fortunate position to appoint additional staff via its School Governing Body (SGB), all other schools need to contend with their limited resources. However, the financial burden on such bodies is becoming increasingly larger and this kind of improvisation by certain schools to address staff shortages will in all probability soon no longer be a viable option. In schools experiencing personnel shortages, it is often expected of educators to teach subjects which they have not been trained for.



All schools have appropriate policies and procedures by which they are governed. However, some of these prescripts require an update in line with current trends and developments.

At the Tshireleco High School as well as the Emmanuel Junior Secondary School the opinion is held that the back office environment is not conducive for the efficient support of educators. In the majority of cases, the principals' secretaries and/or receptionists were the only available back office personnel. Other challenges relate to outdated or broken equipment, lack of stationary and the non-availability in general of the necessary supplies and material to allow educators to efficiently and effectively execute their jobs.

The formalised lines of communication between schools and District Offices include regular meetings with principals and HoDs as well as circulars and other forms of written communiqués. District Office support appears to be adequate although the view is held that some schools are favoured, especially section 21 schools while others are left to fend for themselves especially the non-section 21 schools.

Although the majority of the staff interviewed indicated that they were familiar or aware of the *Batho Pele* principle, they have not been exposed to any official training or briefing sessions on the topic. Best practices regarding the implementation of the mentioned principles at school could not be provided. Constraints that impede the implementation these relate to aspects such as the level of commitment, a sense of responsibility, and work ethics of the educators. Regular absenteeism for no apparent reason during either certain periods or for the entire day is not only extremely disruptive as far as the school curriculum is concerned, but puts unnecessary pressure on colleagues who need to stand in for those absent from work. Worst of all is that no steps are taken against such perpetrators. This was regarded as demoralising as educators start questioning whether their efforts are worth the effort they put in.

#### *(e) Talking to citizens/service users*

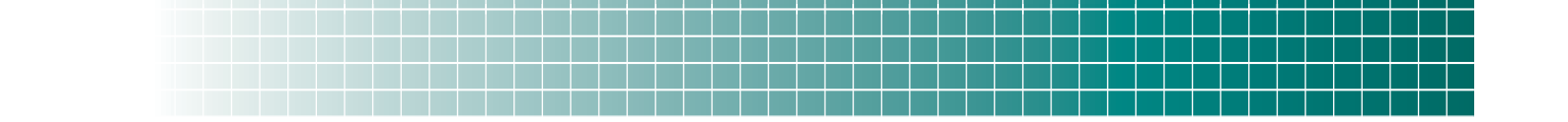
Citizens or service users are in a better position to give feedback on the state of service delivery. The views and comments of service users are important in any effort meant to improve service delivery. During the inspections it was not possible to interview any citizens/service users. The Inspection Team was informed that although parents of school pupils would occasionally visit the District Offices, the majority of their clients were educators. Interaction with office staff is preferably per appointment which eliminates waiting time and ensures immediate attention. However, clients without appointments are also accommodated. Educators are encouraged to schedule their appointments between 2 and 4 pm. This arrangement does not only ensure their presence at schools during official school hours but allows District Office personnel to arrange their diaries to be available between the aforementioned hours. Only serious cases are dealt with during official school hours.

#### *(f) Consultation*

The most popular and main methods of communication with clients (especially parents, learners, educators, and members of community) are by means of general meetings, newsletters and one-on-one consultations/meetings with parents. General parents meetings take place once or twice per term or when necessitated by special events or when the need arises (e.g. fund raising events). General parent meetings are normally well attended. It was reported that the optional one-on-one meetings between educators and parents often require special appointments.

School Governing Bodies (SGBs) are operative in all five schools. General meetings are attended by parents, pupils, educators as well as administrative personnel. Matters of mutual interest or concern are discussed in this forum.

Parents are given guidance on the work of their children on an ongoing basis. The one-on-one meetings referred to is the preferred method of communication in this regard. Guidance about the future of pupils is in majority of cases dealt with informally. Grade 12 educators also counsel and brief pupils on possible career opportunities and future prospects.



Most educators at the schools visited are aware of the school's complains handling system. Procedures in general involve Heads of Department at schools and the principals. Circuit and District Managers may also be involved depending on the seriousness of the case.

Those interviewed were of the opinion that in general they were treated with courtesy. However, the late arrival of some pupils at school in the morning, disobedience, erratic school attendance, rudeness, disloyalty and the indifference of pupils, are aspects related to ill-discipline. Current mechanisms to deal with such issues are ineffective. The perceived arrogance of both the National and Provincial Departments of Education at times towards the profession also creates an impression of indifference (lack of interest) and self-righteousness. In some instances, educators hold the view that they need to fend for themselves and cannot rely on the support of the Department or the District Office.

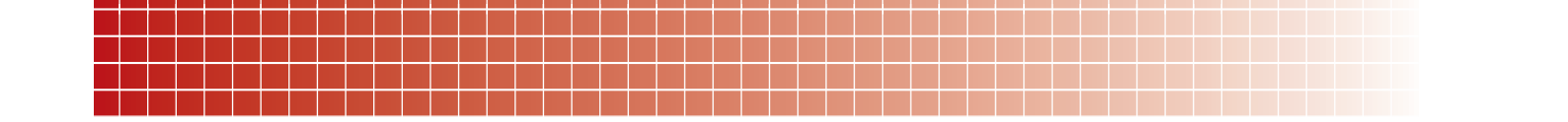
## 9.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 9.4.1 Announced inspections

- Educational campaigns on textbook management and on the retrieval of textbooks in particular, require Departmental attention. Systems of recording book retrievals and the monitoring of these are measures that need to be put in place.
- The Department needs to look into the functioning of the task team on LTSM provisioning as the efficiency and effectiveness of this is questioned. Some stakeholders are of the opinion that the task team's contribution to improved delivery of LTSM is minimal.
- Conducting frequent visits to schools to verify and check excess stock on books, is hampered by staff shortage and the unavailability of official transport for this purpose.
- Despite the distribution of the PSC Report on the Guidelines on School District Management as well as LTSM to the Department, it was reported by both District Offices that they were not aware of such Reports. The Department needs to revise its strategy on the dissemination of material of this nature.
- The existing communication channels between Provincial and District Offices are questioned by some officials. Differing view points on the efficiency and effectiveness of the current arrangements necessitate that the matter be reviewed.

### 9.4.2 Unannounced inspections

- The severe and serious staff shortages at both District Offices should be addressed by the Department as a matter of urgency. It is imperative that the revised and updated organisational staff structure be approved by the MEC. It is recommended that advertised and funded vacancies be filled immediately to *inter alia* address extreme backlogs such as the hundreds of unprocessed leave forms.
- There is a need to ensure effective practice of the *Batho Pele* principles at both District Offices and Schools.
- Personnel acting in vacant posts should be duly appointed in acting capacities by the executing authority and appropriately remunerated in terms of the Public Service Prescripts.
- The lack of transport at District Offices to allow staff members to interact with schools on a continuous basis is hampering efficient and effective service delivery. Additional vehicles will facilitate increased access to service delivery points.
- Although the condition of the buildings and the classrooms were in general found to be satisfactorily, aspects such as broken windows, dropping ceilings, broken downpipes and dirty walls require attention.
- Tshireleco High School needs to deal with the problem of untidy toilets.
- Security measures need to improve at some schools. Access control to certain areas and the proper use of existing facilities such as gates and locks should be looked into. Schools house valuable assets such as computers and photo copiers which require protection.
- Library facilities should be made available to all learners. Where such facilities do exist, it should be updated and stocked with relevant reading and research material.

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- Despite schools maintaining an “open door policy” as far as complains and interaction with learners and parents are concerned, it is recommended that complains registers as well as suggestion boxes be incorporated to further facilitate service delivery improvements.
  - Communicating with clients (community members) and keeping parents informed of developments that influence the education of their children is the cornerstone on which harmonious and sound relations are built. It is not only imperative that the resolutions of the Department, District Offices, Principals, School Governing Bodies, educators and other role players are continuously communicated to parents and the public in general, but that communities and parents in particular, are afforded opportunities to respond to such resolutions.
  - Ill-discipline by learners and educators alike should be dealt with timeously, consistently and in a fair and just manner. It is not only the responsibility of the principal but a partnership in which all role players (the Department, District Offices, educators, pupils, parents and the community), have an equal important role to play.

# Chapter Ten

Provincial Department of  
Education: North West

## 10.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 10 presents the findings of the inspections conducted in the North West Department of Education. The findings are presented according to the type of inspections conducted, namely, announced and unannounced inspections. This chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings obtained during the visits at the Provincial Head Office and selected District Offices and schools.

## 10.2 SITES VISITED

In the North West, inspections were conducted between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October 2007. Two District Offices and four schools (two in each District Office) were visited by the inspection team. The table below indicates the names and dates of the sites inspected.

**Table 12: North West Sites**

District Offices	Date	Schools	Date
Central District Office	18 October 2007	Sejankabu High School	18 October 2007
		Barolong High School	30 October 2007
Bophirima District School	26 October 2007	Seisele Primary School	26 October 2007
		Walter Letsie Secondary School	26 October 2007

## 10.3 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings on announced inspections presents the extent of implementation of PSC recommendations regarding its 2006 reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. Key findings on unannounced inspections are related to the Departments' compliance with *Batho Pele* principles. The findings are further supported by observations of relevant documents made during the inspection.

### 10.3.1 Announced inspections

The findings from the unannounced inspections are presented according to the recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

#### 10.3.1.1 KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

##### (a) *Improve budget controls and management*

During the inspections it was reported by the District Offices that the budget for the LTSM is revised annually at the Provincial Head office of the Department of Education. It was reported that the Quintile system and learner enrollment number are used as the bases to determine the budget for LTSM.

##### (b) *Centralise payment of suppliers*

The inspection team was informed by the District Offices that the payment of suppliers is centralised at the Provincial Head office of the Department of Education and the payment to supplier was done within 30 days. The payment of service providers within 30 days was attested by the Provincial Head office.

### *(c) Improve book retrieval system*

During inspections, the inspection team was informed that both Districts had not embarked on educational campaigns on the importance of proper maintenance and care of books. The central District informed the inspection team that the book retrieval policies are in place and the recorded book retrieval rate in some regions was at 92.18%. These findings suggest that there is a need to enforce this system.

### *(d) Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators*

The inspection team was informed that in both Districts there are standard procedures to be followed in the selection of appropriate LTSM and that the educators are trained in this regard. Educators' Site Managers and subject advisors are involved in the selection.

### *(e) Closely monitor the quality of LTSM*

During the inspections, the Bophirima District Office reported that the regional LTSM management receives reports from service providers and that these are sent to the Provincial office. The Central region reported that:

- all items are approved by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS);
- samples are assessed during tendering;
- Site inspections are conducted; and
- Schools are required to submit reports on substandard material.

### *(f) Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning*

During inspections, both Districts reported that there is a Departmental task team Headed by the Head of supply chain management. The team is constituted by the District LTSM managers and the senior education specialists LTSM Southern District Offices. It was further reported that the task team has resulted in coherence and working together among different directorates on LTSM matters. The task team also oversees the transfer of skills and resources to the District as per the decentralisation process.

### *(g) Task District to conduct frequent visits to schools*

Both Districts reported that there are frequent visits to schools. Excess books are taken to other schools where there is a greater need. In some instances, the books are retrieved and stored in the warehouse for future distribution.

### *(h) Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes*

Both Districts that were visited during inspections indicated that there are service level agreements drawn with the service provider. This includes a schedule which embodies requisitioning, ordering and delivery time frames. Service providers are required to provide delivery schedules which are also monitored on a weekly basis.

## **10.3.2 Unannounced inspections**

Unannounced inspections were conducted at both the selected District Offices and schools. The main aim of the unannounced inspections was to determine the Department's compliance with the implementation of the *Batho Pele* principles.

### *(a) Observing facilities*

At the District Offices, the inside signage was generally far better than the outside signage. There were many Offices marked to indicate the titles of the occupant. However, there were other Offices that did not have signage.

### *(b) Access to information*

During the inspection, it was noted that the District Offices and schools did not have officials at the reception to guide and direct people on arrival to the relevant service points. In addition, a service delivery charter was not displayed at both Offices and schools. Such charter would provide customers with information on the level of service they can expect from the Offices and schools.

In order to elicit feedback from citizens on the services they receive, Departments are also expected to have complains boxes. There was no complain box located in the reception areas of both District Offices and schools. Complain boxes are important in engendering a participatory approach in service delivery and encourage openness and transparency on the part of the Department. The absence of complain boxes at the District Offices and schools shows non-compliance with the *Batho Pele* principle of consultation.

### *(c) Observing Staff*

The inspection team observed that staff members at both District Office and schools did not wear name tags or badges even though it was indicated that they have been distributed to them. Wearing of name tags is important especially when a need arises for citizens to follow up on particular cases. One is able to identify the person who served him/her. It was however, observed that the staff members were friendly and demonstrated professionalism and knowledge regarding their work at the office.

### *(d) Talking to citizens*

At both District Offices and schools, the inspection team could not determine the waiting period clients experience before they were assisted as there were no clients. It was, therefore, not possible to determine if any clients have lodged a complain with both the District Offices and schools, and whether any of the clients were aware of the complains handling mechanism place.

### *(e) Talking to staff*

During the inspection, the inspection team was informed that Barolong High School had a total enrollment of 1300 learners. The inspection team was also told that the school requires more teachers to meet the needs of high number of learners. However, it was indicated that no positive response has been received from both the District Offices and Provincial Head Office of the Department of Education in this regard.

### *(f) General observations*

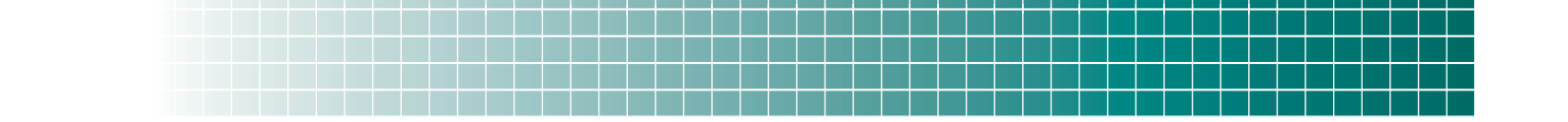
The inspection team has observed that in all schools visited, most of the classroom window panes were broken. This suggests that schools are not looked after by the respective communities. Furthermore, the inspection team observed that electricity plugs have been removed from the walls in almost all the schools visited. Again, the removal of electricity plugs from the walls of the classrooms may suggest that learners and the communities do not look after their schools.

## 10.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations based on the observations made by the inspection team.

- The Provincial Head Office of the Department of Education, District Offices and schools need to ensure that there is proper inside and outside signage to increase awareness and assist service users in finding their way around the building with ease.
- A Service Delivery Charter needs to be displayed to provide service users with a clear indication of the type of services rendered and the standards thereof, at Provincial Head Office of the Department of Education, District Offices and schools.



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- Suggestion boxes and complains registers must be put where they can be easily seen and accessed and complains should be handled timeously.
  - Staff should wear name badges to enhance transparency, openness and accountability. These also make it easier for customers to identify the person who has served them.

# Chapter Eleven

## National Department of Education

## 11.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the unannounced inspections conducted at the National Head Office of the Department of Education. The mandate of the National Departments is to develop policies and frameworks, and the implementation thereof takes place at Provincial level. As a result, the National Department could not participate in the announced inspection in relation to the implementation of recommendations contained in the 2006 PSC reports on *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material*, and the *Guideline on School District Management*. The inspection at the National Department took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2007 and the focus was on compliance with broad issues relating to the *Batho Pele* framework. This chapter concludes with the recommendations for the National Department of Education.

## 11.2 KEY FINDINGS

### (a) Observing facilities

Citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled. One measure of ensuring accessibility is to adapt and improve the physical conditions of service delivery sites for easier accessibility. The inspection team observed that at the National Department, there was no inside and outside signage indicating way-finding. However, the Department's operating business hours were displayed at the reception area. The National Department has a ramp to ensure easier access to the building by people with disabilities using a wheel chair. Bathrooms are not designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities, especially the wheelchair-bound.

All the inspected areas at the National Department were clean and the physical condition of the buildings was in a good state.

### (b) Observing access to information

The *Batho Pele* principles of access and information require information to be readily available to customers in order to empower them and address their needs. During the inspection it was noted that the National Department did not have officials at the reception to guide and direct people on arrival to the relevant service points. Although there were security personnel, they did not appear to be well informed about where specific offices/officials could be found in the building. In addition, a service delivery charter was not displayed at the office. Such a charter would provide customers with information on the level of services they can expect from the department.

In order to elicit feedback from citizens on the services they receive, departments are also expected to have complain boxes. There was no complain box located in the reception area at the National Department. Complain boxes are important in engendering a participatory approach in service delivery and encourage openness and transparency on the part of the department. This practice is in line with *Batho Pele*. The absence of complain boxes at the National Department shows non-compliance with the *Batho Pele* principle of consultation.

### (c) Observing staff

Wearing of name badges fosters a spirit of transparency, openness, accountability and accessibility because service users are able to identify the officials who are serving them by their names. The inspection team observed that staff members at the National Head Office did not wear name tags or badges even though it was indicated that they have been distributed to them. Wearing of name tags is important especially when a need arises for citizens to follow up on particular cases and being able to identify the person who served them. It was, however, observed that the staff members were friendly and demonstrated professionalism and knowledge regarding their work at the office.

#### (d) *Talking to staff*

The morale of personnel plays an important role in effective service delivery. To ensure that the morale of personnel is high and conducive for quality service delivery, personnel concerns should be listened to by those officials in management positions and effective measures should be taken to address their concerns. Equally important are inputs from staff to bring about innovation and improve service delivery. Generally, the staff was satisfied with their offices, and indicated that they have enough computers to execute their daily functions. The inspection team was also informed that the officials at the National Department take turns to go on lunch. This is important because it ensures that service delivery is not interrupted by lunch breaks.

#### (e) *Talking to citizens/service users*

As consumers of the services provided by government institutions, citizens are in a position to give feedback on the state of service delivery. Their views and comments are important in any effort meant to improve service delivery. The inspection team had an opportunity to speak to some service users at the National Department who indicated that they do not wait for a long time before being assisted. However, some concerns were raised regarding the long time it takes to receive a response after making an enquiry. A concern was specifically raised about the process of verifying the authenticity of qualifications, especially qualifications obtained outside the country. It was stated that the process is slow and that it is only done at the National Department, thus requiring people to travel long distances to the National Department. During the inspections, there was a client who had submitted certificates and was given a reference number. However, he had to wait for more than three months before the process could be finalised. The client indicated that he subsequently lodged a complain with the Department and was happy with the way it was attended to. The report by the PSC on the Verification of Qualifications in the Public Service<sup>9</sup> confirms that indeed, the process to verify qualifications (especially those obtained outside the country) is slow.

### 11.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations based on the observations made by the inspection team.

- The National Department needs to ensure that there is proper inside and outside signage to increase awareness and assist service users in finding their way around the building with ease.
- A Service Delivery charter needs to be displayed to provide service users with a clear indication of the type of services rendered and the standards thereof.
- Suggestion boxes and complains registers must be put where they can be easily seen and accessed and complains should be handled timeously.
- Staff should wear name badges to enhance transparency, openness and accountability. These also make it easier for customers to identify the person who has served them.

9. Republic of South Africa. The Public Service Commission. Oversight Report on the Verification of Qualifications in the Public Service 2007

# Chapter Twelve

## Conclusion and General Recommendations

## 12.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the overall conclusions and recommendations covering all the Departments of Education that were visited during the inspections. Therefore the recommendations in this chapter are generic in nature, hence they are applicable to all Departments of Education. According to the PSC protocol on inspections, the lasting success of inspections depends on how and when the outcomes of the process are communicated to the line departments and other implementing agencies. To this end, the PSC has provided formal feedback on the outcome of the inspections, individually to all departments that participated in this study through their Executing Authorities and Accounting Officers.

Indeed this exercise has provided the PSC with an opportunity to witness service delivery in action, it has further allowed for direct interaction with staff and service users at service points. Therefore the outcomes of these inspections are a true reflection of the state of affairs at the sites visited. The PSC trusts that the findings and recommendations would provide the departments with an opportunity of a mirror-image regarding the performance at the selected service delivery sites and therefore take remedial measures to improve service delivery where it was found to be lacking.

## 12.2 CONCLUSION

One of the main instruments available to the PSC in promoting the values and principles as contained in Section 195 of the Constitution, and thus creating a foundation and climate of good governance in the Public Service, is its recommendations to departments. To assess the impact of these recommendations, it is crucial for the PSC to track the implementation thereof. In relation to the implementation of recommendations of the 2006 PSC reports on *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material* and the *Guideline on School District Management*, it became apparent that whilst significant strides have been made, there is still a need to engage District Offices on the two reports.

Budgeting for LTSM is mostly based on the quintile system rather than being needs based. Due to the fact that the system focuses on geographical location of schools, to the exclusion of income levels, it has been found to have negatively affected the ratings of schools in disadvantaged areas.

The PSC's recommendation on centralisation of payment of suppliers was adhered to by almost all Provinces that participated in this study. This is to prevent delays and inability to ascertain the amount outstanding to suppliers.

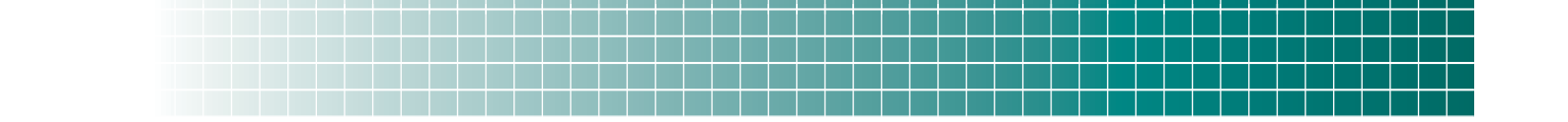
In most instances there were reports of a policy or strategy for improving the book retrieval system. Committees were reported to be in place for the selection of proper LTSM. Most Provinces have also established task teams for LTSM provisioning. It must be commended that in this regard, the Departments of Education have adhered to the recommendations of the PSC as contained in its report on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material*.

On the other hand, District Offices were found not to be empowered in terms of delegation of functions to support schools in procurement of school facilities, learning material or appointment of staff. Communication between District Offices and Provincial Head Office remains a challenge. The Education Management Information System is centralised at Provincial Head Office and where it exists at District Offices, it is not resourced and staff has not been trained to use it.

Most of the service points visited did not have service delivery charters. This makes it difficult for service users to know what services are rendered and within what time frames.

The unavailability of complain boxes or suggestion boxes in almost all service points indicates that departments do not cultivate a culture of consultation and participation with their service users. Citizens are further not afforded an opportunity to complain or make suggestions regarding the services they receive.

Most of the service points visited had a generally acceptable outside signage. However, inside signage remains a problem.



In the absence of inside signage, it was also found that there was no staff to guide visitors or clients inside the service delivery points. This undoubtedly makes it difficult for users to find their way inside service points.

Staff was observed to be friendly. They also demonstrated professionalism and knowledge regarding their work. This will go a long way in enhancing the image of the Public Service in delivering services to the communities.

In most instances, staff did not wear name tags or badges. Lack of identification by staff is an indication of non compliance with the *Batho Pele* principle of transparency. It also makes it difficult when citizens make a follow up on services rendered, to know whom to talk to.

It was observed that in general, staff that interacted with the inspection teams were not well conversed with the principles of *Batho Pele*. In some instances staff confessed to have never heard of *Batho Pele* principles.

The inspection teams observed that the majority of the service points were kept clean. This contributes to enhancing the image of the Public Service and it makes citizens feel important.

Although in isolated cases, the inspection team observed that some schools do not have ablution facilities, toilets and running water. Incidents of drug or substance abuse and rape were also reported.

## 12.3 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

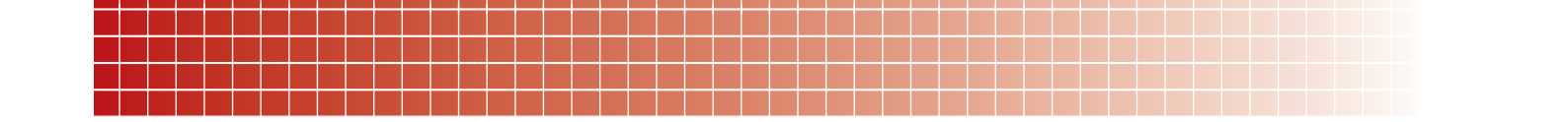
The following recommendations are generic and are applicable to all Departments of Education.

### 12.3.1 Announced inspections

- District Offices are at different levels in as far as being exposed to the contents of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material* and the *Guidelines on School District Management* is concerned. This means that most officials in these Offices do not know the recommendations contained in such reports. Provincial Head Offices, and in particular units responsible for the functioning of District Offices and Learner Teacher Support Material, need to engage District Offices on the two PSC reports.
- The departments should improve communication and reporting mechanisms between Provincial Head Offices and District Offices. Improved communication is likely to facilitate interaction between these Offices, which can contribute to improved service delivery.
- The departments should monitor and evaluate the implementation of the book retrieval system. Educational campaigns should also be undertaken to sensitise parents and learners about the importance of returning books to schools for use by the next generation of learners.
- The departments need to develop terms of reference for the establishment and the functioning of the task teams on LTSM provisioning. Currently, the efficiency and effectiveness of these structures is not satisfactory.
- Departments should expedite the delegation of functions to District Offices. Such functions should include procurement of school facilities and appointment of staff to fast track service delivery at these levels.
- The departments should ensure that management of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) takes place at District level. Capacitated staff on the management and utilisation of EMIS would ensure effective service delivery.

### 12.3.2 Unannounced inspections

- Provincial Head Offices of the Departments of Education need to assist Districts Offices in developing service delivery charters to ensure that service users understand the type of services rendered and standards thereof. Once developed, service delivery charters should be translated into local languages and be displayed where they could be easily noticed by members of the public. Provincial Head Offices should monitor compliance with the development and display of service delivery charters.

- 
- Complain and suggestion boxes should be made available to enable citizens to either lodge complains or make suggestions on service delivery improvement. Such mechanisms should be supported institutionally. For instance, on complains there must be a complain handling system to efficiently respond to citizens' complains.
  - The wearing of name tags should be made compulsory in line with the *Batho Pele* principles of transparency and openness. Where staff does not have name tags, provincial departments should ensure that they are made available.





# ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

ANNEXURE B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ANNOUNCED INSPECTIONS

ANNEXURE C: CHECKLIST: FOR UNANNOUNCED INSPECTIONS

## ANNEXURE A

List of recommendations of the PSC reports on the *KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material* and the *Guideline on School District Management*.

### 1. Report on the KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Procurement and Distribution of Learner and Teacher Support Material

- a) **Improvement of LTSM budget controls and management:** National and Provincial Departments of Education should annually assess the requirements of learners so that the LTSM budget can be needs based. This assessment should ideally be conducted before the budget is drawn up so that it can be discussed with the Provincial Treasury prior to the finalisation of the Provincial education budget for the New Year.
- b) **Centralise payment of suppliers:** The centralisation of payment of suppliers ensures that delays in payments are avoided and the Department will have a clear indication of outstanding invoices. Payment to suppliers should be made within 30 days in line with procurement or supply chain management policy after receiving the invoice and proof of delivery.
- c) **Improve book retrieval system:** The Department of Education has to introduce a system in terms of which schools will be expected to record their book retrieval rates. With this system, schools can accordingly establish at an early stage what textbooks have been lost or destroyed. Furthermore, Districts together with the schools should embark on an educational campaign with learners and parents on the importance of and benefits attached to proper preservation, maintenance and care of textbooks.
- d) **Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators:** The selection of appropriate textbooks at the school level is one of the most important steps in the provisioning of LTSM, and enough time must be given to complete this task. The PSC recommended that sustained training and clear communication of the selection process will ensure appropriate selection of LTSM by educators and other relevant stakeholders. It was also recommended that enough time should be given to educators to promote the selection of appropriate LTSM.
- e) **Review LTSM requirements:** National Department of Education should announce revised National curriculum statements timeously, if there is any, as selection of the LTSM is affected by National curriculum review.
- f) **Closely monitor the quality of LTSM received by schools:** The Department of Education should introduce monitoring mechanisms for checking the quality of the LTSM and ensuring that distributors deliver LTSM timeously to schools.
- g) **Ensure that there is necessary capacity to effect the provision of LTSM:** During its study on the procurement and distribution of the LTSM, the PSC found that schools do not understand the top-up system and that many of Grade 11 and 12 textbooks are obsolete. To address the problem on the lack of LTSM provisioning capacity, the PSC recommended that the Department should see to it that all schools are fully briefed on how the top-up system works. Furthermore, the Department should closely examine the books currently being used by Grade 11 and 12 learners. The Department should also identify subject areas and schools where the books being used should be upgraded, prior to the implementation of the new curriculum.
- h) **Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning:** All regions should establish regional task teams for LTSM provisioning along the similar lines to the envisaged Provincial task team. These task teams should monitor and report aspects of LTSM provisioning. The task team should also monitor the role played by suppliers in the process LTSM provisioning.
- i) **Task Districts to conduct frequent visits to schools:** When conducting the study on the procurement and distribution of LTSM, the PSC found that the Department experiences problems with schools that store excess stock. Although the Department encourages schools to send unused textbooks to schools experiencing shortages, this does not always happen; some schools still have new books and excess textbooks stockpiled in their storerooms. The PSC recommended that Districts should conduct frequent school visits to verify and check what excess stock is available.
- j) **Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes:** The Department needs to develop a monitoring and evaluation system in order to manage action plans for the LTSM processes. The system should include issues around quality, timeframes, and payment of suppliers.

## 2. The Report on the Guideline on School District Management

- a) **Delegations:** Heads of District Offices have delegated powers in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (1999) to enable them to perform supportive functions to learning institutions effectively. However, the Head of the Provincial Department remains the Chief Accounting Officer, as prescribed by the Act. Delegations should relate to all powers that could empower a District office with a view to realising the Department's vision. These delegations could include areas such as procurement of school facilities and learning material, recruitment of staff and labour relations issues.
- b) **Reporting:** According to the PSC's Guideline on School District Management, reporting is a term used to define communication in a District. Reporting should be understood in relation to delegation. Proper communication channels between Provincial and District office should be established by routing communication through the office of the District manager. Reporting in a school District should be based on its organogram, which clearly identifies units that are managed by Heads and define reporting lines.
- c) **Financial Management:** Financial management is crucial to the successful running of an organisation because it relates to how the resources available to the organisation are used. For a District office to be managed effectively and efficiently, it should have the delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District.
- d) **Strengthening of School Management:** District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management. This can be done through school visits, managing physical resources, and performance management.
- e) **Educational Management Information System (EMIS):** Information can be a powerful tool to improve planning and management in education if District and school management teams are able to analyse the information in the EMIS. During the PSC study on School District Management, it became apparent that Districts are currently not involved in analysing data. The research units in the Provincial and National Offices interpret and produce reports on the data generated. Districts are currently merely a data source. In this regard, the PSC gave a recommendation that functions of the EMIS should be made available at District, circuit and school levels. For the decentralisation to be successful, the management capability of the District to operate the system should be enhanced. This includes the ability to operate, administer, process, interpret and report on the information generated by the system.

## ANNEXURE B

### QUESTIONNAIRE (ANNOUNCED INSPECTION)

#### 1. Assessment of the Distribution of Learner Teacher Support Material

In 2004, the PSC, embarked on a study to assess blockages and problems that existed in the procurement and supply of learner teacher support material (LTSM) in KwaZulu-Natal and Free State Provinces. The study also monitored the implementation of the recommendations which had been made by Proudfoot Consulting in 1999 on the same subject. The PSC report was printed and distributed in 2006. The PSC recommendations, to a large extent reiterate recommendations made by Proudfoot Consulting. **Although the PSC study focused on 2 Provinces, the emanating recommendations may be used to determine management of the LTSM programme in the 9 Provinces.**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY
<p><b>1 Improve LTSM budget controls and management to ensure that budgeting is needs based.</b></p> <p>1.1 How often does the Department revise the LTSM budget? 1.2 Are there any norms and standards governing the amount allocated per learner for LTSM?</p>
<p><b>2 Centralise payment of suppliers to prevent delays and inability to ascertain the amount outstanding to suppliers.</b></p> <p>2.1 Is the payment of service providers centralised or not? If yes, at what level is it centralised, is it at the District or Provincial Head Office level? 2.2 What should be submitted by the service providers and where before they are paid? 2.3 How long does it take for payments to be finalised?</p>
<p><b>3 Improve book retrieval system.</b></p> <p>3.1 Is the Department currently implementing a system of recording book retrievals? (records of actual retrieval rate to be submitted) 3.2 What strategies are being used to improve book retrieval? 3.3 Have educational campaigns been embarked on with learners and parents on the importance of and benefits attached to the proper preservation, maintenance and care of textbooks at schools? If yes, what changes have been brought about by these campaigns?</p>
<p><b>4 Ensure selection of appropriate LTSM by educators.</b></p> <p>4.1 Which stakeholders are involved in the selection of LTSM and how? 4.2 Are there any standard procedures that have to be followed in the selection of appropriate LTSM? (document with the standard procedures to be submitted) 4.3 Are the educators properly trained and given guidance on what textbooks and material to select (guidelines to be submitted if there are any)</p>
<p><b>5 Review LTSM requirements in line with curriculum changes e.g. OBE.</b></p> <p>5.1 When in the year does the National Department announce revised National curriculum statements if any and how does this affect the selection of LTSM?</p>
<p><b>6 Closely monitor the quality of LTSM received by schools.</b></p> <p>6.1 What quality control measures is the Department taking to control quality of LTSM supplies?</p>
<p><b>7 Ensure that the Department has the necessary capacity to effect the provisioning of LTSM.</b></p> <p>7.1 Describe the training that educators receive on the implementation of the top-up system.</p>

## **8 Set up a task team on LTSM provisioning**

- 8.1 Does the Department have an established LTSM provisioning task team? If yes, explain how it is constituted. (According to the Proudfoot recommendations, the task team should consist of the CFO or his/her representative, the Head of the supply chain management, the Head of the curriculum services, the Head of IRRISS, and the Head of ABET. The task team should be co-chaired by the Head: Supply Chain Management and the Head: Curriculum Services. The team is responsible for the screening and procurement action plans and coordinates the implementation of these plans)
- 8.2 Are there any noticeable changes that occurred as a result of setting up the task team on LTSM provisioning?

## **9 Task Districts to conduct frequent visits to schools to verify and check what excess stock is available.**

- 9.1 Does the District conduct frequent school visits to verify and check what excess stock is available (a schedule for such visits should be submitted). If it does, how does this impact on the LTSM processes?
- 9.2 What happens to excess stock? (a recommendation was made that arrangements should be made to take surplus books to other schools where there is a greater need)

## **10 Develop monitoring and evaluation system for the LTSM processes.**

- 10.1. What steps have been taken to ensure that the LTSM meet delivery deadlines from both the supplier and publisher sides?
- 10.2. What steps have been taken to improve on the general management of the LTSM programme?
- 10.2. Looking back from 2004/05 to 2006/07, what has been the record in the delivery of LTSM within the set timelines? (a written analysis to be submitted). What caused improvements or deterioration in meeting set timelines?

## **11 Are there any problems encountered and/or gains achieved in implementing the recommendations of the PSC LTSM Report?**

### **General comments/remarks:**

## **2. Guidelines on School District Management**

The PSC conducted a study on School District Management during the 2004/2005 financial year. A report with recommendations on School District Management and a Guideline on School District Management were printed and distributed in 2006. The scope of the project covered the following areas:

- (i) The relationship between Provincial education Departments and the District office – where applicable also regions.
- (ii) The relationship between the District office and circuits/schools and their principals/places of learning, school governing bodies and organised learner groups or institutions and organised education.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

### **12 Delegations: Districts should be empowered to render all support functions to schools from the procurement of school facilities and learning materials to the appointment of staff.**

12.1 Are there any areas of performance which have been delegated by the Provincial Department to the District Manager? Which areas are those and how have such delegations empowered the District performance?

### **13 Reporting: Proper communication channels between Provincial and District office should be established by routing communication through the office of the District manager.**

13.1 How is communication and reporting between the District office and the Provincial Department structured and practiced?

13.2 What mechanisms are there to ensure communication and reporting between the District and Provincial Offices?

13.3 How effective are these mechanisms?

13.4 Identify strengths and weaknesses of the current communication and reporting channels between the District office and the Provincial Department.

13.5 What can be done to improve the current communication and reporting level?

### **14 Financial Management: For a District office to be managed effectively and efficiently, it should have the delegated responsibility and the necessary capacity for the management of all financial affairs within the District.**

14.1 Describe the financial management responsibilities that have been delegated to the District office (a copy to be submitted).

14.2 Does the office have the necessary capacity for the management of financial affairs of the District?

14.3 Which committees have been established to ensure quality financial management?

### **15 School Management: District Offices should play a pivotal role in strengthening school management.**

15.1 Does the office have a schedule for school visits? (copy of the school visit schedule to be submitted)

15.2 How often is school performance assessed, and what are the focus areas of assessment and how is the assessment committee constituted?

15.3 Is there a standard framework for school performance assessment? (copy of the framework to be submitted)

### **16 Educational Management Information System (EMIS): The EMIS should be managed at District, circuit and school levels.**

16.1 Are educators in the District sensitised and trained in the use of EMIS? If yes, how does this training enhance staff performance?

## ANNEXURE C

### PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION SITE INSPECTIONS CHECKLIST

#### CHECKLIST: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

(Adopted from the DPSA's Unannounced Visits Checklist)

Name of the assessor/inspector\_\_\_\_\_

Designation\_\_\_\_\_

Date of assessment\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Department visited\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Office Head\_\_\_\_\_

Designation of Head\_\_\_\_\_

Office/town\_\_\_\_\_

Address and phone number\_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments\_\_\_\_\_

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Recommendations:\_\_\_\_\_

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N.B.

Rating is based on a 5-point scale where

0 -3 means there is need for improvement

4 means performance is satisfactory

5 means performance should be commendable for exceptionally good performance

Initial observations:

Rating facilities	Score	Comments
1. Is the reception clearly identifiable		
2. Outside signage <sup>1</sup>		
3. Inside signage gives proper information		
4. Business hours reflected		
5. Service rendered displayed		
6. Prior requirements to accessing services displayed		
7. Cost of services displayed		
8. Condition of building/Police Station		
9. Ramps for people with disabilities		
10. Cleanliness		

Observing access:	Score	Comments
11. Is there a staff member who guides and directs people on arrival to the appropriate service points?		
12. Is there a service charter/standards displayed?		
13. If yes does it reflect the dominant languages of the region?		
14. Is it appropriately placed (visible) to citizens		
15. Is there an information or help desk?		
16. Is the desk stocked with appropriate forms and material?		
17. Is the desk staffed?		





18. Is there a complaints register or suggestion box?		
19. How are complaints from the box/register addressed?		

Observing staff	Score	Comments
20. Front staff wearing name badges		
21. Back office staff wearing name badges		
22. Staff appears friendly		
23. Staff appears professional (efficient and knowledgeable)		

Talking to citizens <sup>2</sup>	Score	Comments
24. Waiting time in the queue before someone assisted you		
25. Waiting time for the service after application		
26. Travel time to reach the service point		
27. Have you lodged a complaint with the office?		
28. Are you aware of the office's complaints handling system and procedures?		
29. Did you feel that you were treated with courtesy?		
30. General perception of service, comments and complaints:		

Talking to staff	Score	Comments
31. Counter area appropriate		
32. Computers and equipment at counters		
33. Does it appear that there is enough staff on duty to help citizens?		
34. Are lunch and other breaks taken without disrupting services?		
35. Which other approaches do you use to improve access to your services especially to previously disadvantaged people?		

<sup>1</sup> Signage means an object, mark, lettering, signboard or other visual or audible device, conveying information or a special message. Although, signage plays an important role in wayfinding, the process does not rely exclusively on signs. There are basically two stages to this process, first people have to know how to get to the building in which offices and services are located and they need to find their way within the building to locate the particular service they require. (Batho Pele Handbook, Chapter 7)



36. Back office environment conducive for efficiency/support of front office		
37. Are there any best practices regarding the implementation of Batho Pele principles		
38. Are there any constraints that impede on the implementation of Batho Pele principles		
39. Staff comments and complaints:		

<b>General Observations:</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Comments</b>
40. Air conditioning/heating		
41. Access to water for the public		
42. Toilet facilities		
43. Facilities for the disabled		
44. Parking sufficient		
45. Safety of service point location		
46. Additional comments:		





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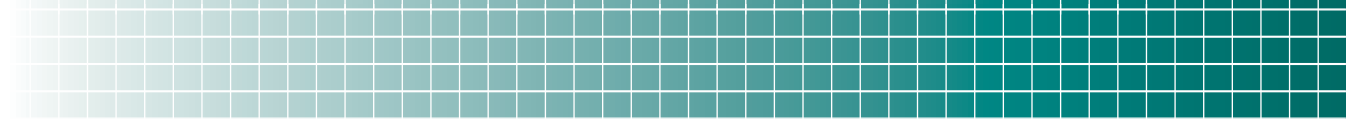
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