

**OVERSIGHT REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION;  
CULTURE, SPORT AND RECREATION DURING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
PROVINCES (NCOP) PROVINCIAL WEEK ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2015, IN THE  
STEVE TSHWETE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY: EKWAZINI SECONDARY SCHOOL AND  
POOLZEE SECONDARY SCHOOL**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The National Council of Provinces (NCOP) conducted a Provincial Week in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (the municipality) from 14-18 September 2015, which was intended to enable Parliament, Provincial Legislatures, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the NCOP to monitor the state of infrastructure in the nine provinces.

The theme for the Provincial Week was: "Advancing infrastructure investment and development for better services to communities". As part of the programme for the week, the Portfolio Committee on Education; Culture, Sport and Recreation (the Committee) undertook oversight visits to Ekwazini Secondary School in Mhluzi and Poolzee Combined School within the municipality.

House resolutions emanating from this Committee report will be referred to the Department of Education for the necessary intervention and report back to the Legislature.

## **2. PURPOSE OF THE OVERSIGHT VISITS AND PUBLIC HEARING**

The purpose of the oversight visits was to assess the general functionality, performance and infrastructure at schools in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality.

## **3. METHOD OF WORK**

The Research Section conducted preliminary visits to identify projects for oversight visits by the Committee. Their findings and recommendations were incorporated into the research report, which was presented to the Committee. Subsequently the programme of the Social Transformation Cluster oversight visits was developed and approved.

An invitation to the oversight visits was sent to the Department of Education, with a request to prepare the necessary presentations on the schools and to engage the District management to host the Committee and the NCOP during the oversight visits. Other stakeholders such as the Office of the Auditor-General, the Department of Finance, South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the House of Traditional Leaders (HTL) were also invited. The Nkangala District Municipality and the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality were already engaged by the NCOP, as they had received invitations and the programme.

On 15 September 2015, the Committee was briefed by the researcher on the two schools. The Committee subsequently considered and adopted its report on 18 November 2015.

#### **4. EKWAZINI SECONDARY SCHOOL**

The oversight visit commenced with a briefing session at the school, at which the District Director (Mr JJ Mabena), the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB) briefed the Committee on the school profile, performance, functionality and infrastructure. The Committee interacted with Hon MEC Mhaule, the District Director, the school SMT and the SGB.

##### **(a) MAIN OBSERVATIONS**

The Committee made the following main observations at the school:

- The school was functioning well, despite having an Acting Principal;
- There were some dilapidated classrooms at the school that need renovating;
- The school had adequate water supply, but the ablution facilities were inadequate to cater for learners and staff;
- The office block had electricity and internet connection, but not all the classrooms had electricity;
- There was a shortage of learner furniture (desks and chairs) and grade 10 Life Orientation textbooks;
- Although most of the educators were highly qualified, the academic performance of the school was not good. From 2012-2014 the Annual National Assessment (ANA) pass rate in grade 9 Mathematics was 0%;
- The school has an elected SGB, which is functional and supportive;
- 650 learners benefit from the National Schools Nutrition Programme (NSNP);

- 43 learners benefit from the Scholar Transport programme, although some learners are still being left behind at times;
- The school has a partnership with the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), which provides operational support to the school. During the oversight visit, they provided the sound system and also welcomed the Committee to the school by singing the National Anthem and hoisting the National Flag.

**(b) SCHOOL PROFILE AND PERFORMANCE**

The school is one of the oldest in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, situated in Mhluzi. It was built in 1979 as Sozama Secondary School and started operating in 1980. It later became known as Ekwazini Secondary School. Feeder schools are Mhluzi Primary School, Manyano Primary School and Elusindisweni Primary School.

Ekwazini Secondary School is categorized as a Quintile 1 school (no fee school). The school finances are the responsibility of the SGB and the school finance committee. Expenditure is done within a school budget and monthly financial reports are produced. Funding is transferred by the department through the paper budget, which is in terms of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF). For the 2015 academic year the school is allocated a budget of R 399 444.00. Transfers are received in May and November each year (50% each transfer).

The Committee noted that the learner educator ratio was 1:27, which is below the 1:32 ratio of the municipality. Learner enrolment in 2015 stood at 650, with a staff establishment of 23 educators, two (2) administration staff and one (1) gardener. At the time of the Committee’s visit, the school did not have a permanent Principal and Deputy Principal.

Principal	Deputy Principal	HOD's	Post Level 1 Educators	Admin staff	General Workers
1 acting	1 acting	3 appointed (1) vacant	19 appointed	2	1 (1) retired

It was noted that there was a vacancy for one (1) additional HOD. The Committee noted that the department needed to fast track the appointment of the Principal, Deputy Principal and the (1) HOD.

### Subject offering

The subjects offered from grade 7 to grade 12 are English, isiZulu, Sepedi, Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, Accounting, Business Studies, Economics, Economic Management Sciences, Technology, Geography, Physical Science, Natural Science, Life Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts and Culture, Life Orientation and Tourism.

### School enrolment

The school reported the following enrolment for the past three years:

Table 1

GRADE	2012	2013	2014	2015
7	62	111	90	59
8	84	103	122	129
9	75	93	111	122
10	104	120	161	157
11	126	96	89	129
12	35	65	87	54
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>650</b>

Table 1 above shows that there was a sharp decline in enrolment between grade 11 and grade 12 over the past four years, with the exception of 2014. The Committee noted that this is a common problem at schools throughout the Province.

### Break down of the grade 12 results over the last three years

Table 2 below shows that in the last three years, only 10 learners managed to qualify for university entrance, 47 obtained diploma passes and 59 obtained certificate passes.

Table 2

	2012	2013	2014
Bachelors	4	4	2
Diplomas	7	20	20
Higher certificates	11	23	15

The Committee raised a concern that the school is producing very few learners that qualify for university admission; this was an area that needed to be improved.

It was further noted that the school has arranged a study camp for the 2015 Grade 12 learners in collaboration with the SANDF.

## Grade 9 Annual National Assessment (ANA) 2012 - 2014

Year	English	Mathematics
2012	59%	0%
2013	48%	0%
2014	40%	0%

The Committee raised a concern about the poor performance in the grade 9 ANA in Language, which indicates that learners in grade 9 have never passed the Mathematics Annual National Assessment in the last three years. The Hon MEC also indicated that the school's performance was disappointing, despite being over-staffed with a (1:27) learner teacher ratio which was below the municipal average of (1:32), as well as having highly qualified educators. She emphasized that the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality was performing above the Provincial norm (80-86%); therefore the 0% pass rate in grade 9 Mathematics ANA was unacceptable. Furthermore, the department's Annual Performance Plan aimed to increase the grade 10 enrolments for Mathematics.

### **Educator qualifications**

19 educators are in the relevant REQV 14, as required by the Department of Education; four (4) educators are in the REQV 15, which is above the minimum level required by the department. Only one (1) teacher is under qualified at REQV 13.

The Committee emphasized that the school must improve the 2015 grade 9 Mathematics ANA results.

### **Leave management**

Leave taken by educators is of a reasonable nature and is properly controlled by the school and the District. Common leave items are sick leave, maternity leave, family responsibility leave and special leave for examination purposes.

## **(c) INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Committee summarized the infrastructure situation at the school:

- There are 24 classrooms and the following special classrooms: administration block, library, laboratory, computer laboratory, kitchen and school hall;
- Some of the classrooms were in need of urgent repairs (ceilings) as there were holes in the floors and the gutters and roof trusses were rotten;

- Classrooms were not electrified, which is a serious threat to learning and teaching productivity. There was only electricity connection in the administration block;
- There was sufficient water supply at the school, although there were inadequate ablution facilities. There were two (2) water borne toilets, which must cater for all educators and learners. The learner ratio for use of toilets is unacceptable and needs to be addressed. The sewer line is open and poses a health hazard to the learners;
- Sporting facilities include one netball court. There is a need for more sporting facilities at the school;
- There is a palisade fence around the school, which needs repairs in some places.

#### **ICT connectivity**

E-education is one of two key areas of innovation for the Basic Education sector. The Committee noted that the school is ICT compliant and there is WI-FI connection, which is used by both the learners and the teachers for research projects. 20 lap tops were donated to the school and the learners have access to them.

#### **(d) LEARNER WELFARE**

##### **Staff and Learner Morale**

The learners displayed discipline and pride in their school, particularly seen in the guard of honour to welcome the Committee to the school. The learners also acted as hosts and hostesses in the room where the Committee held its oversight deliberations. The acting principal displayed good leadership abilities; his SMT was very supportive and showed a sense of pride in their responsibilities.

##### **Learning and Teaching Support Material**

The school is sufficiently supplied with the learner support material. The only grade with a shortage of LTSM was grade 10, with a shortage of 20 Life Orientation textbooks. To close the content gap, the Department of Basic Education provides schools with sufficient Mathematics workbooks, which are used by grade 7, 8 and 9 learners.

##### **Learner furniture**

The school has a shortage of learner furniture and this is mostly felt during examinations sessions, where the "one learner per desk" principle is implemented. The Committee urged the department to fast track the supply of furniture to the school.

### **Learner pregnancy and drop out in the last three years**

Over the past three years, 119 learners dropped out of the school:

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Learners dropped out</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>40</b>

### **School safety**

The Committee noted that the school SGB has a functional Safety Committee. The acting principal and the SGB were urged to address the matter of the palisade fence that needs repairing.

Some learners were smoking dagga and drinking alcohol. The issue of the liquor store across the road from the school and the drug problem in the community are areas of concern that threaten the safety and security of the learners. As a result, the school has forged relations with the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA) and the South African Police Services (SAPS) to help combat these challenges by doing random searches and the adopt-a-cop programme. The Committee noted that the department has also provided the school with metal detectors and trained the teachers on the usage thereof. The presence of the SANDF at the school was also appreciated.

Bullying at the school was another challenge; the Committee noted the report from the school that a criminal case had been opened in relation to a stabbing incident whereby one learner was stabbed by another.

It was also reported that there were repeated burglaries at the school, which are reported to local SAPS but there was no progress on arresting the criminals.

### **National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)**

The Committee commended the department for ensuring that this school participates in the NSNP. Due to the high level of unemployment in the area, the NSNP has brought hope to the children at the school. The positive impact of the NSNP is seen in the improved school attendance; the number of learners who would otherwise dodge school has decreased.

The Committee was informed that the service provider was reliable and supplied the food on time. Parents of learners volunteer to prepare food for the children; they are paid a monthly stipend of R960. There were no complaints about late departmental transfers of money for the stipends and the fuel for cooking.

### **Scholar Transport Programme**

The service is provided to 43 learners at the school. The main challenge is that learners are sometimes left behind by the service provider. The Committee noted that this can be attributed to various reasons, but advised the department to assess the situation and engage the implementing agent to ensure that the service provider is paid on time and that any issues are clarified before the learners have to be negatively affected.

### **(e) CHALLENGES AT THE SCHOOL**

The school identified the following main challenges and accompanying interventions:

- Due to the underperformance in 2014, extra classes and Saturday classes were organized as from March 2015 and spring classes as from September 2015. However, the acting principal indicated that parents did not fully support the extra classes, especially during June 2015. **The MEC emphasized the importance of the extra classes having a specific focus for them to be successful.**
- Poverty and lack of adult supervision at home is a serious threat to the learners. Many learners come from child-headed households and have no after school supervision;
- Safety and security is a serious challenge at the school. The nearby liquor store is a serious threat to learner performance. Although the school has reached an agreement with the owner of the store that no liquor should be sold to learners, the agreement needs to be strictly enforced and monitored.
- There is easy access to drugs in the community. The school has enlisted the SAPS to do random searches and participates in the Adopt-a-cop programme;
- There are over-aged learners at the school, but they are only admitted in order to give them an opportunity to get a certificate despite their challenges. Many learners come from other schools where they had failed and have to now repeat a grade at Ekwazini Secondary School. In such cases, the school reported that it uses the National Policy pertaining to Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R to 12 (*NPPPR*).



#### 4.1. FINDINGS

The Committee made the following findings on the **Ekwazini Secondary School**:

- (a) The school does not have a Principal and a Deputy Principal, although it is currently functional under the care of the Acting Principal. There is also one (1) vacant HOD position.
- (b) The Committee raised a serious concern that despite the highly qualified educators, the school had a 0% pass rate in grade 9 Mathematics ANA results for the past three years (2012-2014).
- (c) Some classrooms need urgent renovations, specifically the ceilings, roofs and floors. The classrooms are not electrified; this has a negative impact on teaching in learning. There is only electricity connection in the administration block.
- (d) The school has adequate water supply but there is a serious shortage of ablution facilities to cater for all the learners and educators.
- (e) Many of the learners are faced with the threats of poverty, child-headed families and lack of supervision after school, which contribute to the poor results.
- (f) Most of the learners are disciplined and hardworking; the school has a partnership with the South African National Defence Force which has great potential. The school also has partnerships with SANCA and SAPS.
- (g) School safety and security is a challenge, as a result of the prevalence of alcohol and drugs in the surrounding community, repeated burglaries at the school, as well as incidents of bullying. The school has reported the burglaries and the stabbing of one learner by another learner to the SAPS, but there is no progress in relation to the cases that were opened when the incidents were reported.
- (h) There are some issues on Scholar Transport that need to be attended to, such as learners being left behind at times.
- (i) There is a shortage of grade 10 Life Orientation textbooks and also a shortage of learner furniture (insufficient desks and chairs).
- (j) The department has distributed the Provincial improvement plan to all schools in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality.

## 4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommended that the Department of Education must:

- (a) Fast track the appointment of the principal, the deputy principal and the one (1) HOD post at Ekwazini Secondary School before 31 December 2015. The SGB must be engaged to address all other staffing needs of the school, as not all posts can be filled by the department. Provide a progress report at 31 December 2015.
- (b) Improve the 2015 grade 9 ANA results for Mathematics by at least 10%.
- (c) Repair the dilapidated classrooms and begin with electrification of the classrooms before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> term of the 2016 school year (31 March 2016). The department must immediately assess the work to be done and decide if it can be an SGB project or if it needs the intervention of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. A progress report on the assessment and works to be done must be submitted to the Committee before 31 December 2015.
- (d) Fast track the provision of adequate ablution facilities at the school and ensure that the open sewer line is closed by 31 March 2016. The school must be prioritized within the 3 year cut-off period in terms of the National Norms and Standards for Basic Services at schools, which is December 2016. Submit a costed project plan to the Committee for this project (with timelines) by 29 February 2016.
- (e) Engage the SGB to enforce stricter monitoring of learners from child-headed families and very poor homes. The department and the SGB must intervene in this space and come up with specific interventions to mitigate the effects of their unfortunate circumstances and make an impact in these children's lives. The district must outline the interventions in a progress report by 29 February 2016.
- (f) The school and the SGB, with the support of the department, must develop a concept document to engage other government departments, as well as private sector and civil society partners to provide mentoring to the learners and transfer of leadership and life skills to them. Submit the proposed concept document to the Committee by 29 February 2016.
- (g) The school and the SGB (Safety Committee) must become more pro-active and intensify anti-drugs and alcohol community programmes, with the help of its current partners, the SAPS, SANCA and the SANDF. The department must assist

the school to get progress on the burglary and bullying cases reported to SAPS. A progress report must be submitted by 29 February 2016.

- (h) Follow up with the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport on the matter of learners being left behind by scholar transport service providers. The department must ensure that no learner who qualifies for this service is disadvantaged. The District must submit a progress report on the interventions made in this regard by 31 December 2015.
- (i) Ensure that the required textbooks and furniture (shortages) are delivered to the school before 31 December 2015.
- (j) The District must closely monitor the school's implementation of the Provincial school improvement plan and submit monthly reports to Head Office. Submit a progress report on the school's implementation of the Provincial school improvement plan in the 2015 academic year, by 31 December 2015.

## **5. POOLZEE COMBINED SCHOOL**

The principal (Mr Aphane), the SMT and SGB of Poolzee Secondary School joined the Committee's briefing session on 16 September 2015 at the Ekwazini Secondary School. After the deliberations with the Hon MEC, the District Director, the school management team and the SGB, the Committee travelled about 50km on the Driefontein road to do a site inspection of the Poolzee Combined School.

### **(a) MAIN OBSERVATIONS**

**The Committee made the following observations at Poolzee Combined School:**

- The school is a public school on private farm land. The building infrastructure was satisfactory, although some buildings were very old. Some had been built by the department and others were donated by a local mining company;
- The school was in a transition process due to the imminent transfer of the FET phase to nearby Bankfontein from January 2016. The owner of the farm on which the school is situated, wishes to close the school. The ultimate goal is to transfer

all learners from the surrounding farm schools to the Steve Tshwete Boarding School upon completion of the construction thereof;

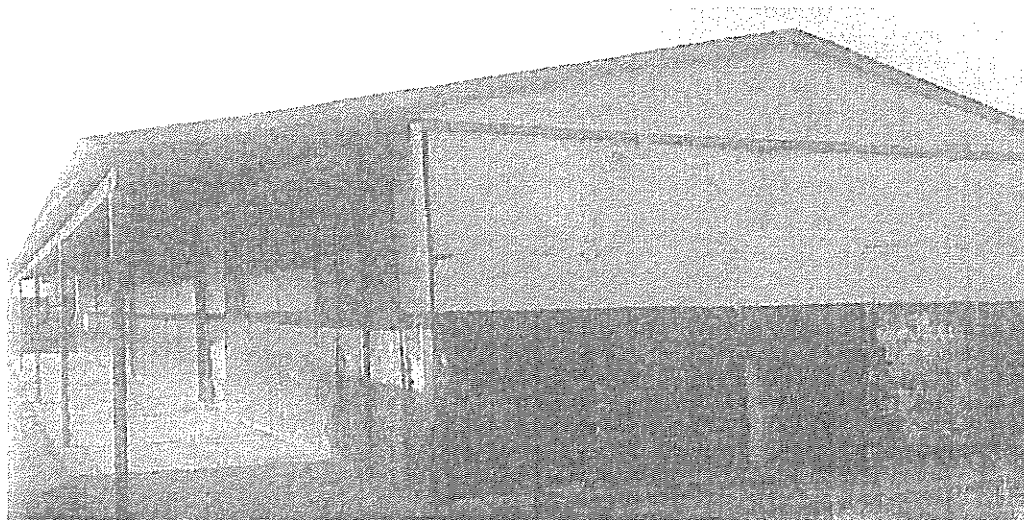
- The building infrastructure at the school is adequate and most are in good condition. However, the ablution facilities are inadequate. The pit toilet system is still being used, with an unacceptable learner user ratio. There was also an oil pit latrine that was exposed and was a danger to learners;
- The Committee noted all the infrastructure challenges such as the inadequate ablution facilities, lack of a proper library, ECD centre and outdoor play area and lack of cooking facilities for the NSNP. **However, it was agreed that due to the imminent transfer of learners to the Steve Tshwete Boarding school, no major infrastructure works could be undertaken at this point. However, the department should assist in the interim period so that the quality of learning and teaching is not hindered and the dignity of the learners is upheld, especially regarding the ablution facilities;**
- Having said that, the following infrastructure was observed at the school:
  - The school has an administration (office) block, which was well-equipped with laptops, photocopier, printer machines, telephones and electricity supply;
  - A borehole on site supplies water to the school;
  - Learners' pit toilets that were insufficient and in a very poor condition;
  - Sufficient classrooms that had electricity connection;
  - Internet access and a mobile container library on site.
- The Committee also noted the following:
  - There was a shortage of Learner support material (LTSM) and learner furniture (30 desks and chairs) but the Committee noted that once the Grade 10-12 learners are transferred to Bankfontein as from January 2016, there should be adequate desks and chairs for the remaining learners;
  - The school was benefitting from the NSNP Programme, although the structure where food was prepared for the learners was too small;
  - Most learners benefit from the Scholar Transport programme, but the service was at times hindered by muddy farm roads caused by rainy periods.

## **(b) SCHOOL PROFILE AND FUNCTIONALITY**

The school was established in 1973 by two farmers, Mr Poolman and Mr Coetzee, hence the name Poolzee. The school is located within the farming community near Driefontein in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality. The department has been paying rent to the farm owners, but it was reported that the current owner of the farm (Mr. Botha) wants the school to close down. However, the Committee noted the department's current plans to build the Steve Tshwete Boarding School, which will alleviate the need for farm schools.

At the time of the Committee's visit, Poolzee Combined School had been offering classes from grade R to grade 12. Grade 7 and grade 8 learners were combined in one class and the multi - grade teaching approach was used. The Committee noted that the teachers were not trained on the multi-grade approach and that the school had requested the department to assist in this regard. It was also noted that the FET Phase (grade 10-12) would no longer operate at the school as from January 2016.

**One of the old school buildings at Poolzee Combined School (prefab building)**



### **Learner enrolment**

The 2014 total enrolment from grade 1 to grade 12 was 402 learners, which was a learner teacher ratio of 29:1. The following enrolments have been registered in the farm school since 2012 to date, which indicates an increase each year:

<b>Year</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Enrolments</b>	333	365	402

### **Staffing and school management**

The staff establishment consists of 14 teachers, consisting of one (1) principal; two (2) HODs and eleven (11) post level 1 educators. The two HODs are placed in the FET phase and the Committee raised a concern that there were no HOD's appointed in the Foundation phase, Intermediate phase and Senior phase. This poses a challenge to the monitoring and management of effective curriculum delivery. The Committee also noted that the school had appointed some teachers as caretakers in the phases where there were no appointed HOD's.

The Committee was informed by the school that the circuit manager's monitoring visits to the school on curriculum matters were rare. However, the officials from the curriculum section of the District Office paid frequent visits to the school. The department was urged to improve this aspect of the circuit manager's performance.

### **School Governing Body**

The SGB was elected during the May 2015 SGB election process and is fully functional with supporting committees in the execution of all its important tasks. However, the Committee noted that the SGB has not yet reviewed the policies of the school and this is a process matter to be attended to.

### **School Performance**

The Committee noted that the school performance was poor in most of the grades. Table 3 below shows that the Grade 12 performance in 2014 was 55%, which is below the expected performance percentage for the Province and noting that Steve Tshwete Local Municipality is one of the top performing municipalities in the Province.

The Committee emphasized to the school and the department that Grades 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 needs to make a drastic improvement in pass percentage at the end of 2015 school year.

Table 3

Grade	2013			2014		
	Enrolment	No pass	% pass	Enrolment	No pass	% pass
1	34	30	88%	50	22	44%
2	28	21	75%	37	23	62%
3	32	25	78%	27	15	56%
4	36	22	61%	35	20	57%

5	38	24	63%	44	29	66%
7	23	13	57%	25	9	36%
8	31	23	74%	33	12	36%
9	37	23	62%	32	20	63%
10	26	15	58%	43	12	28%
11	33	22	67%	22	12	55%
12	25	11	44%	27	15	55%

The grade 12 results over the last three years indicate that there were eight (8) bachelor's passes, eight (8) diploma passes and nine (9) certificate passes.

### Annual National Assessment (ANA) Performance

Table 4 below shows that the school's ANA results over the last three years was very poor in Grade 3 Mathematics and Language, although there was an improvement in the 2014 results. The grade 6 results were fairly satisfactory in English First Additional Language (FAL) but very poor in Mathematics; again there was an improvement in 2014 results although still far below the pass mark. The grade 9 results were fairly satisfactory in English but dismal in Mathematics. There was no improvement at all over the last three years (0% pass rate). The Committee noted this as a serious concern, showing that Mathematics teaching and learning was actually non-existent.

Table 4

	Grade 3		Grade 6		Grade 9	
	Language	Mathematics	English FAL	Mathematics	English FAL	Mathematics
2012	12%	4%	57%	0%	36%	0%
2013	12%	16%	57%	0%	36%	0%
2014	36%	29%	56%	11%	59%	0%

### Mathematics and Science

Table 5 below shows that there was a slight increase in the number of Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners who enrolled in pure Mathematics and Science from 2012 – 2014. However, the numbers need to increase going forward.

Grade	2012	2013	2014
10	14	26	26
11	8	18	17
12	-	9	15

### **Access to ECD Education**

The National Development Plan (NDP) dictates that Early Childhood Development is a priority as part of the measures to improve the national quality of education and long term prospects of future generations. To this effect, the school has enrolled 32 most vulnerable learners from the farming communities for grade R in 2015. The Committee noted with appreciation that this has had a positive impact on the lives of children adversely affected by socio-economic challenges and who previously did not have the opportunity to accessing quality ECD education before. Although there is no ECD centre and equipment to develop the motor skills and co-ordination skills of the children, the department has provided ECD learner support material. The Committee noted that the learners also enjoy a daily hot meal through the NSNP.

### **Provision of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM)**

There were some shortages of text books and workbooks at the school. The school reported that they have a textbook retrieval policy (retrieval rate for 2014 was 85%) and that the usage of textbooks is monitored throughout the year.

The Committee emphasized the importance of the school making use of the paper budget to ensure that educators have sufficient and correct resource material from which to teach effectively. The department should ensure that all schools have access to the curriculum website which is loaded with supplementary teaching and learning materials developed by the department and is available freely to all schools, teachers, learners and parents.

### **Electricity and ICT Connectivity**

The department was commended for ensuring electricity connection and ICT connectivity at the school. The learners and teachers have access to WI-FI at the school.

## **(c) LEARNER WELFARE**

### **National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)**

The Committee noted with appreciation that all the learners in the school benefit from the NSNP. It was further noted that learner drop outs and absenteeism had been minimized since the introduction of the NSNP at the school. The service provider also works collaboratively with the school and quality food is delivered on time. The Committee noted that the room where the food is prepared for the learners was too small.



### **Scholar Transport**

The school indicated that 98% of the learners made use of the scholar transport (busses) to come to school from the surrounding farms. The Committee noted that the transport was reliable in general, but there were some challenges experienced, such as during the rainy season the buses were unable to ferry learners to school because of the poor condition of the farm roads. The department was requested to assess the situation and intervene where necessary. The Committee commended the SGB for regularly meeting with the bus drivers to discuss challenges and solutions.

### **Learner Furniture**

The Committee noted that the school had shortages of learner furniture. It was commendable that the SGB had taken the initiative to buy some chairs and to repair others. The department was also urged to intervene in this space and provide at least 30 double desks, which would alleviate the shortage.

### **School Safety**

There were no complaints about burglaries or vandalism at the school.

### **Learner Pregnancy and Drop Outs**

The statistics in Table 6 below indicate the total number of learners who fell pregnant and those who dropped out during 2012 to 2014.

Table 6

<b>Year</b>	<b>No of learners who fell pregnant</b>	<b>Learners who dropped out</b>
<b>2012</b>	1	18
<b>2013</b>	3	10
<b>2014</b>	4	8

## **5.1. FINDINGS**

The Committee made the following findings on the **Poolzee Combined School**:

- (a) The school is a public school on privately owned land. As from January 2016 the FET Phase learners (grade 10 -12) will be transferred to nearby Bankfontein as part of the process to eventually relocate all learners to the Steve Tshwete Boarding School, once it is constructed.

- (b) The Committee noted all the infrastructure challenges such as the inadequate ablution facilities (pit toilets), lack of a proper library, lack of an ECD centre and outdoor play area and lack of proper cooking structure for the NSNP. However, it was agreed that since the learners of this school will shortly be transferred to the Steve Tshwete Boarding school, no major infrastructure works could be undertaken at this point.
- (c) There were no HOD's appointed in the Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase, which has a negative impact on effective curriculum management and delivery in these grades (1 – 7). The academic performance of the school over the past three years has been very poor.
- (d) Grade 7 and 8 learners were combined in one class and the multi-grade teaching approach was used. Teachers at the school were not trained to teach in this way.
- (e) The school started to provide an Early Childhood Development service to the surrounding communities in 2015; a total of 23 children were registered for grade R. Although there was no ECD centre and outdoor playing facilities, the department provided the necessary ECD learning and teaching material, which is commendable.
- (f) The learner dropout rate at the school decreased slightly from ten (10) in 2013 to eight (8) in 2014, while the pregnancy rate increased from three (3) in 2013 to four (4) in 2014.

## 5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommended that the Department of Education must:

- (a) Submit a progress report (with timeframes) by 31 December 2015 on the process to be followed as from January 2016 for transferring FET learners to Bankfontein and eventually transferring all learners to the Steve Tshwete Boarding School.
- (b) Provide the relevant infrastructure support to the school until such time that all the learners are transferred to the Steve Tshwete Boarding School. Before the 2016 school year begins, the department must supply the school with the correct chemicals to be used in the pit toilets, ensure that the toilets are repaired and properly divided into male and female sections, as well as seal the exposed oil pit latrine for the safety of the learners.

- (c) Put measures in place to strengthen curriculum support to the school in order to augment the lack of appointed HOD's in the Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase. Provide a progress report by 31 January 2016.
- (d) Ensure that by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> term of 2016, the affected educators are trained to teach multi-grade classes. Submit a progress report by 29 February 2016.
- (e) Continue to support the school with the necessary ECD learning and teaching support material. The department should also provide more curriculum support and trained ECD practitioners in 2016. Provide a progress report by 29 February 2016.
- (f) The SGB together with the School Management Team and the Nkangala District Office must implement advocacy programmes regarding teenage pregnancy. The root causes of learner dropouts must be identified and addressed. Provide a progress report by 29 February 2016.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson would like to thank the Honourable Members of the Committee for their constructive inputs made at the oversight visits to the Ekwazini Secondary School and Poolzee Combined School, which were conducted on 16 September 2015 during the NCOP Provincial Week which was held in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality.

The Committee also extends its appreciation to the Department of Education for providing the requested information and support. The presence of the Hon MEC at the oversight visit was appreciated. The Committee acknowledged the success of the department in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, as this municipality has been one of the top performing municipalities for a number of years.

The assistance provided by the Legislature support staff during the NCOP Provincial Week to the work of the Committee, was also appreciated.

The Committee requests the House to adopt this report with its findings and recommendations. The department is expected to investigate all the observations and findings of the Committee in this report and implement the House Resolutions herein.

**A progress report on the implementation of the House Resolutions in this report must be submitted to the Legislature on or before 29 February 2016 (unless otherwise stated).**



**HON SK MASHILO  
CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE  
ON EDUCATION; CULTURE, SPORTS AND RECREATION**

18/11/2015

DATE