

BUDGET SPEECH BY MR NAREND SINGH, KWAZULU-NATAL MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE, IN THE LEGISLATURE ON THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2003

Chairperson, Honourable Members,

It is my privilege to present to this House the Budget of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education for the 2003/2004 financial year.

South Coast Accident

However, I would like to begin by echoing what the Honourable Premier said about the terrible road accident on the South Coast about a week ago, in which fourteen people died, twelve of them young children on their way from school. This was a heavy blow, an absolutely tragic event. Entire communities have been traumatised, the school communities included, and I think it is important that they – the bereaved parents especially – should know that we in this House and officials of the Department share in their grief. As far as the accident is concerned, there are reports that the drivers involved were playing some kind of crazy, reckless game on the road. I am sure the police will get to the bottom of what happened, and my officials are investigating as well. It is absolutely unacceptable that school children should be put at risk in this way.

The accident raises other questions for the Department. I believe an investigation is needed into the reasons why there is such a wholesale transmigration of schoolchildren from one area to another every day. Are local schools not up to standard? Does the pattern of registration of schools not have to be brought more into line with needs established by the Department? These are issues that will be investigated.

Meanwhile (as you probably know) a relief fund has been launched to assist affected families and surviving victims. Nothing will bring back those innocent young lives and it is doubtful whether the grief of the parents will ever be fully assuaged. But what we can do is attempt to soften the financial blow which accompanies the emotional one. All the parents affected are disadvantaged and struggling. They now have funeral costs and they also need psychological counselling which none can afford. A Relief Fund has been established and anybody wishing to contribute is able to make a deposit into Standard Bank Account No 052 797 384, branch code 057 627 01 in the name of the Malangeni/Umzinto Children Disaster Fund.

Education the key

Chairperson, Honourable Members, at R11.8 billion, the Budget of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education is the largest of any provincial department in South Africa and the second largest in the country after Defence. I believe we in this House have a correspondingly weighty responsibility to ensure that it will be money well spent – that it will translate into quality education for the learners of this province, to serve them in their personal lives and to serve the economy on whose growth the prosperity of all of us ultimately depends. As Honourable Members know, I am new in this Portfolio. I have been working to acquaint myself with the internal workings of a very large Department, but that takes time.

My observations are based largely on the information supplied to me by senior officials, not on first-hand experience, but I would like to say, at once, that I have

every confidence in the calibre and commitment of those officials, just as I have confidence in the calibre and commitment of the vast bulk of the educator corps. I would also like to say that although I am a newcomer to the Portfolio, I have always looked with great interest at what is happening in Education. Not only is quality Education the key to the future, it is the yardstick by which we, as public figures, will be judged as to whether we have made the political emancipation of 1994 meaningful. I believe it is no coincidence, Chairperson, that Education – or the lack of it in terms of quality – ran like a thread through the course of the political struggle which bore fruit in 1994. Nor is it coincidence, I believe, that the great leaders produced by that struggle - Nelson Mandela, Mangosuthu Buthelezi and others - are individuals who grasped the little that was available to them in Education in those early pre-apartheid days and used it to gain the knowledge and breadth of vision that equipped them to lead their people. I believe that, nine years into the new South Africa, it is incumbent on us to deliver quality education to all the people of this country. It is the only way to give full meaning to political emancipation.

Inherited nightmare

In 1994 we inherited a grotesquely uneven system of Education, the result of past political fragmentation, with gross under-funding in the largest sector and a build-up of daunting material backlogs. My predecessors in office had to wrestle with the nightmarish logistics of meshing the operations of no fewer than six Education Departments that had operated in KwaZulu-Natal, each with its own traditions, standards and modus operandi. They have also had to cope with an almost chronic lack of funding. Apart from the fact that KwaZulu-Natal has the country's largest number of schoolchildren, there are all kinds of hidden economic distortions also which throw a heavier load on the Department. When you consider that KwaZulu-Natal parents earn probably 20% less on average than their counterparts in Gauteng, say, and 10% less than their counterparts in the Western Cape, obviously they are in nothing like the same position to contribute to their children's education by way of fees.

This means the Department has to shoulder a considerably higher portion of the overall funding burden than some of its counterparts in the other provinces. I would like to acknowledge the contribution of my predecessors in this regard, which includes the Honourable Premier because he acted as Minister of Education for a time.

I am given to understand that, in spite of the difficulties, reasonable progress has been made in fashioning a Department which is increasingly functional, efficient and transparent in its operations. At the same time I believe we might have reached a stage where we need to stand back and take stock - consider whether new approaches, fresh and innovative thinking and a reaching out to potential partners in Education, could not speed up effective delivery. I intend returning to that theme in due course.

Strategic issues

Chairperson, allow me meanwhile to address a few current strategic issues.

I am informed that the Department has made progress in improving the internal control environment and is totally committed to an effective, efficient, economical and transparent administration. This has not been without its pains, I gather, but the changes mean the Department today is significantly altered from what it was

For me, financial administration is just as important as the professional administration of education. Among the changes are:

- The appointment of a full-time Chief Executive Officer, Professor Charles Dlamini. Professor Dlamini is the former Rector of the University of Zululand and an intellectual and educationist in his own right. I am sure Hon Members will agree with me that the Department is most fortunate to have his services;
- The appointment of Deputy Directors-General to manage Corporate Services and Education Management and Support Services. This is surely a step in the right direction. I believe our professional educators are hamstrung without effective support services;
- The placement of an Acting Chief Financial Officer for the full year. I see the Financial Office as a key contributor to efficiency, cost-effectiveness and transparency in administration, and I am glad to be able to announce today that the acting incumbent, Jeremy Perks, will join the Department in a full-time capacity later this year. Mr Perks is an experienced Chartered Accountant who had been on secondment from KPMG and in whom I have every confidence to put in place financial systems that will lead to the fullest degree of accountability in terms of the Public Finance Management Act;
- Filling of the post of Deputy Chief Financial Officer;
- The appointment of Regional Senior Managers, on a permanent basis rather than in the acting capacity of previous years; and
- A restructuring of the Department to more effectively meet the challenges in various areas. This will be under continuous review and more changes will be made as new challenges arise.

Chairperson, the Department has developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan, which has already been tabled in this House. I am pleased to report that this Strategic Plan has greatly impressed the National Department of Education, as well as the Departments of the other provinces – in fact is considered to be in advance of other provincial plans, which puts KwaZulu-Natal potentially at the leading edge of service delivery in Education.

This Strategic Plan is being unpacked and brought closer to realisation. When that is completed, KwaZulu-Natal really will be at the leading edge. Operational plans need to be firmed up, timeframes established and objectives achieved on time. I also believe that when we speak of implementing a Strategic Plan, we have to involve every stakeholder in Education. It cannot be left only to the Department.

Stakeholders' Forum

Who are the Stakeholders? Obviously the tertiary institutions are major stakeholders because they take a proportion of our school-leavers and it is important that these should be equipped for study at that level. The teacher unions and professional associations are stakeholders because it is their members who will have to implement the Strategic Plan and it is vital that they fully understand and support it. Parent associations are stakeholders because the future of their children depends on success in Education, while it is they who pay

taxes and school fees. School management bodies are stakeholders because they complement the professional activities of the teachers and give direction to the schools.

And I also believe, Chairperson, that the Private Sector are important stakeholders. South Africa has a terrible skills shortage. Our economic well-being depends on the development of a skilled and educated workforce. I believe the Private Sector has a vital stake in quality Education and I believe its corporate members would be only too willing to involve themselves with our Strategic Plan, to make inputs and contribute to its success. I can see the Private Sector becoming important partners in education because it is very much in their own interest. It is also in the interest of the learners themselves because a Private Sector input would see them being propelled in directions where there is a likelihood of future employment.

As I say, I do not believe the Department should attempt to implement the Strategic Plan entirely on its own. We need to take all the Stakeholders with us, get their input and make sure that all are pulling in the same direction. For that reason I intend calling a Stakeholders' Forum very soon, an inclusive gathering at which everyone will be able to contribute and, hopefully, from which we will emerge with a clearer idea of where we are and where we are going in achieving the objectives and targets of the Strategic Plan. I believe it will be a useful and healthy exercise. I hope it will be possible to hold this Stakeholders' Forum within the next four to six weeks.

Provincial priorities

KwaZulu-Natal has set provincial priorities of:

- Eradication of poverty and inequality;
- Dealing with the impact of HIV/Aids and cholera;
- Re-engineering and the enhancement of service delivery in government;
- Investment in infrastructure;
- Strengthening governance and human resource capacity; and
- Safety and security.

I believe the Strategic Plan of the Department addresses all these, and I illustrate this as follows:

- Education in itself works to eradicate poverty and inequality, not least through Further Education and Training (FET) institutions and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET).
- HIV/AIDS is addressed to some extent through the Conditional Grant Programme and I believe our teaching programmes have a vitally important role to play in educating young people as to the dangers of HIV/AIDS and in safe lifestyles, complementing the work of the Departments of Health and Social Welfare. However, I believe there is another aspect of HIV/AIDS that needs to be seriously addressed. If it is true, as seems likely from preliminary research, that infection rates among teachers have reached a stage when there is serious absenteeism, due to illness, and eventual early death, we will have a crisis bearing down on us. It is unacceptable that pupils should be deprived of the attention of teachers, and we must plan for future teacher training and recruitment. I have tasked officials to establish the closest liaison with the Department of Health so that it can be established how prevalent HIV/AIDS really is

within the teacher corps, what age groups are affected and what replacement action is likely to be necessary.

- I believe the Strategic Plan encompasses the priorities of re-engineering, enhancement of service delivery and the strengthening of governance and human resources. Clear targets need to be achieved throughout the year, and they are monitored through the Operational Plan.
- The Department continues to invest in infrastructure. The Capital Works Budget has increased from R267 million in 2002/2003 to R452 million in the coming year and will increase to more than R600 million in 2005/2006. A total of 1 270 classrooms will be built this year, compared with 904 in 2002/2003, while 1 300 toilets will be completed, compared with 710. At least 1 000 schools will receive proper running water for the first time. However, Chairperson, the demands for infrastructure outweigh the ability of the province to provide sufficient funding. On our present course the backlog in capital expenditure is likely to remain at an altogether unacceptable nine years. I believe it is time the Department of Education and the Department of Works got together with members of the Private Sector to explore alternatives such as Public/Private Partnerships to shift this backlog. Again, I see innovation as the key. For example, we must involve local government more in that Public/Private Partnership. It must be a co-ordinated effort in which local government and the Private Sector work together in the best interests of the community.
- As far as safety and security is concerned, it is unacceptable that learners should be intimidated and subjected to violence by criminal elements from outside the schools. Problem schools should be put under the spotlight and the input of the police and local communities sought to end these abuses. Proper systems of school security have to be set up, which is often a matter of perseverance and will. The criminals who prey on our children can and will be defeated.

Review of past year

Improved results

Chairperson, Honourable Members, I now have pleasure in recording improved Senior Certificate results in the province, with a percentage pass rate at 70,8% in 2002 compared with 62,8% in 2001. Equally important, the percentage of poorly performing schools (those with a pass rate of 40% or less) fell from 30% to 14,5%. I congratulate all involved - educators, school governing bodies, teacher unions, school support staff and, of course, the learners themselves. I also acknowledge the contribution of the Provincial Examination Directorate, who have worked hard and professionally to ensure that the examination process in KwaZulu-Natal remains fair and retains the proper integrity and validity.

The Department has now set the target of a 75% pass rate for the 2003 academic year. This might appear to be a modest target, but actually it is calculated from a much higher base than before.

As I say, these results are encouraging. But I am afraid I have to sound a caveat. Are Senior Certificate results an end in themselves? Is the proportion of school-leavers who find employment not more significant than the percentage pass? It seems that 5% of school-leavers find employment and 13% move into tertiary education. What happens to the other 82%? It is a frightening question, Chairperson and Honourable Members, and it is one of the reasons I am eager to pursue vocational training in schools wherever possible, the teaching of practical and business skills, through expanded FET programmes, so that school-leavers

will be equipped to find employment or set up their own small businesses. I see this as an important function of the Chief Directorate.

We are deeply concerned about the 14.5 % of schools that had a pass rate of 40% or less. Officials of the Department have already visited them and remedial action is being taken.

Delivery of books

I am told the 2003 academic year started more smoothly than anticipated. Deliveries of stationery and textbooks were not made timeously, but suppliers did their best to speedily make up the backlogs. I understand the confusion was a legacy of procurement actions not taken two years ago, but that this has now been rectified. I am told that this year tenders were submitted to the Provincial Treasury on time and there are firm timetables for the ordering of textbooks and stationery so that deliveries can be completed before the year-end examinations finish.

Expenditure on personnel

Chairperson, over-expenditure on personnel was a significant factor in the previous financial year. The Budget was overrun due to abnormally high intakes with the admission of six-year-olds. Consequently, in January this year the Department had to take the unwelcome step of reducing the number of temporary teachers. Chairperson, I am happy to report that a further R342 million has been provided for additional educators this to cater for the intake of six year olds.

Initiatives ahead

Chairperson, I would like to share with the House the initiatives and activities for the year ahead :

Public schools

Improving the quality of education in the public schools continues to be the main focus. A number of interventions are being initiated and implemented. Chairperson, this is evident from the improvement in matriculation results over the past three years. The 2003/04 budget, including the conditional grants from the National Department of Education, will allow the Department to implement programmes directed at enhancing the quality of education.

Public Ordinary schools take the bulk of the budget for the Department, as the objective is to provide public ordinary education from grade 1 to 12 in accordance with the South African Schools Act. The major activity is to ensure timeous and adequate provision of human, financial and physical (LSM) resources to schools. It is critical to monitor and manage the Budget in the light of the continuous challenges associated with the provision of educators in line with learner: educator ratios and the continuous need to provide substitute educators.

Over past years the Department has been accused of a lack in specific policies, strategies and locus of responsibility for quality assurance. As noted earlier, quality management and assurance was formally introduced during 2002. The Department is committed to quality assurance as part of the solution in developing a more cost-effective and efficient education system.

The Department is aware that the criteria previously used to provide norms and standards funding to schools did not necessarily take into consideration the poverty of the pupils attending such schools. In an effort to address this, the Census 1996 data has replaced the Census 1991 data that has improved the ranking of many deserving schools. In addition, place names have been introduced to the funding model in an effort to further address the issue of poverty. Research is also currently being done on the impact of HIV/AIDS, malnutrition in schools, absenteeism through illness and this data is being analysed to determine whether it could be reliably used as further poverty indicators.

Outcomes-Based Education

I am informed that the Department is providing high quality education with the framework of Outcomes-Based Education as a matter of policy. It is aiming at achieving high levels of knowledge, skills and values through the setting of high standards in all phases and grades of education.

The system is based on realising the full potential of each learner as a citizen of a democratic South Africa and relies on caring and competent educators, dedicated to the teaching profession.

Outcome-based education has a learner-centred, activity-based and a resource-based approach to teaching and learning. While this approach is common across the world, it has been oriented and adapted to South Africa's conditions, blending in a unique way knowledge, skills and values drawn from South Africa, Africa and the world. With the phasing in of the Outcome Based Education approach to the FET phase – that is, Grades 10, 11 and 12 – it has become necessary to harmonise the provision of the general education and training phase on the ground and the four-phase curriculum system, which the country ushered in through Curriculum 2005.

The first phase consists of Grade R up to Grade 3, referred to as the Foundation Phase. The second phase stretches from Grade 4 to Grade 6, which is known as the Intermediate Phase. And the third phase covers Grade 7 to Grade 9, which is an exit point with the General Education and Training Certificate (or GETC). The fourth phase is the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, consisting of Grade 10 to Grade 12.

I therefore urge all stakeholders in education throughout the province to support us as a Department in implementing the four-phase OBE system in all schools. Communities in collaboration with the Department throughout the province of KwaZulu-Natal are requested to gradually and systematically phase in the schooling system that allows clusters of schools in a community to be organized into those that offer:

- Either the Foundation Phase (Grade R to Grade 3);
- The Intermediate Phase (Grade 4 to Grade 6) only, or both these phases;
- The Senior Phase (Grade 7 to Grade 9) or General Education and Training Certificate only;
- Or the Further Education and Training Phase only (Grade 10 to Grade 12), that is a Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC), allowing more differentiation of the curriculum, into vocationally-based or skill-based education and the scarce subjects, as against the so-called "straight six" subjects for matriculation.

Schools should carefully feed into one another within clusters, which would reduce transmigration of learners. The Department is currently implementing the revised National Curriculum statements for Grade R to Grade 9 at schools as a policy declared nationally. It is the intention of my Department to phase in the revised National Curriculum statements gradually in schools, as follows:

- Foundation Phase – 2004
- Intermediate Phase – 2005
- Grade 7 – 2006
- Grade 8 – 2007
- Grade 9 – 2008

Freedom of religion, belief and opinion

I now turn to the question of freedom of religion, belief and opinion in schools. In terms of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa: everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought and belief. Religious observance may be conducted at state or state-aided institutions provided that:

1. Those observances follow rules made by the appropriate public authorities;
2. They are conducted on an equitable basis; and
3. Attendance at them is free and voluntary.

In accordance with these constitutional prescripts, I intend to determine the rules as provided for in (a), (b) and (c), after consultation with the public, with the stakeholders of religious faiths, with structures in my Department and with all interested parties. To this intend I intend issuing a public notice inviting the stakeholders to comment on the draft policy, which will be spearheaded by my Department.

To prevent the unconstitutional imposition of a particular faith on learners in schools, the Department is currently engaged in promoting values of education, moral education, life orientation and school enrichment in morning assemblies as schools.

Learner support material

The increase in the budget for learner support material is welcomed as an aid to relieve parents of some of their onerous obligations. The increase of 169% from the 2002/3 budget will indeed go a long way in addressing the needs of the schools in the disadvantaged areas and improving the conditions of learning and teaching. Chairperson, appropriate systems are being implemented to expend every cent allocated.

Discipline in schools

Discipline in schools will be enforced to provide a quality learning environment. Principals and staff will be supported in this.

Infrastrucutre

The Department has a School Infrastructure Development Plan that covers the 2002/2003 to 2007/2008 financial years. The magnitude of the basic, essential infrastructure needs of the Department is such that the focus is exclusively on

providing additional/replacement classrooms and toilets as well as water where possible (water tanks). Apart from being severely overcrowded, 2 950 of the most disadvantaged schools have classrooms and toilets of completely inferior original construction, some dating as back to 1947. In such situations it is not economically viable to undertake repairs. Instead such structures need to be demolished and replaced.

The infrastructure backlog, especially the shortage of classrooms, results in a situation where teachers are sometimes not gainfully employed, for instance, twenty educators in a school with only ten classrooms and enrolment of 750 learners. For this reason, it is considered more useful to provide more classrooms in existing schools than to build new schools.

A planned school maintenance programme will ensure timeous repairs and an environment conducive to learning.

Public special education

The need to make education accessible to children with disabilities is still a challenge with the limited resources. In terms of the policy the Department has to provide for such children within the mainstream. That, Chairperson, suggests that the Department will have to gradually shift resources from these institutions to upgrade facilities in the ordinary schools such that children with disabilities are accommodated, hence, only a marginal increase of 7.8% from 2002/3 budget has been allocated to Special school education. With the current arrangement the major activity is to provide accommodation for Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN).

School nutrition

On September 18, 2002 the National Cabinet decided that the Primary School Nutrition Programme would be transferred from the Department of Health to the Department of Education with effect from April 1, 2004. The KwaZulu-Natal Cabinet approved this on March 3, 2003.

The Primary School Nutrition Programme presently benefits approximately 1,3 million learners in 2 079 schools and, in accordance with national directives, will increase as additional focus is placed on schools on farms, in rural areas and in settlements. The allocation to the Department of Health is R176,6 million for the financial year 2003/2004. For the financial year 2004/2005 this will increase to R207,6 million. Amounts paid to the Department of Health and to Education and Culture will be in the form of Conditional Grants.

In preparation for the transfer, the Department has begun close liaison with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health to ensure that the handover is smooth. It is developing a management plan, based on national guidelines, to address critical issues such as: capacity building and training for stakeholders; Financial management and effective procurement procedures to ensure accountability and service delivery; and advocacy campaigns to ensure that the scheme is properly utilised.

An area I will investigate is the criteria used to categorise a school as disadvantaged or advantaged merely on the basis of locality and infrastructure. For example, in some schools with up-to-date infrastructure the majority of pupils are from impoverished squatter settlements. Once again, my emphasis on the needs of learners is going to come into play.

Grade R classes

The intended compulsory introduction of Grade R classes places strain on the Department. There are currently 1 078 Grade R classes catering for 80 007 learners. By the year 2010 the number of classes will have to be increased to 5 970 in order to cater for 273 633 learners. This represents an annual compounded growth rate of 23, 8% per annum over 8 years.

Other initiatives

Chairperson, during the coming year the Education Advisory Council will be revived to enable the Department to benefit from the wisdom of people able to view the Education with knowledge and from a suitable distance.

In addition, a detailed audit of the learner: educator ratio has begun. The same audit will discover whether phantom staff have been fraudulently entered on our systems.

Chairperson, I have addressed Public Ordinary School Education in this part of my speech, but there are other critical areas of Education that must be addressed:

Further Education and Training (FET)

The Department is implementing the Further Education and Training Act principally by providing FET colleges with resources. The biggest challenge in this area is to increase participation by historically disadvantaged groups in public FET institutions. This will require the Department to engage in to aggressive marketing strategies and to establish funds to assist the marginalised students. Policy reforms in the area of further education and training necessitated an increased budget to be able to implement all the policy imperatives, which resulted in the 31.6% increase from the current budget. The progress on this program will be measured by the percentage of the marginalised students participating in further education and training.

Chairperson, I am pleased to report to this House that the rectors of nine FET institutions of higher learning have been appointed

Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)

The illiteracy rate in the Province is still a challenge to the Department. For this reason the budget for ABET has been slightly increased by 16.1% from the 2002/3 budget. The major activity will be to provide ABET sites with resources. The challenge is to ensure that the existing ABET centres are fully operational and, depending on the needs of the specific communities, to establish new centers.

Statistics indicate that nearly 1,5 million adults in KwaZulu-Natal are illiterate or severely under-educated. It is incumbent on the Department to engage in activities aimed at wiping out illiteracy backlogs by ensuring that education is extended to adults on an ongoing basis. The Department has, among others; the following programmes intended to address the backlog of illiteracy:

- Classes in 485 ABET centres, with a budget of R46 million;
- The South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI), which is intended to reduce the level of illiteracy that is, being able at least to read and write) by at least 35% by 2004 and to ensure that 60% of newly literate adults

maintain their skills. This is accomplished by keeping in contact with the learners, utilising materials in local resource centres and community development projects. SANLI has a budget of R5 million;

- The Ikhwelo Project, which targets the rural and urban Presidential Nodal Areas of Ubombo, Inanda and KwaMashu. The project aims at empowering the adult learners in 10 centres with leadership skills in Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises and in Agriculture, as a means of fighting poverty;
- Aggressive and rigorous advocacy campaigns to sensitise the illiterate adults about the need to receive basic education. This will be done using both printed and electronic media;
- Use of school children and local government structures to reach people where the need is greatest, mainly in the rural areas.

Our people need to be able to read and write in their own language; use English as the language of the local economy; check their change in a shop; do the arithmetic needed to run a small business; understand written public information such as HIV-AIDS posters; and play a full role as a parent or on a school governing body.

Cultural Services

With regard to cultural services, Chairperson, the goals of my Department will be to:

- Promote a culture of learning, values, achievement and excellence both within the Department and the learner community.
- Strengthen Arts and Culture and Sports and Recreation to develop diversity and roundness of character.
- Encourage cultural diversity and emphasise it as a social strength.

Cultural Services will be strengthened to develop the diversity and roundness of character that are essential for survival in the modern world and for making a contribution to it.

- Through Art Centres in Ulundi, Manguzi, Ntuzuma and Durban, the Department will be able to take the Arts to the people.
- Development of cultural industries will be enhanced by educating our artists in patent rights, copyright and pricing, so as to put an end to the rampant exploitation of our people, especially in the craft industry.

Arts and Culture will continue with its HIV/AIDS Awareness Campaign through the Arts Programme. The Poverty Alleviation Programme will also be strengthened through the Arts Project.

Archives Services

The Department's archives continue to promote efficiency through proper records management. This requires the archives to:

- Help all provincial departments and all local government structures with proper systems of records classification.
- Inspect all offices (provincial and local) to ensure that proper record-keeping systems and practices are in place.
- Train those who handle records in the promotion of efficiency. The training includes records management and registry systems courses.

Language Services

A Provincial Language Committee has been established. The Department's Language Planning Section has completed a survey to establish whether Provincial Government departments and municipalities are complying with the Constitution and taking practical steps to promote and develop previously marginalized languages, especially isiZulu, which is spoken by the majority in this province.

The Department is working toward producing all its documents in isiZulu, Afrikaans and English, to enable our people to participate in matters of government. A provincial Place Names Committee has been established and is working hard to correct the mistakes of the past by recommending authentic and historical place names to the National Place Names Committee.

Library and Information Services

Improving access to public libraries is essential. The library building and furniture subsidy scheme offered to municipalities addresses this need, while existing and planned libraries receive professional support and a constant refreshing of material. The Provincial Library Service has an automated management and information resource-sharing system known as PALS, which is linked by a centralised server to public libraries. Users of affiliated public libraries are able to link to the library from their homes via Web PALS. A project is under way to ensure that all public libraries have Internet access. Funding will be provided for the purchase of hardware and librarian training.

I believe that in terms of development and community upliftment, libraries are not just about having more but being more.

Sport and Recreation

The Department continues, in partnership with the National Department of Sport and Recreation and with local government, to provide sports facilities in previously marginalised communities. Programmes are in place to train local committees in facilities management, coaching and general sports administration.

- Community sport and recreation has been fully integrated with school sport. The Department is working with KwaNaloga Games and various sports federations so that fully representative teams can be sent to the South African National Games in East London in 2004.
- Progress being made in the transformation of elite sports. Karate clubs have been unified under one federation, while an Under21 rugby team which will tour the United Kingdom this winter will have in it eight African players.
- HIV/AIDS awareness and healthy lifestyles are actively promoted through sport and the empowerment of women and the disabled is being addressed in the administration of sport.
- Various sports federations are supported through transfer payments, and the Department plans a workshop to address with them the implications of the Public Finance Management Act.

External Funding

Chairperson, constrained as we inevitably are by considerations of Budget, some of the Department's activities rely on external funding. In this respect I would like to express my sincere thanks to foreign donor agencies and local organisations that continue to support the Department's activities in several important areas. These are:

- The Governments of Denmark, Japan and the Netherlands;
- US Aid, the City of Chicago, the Booksmart Foundation and the South African National Literacy Initiative,
- Zenex Foundation, B.H.P. Billiton and the Transnet Foundation

Their contributions and funding are appreciated and put to the best use possible. Without this assistance, KwaZulu-Natal would be the poorer, spiritually as well as financially. I believe the Department needs to make a greater effort to engage the Corporate Private Sector and overseas donor agencies in the funding of educational projects, and I anticipate this being a major theme of the Stakeholders' Forum I mentioned earlier.

Development of personnel

I am informed that my Department is continuously supporting its employees in development of their skills in both teaching and management. Again this year the Department will disburse financial assistance worth R5.6 million to 1 300 employees to develop their skills through award-bearing relevant qualifications.

The Department has prioritised financial assistance to some educators in scarce subjects, to under-qualified educators and to those financial and senior managers without appropriate qualifications.

The availability of this financial assistance will be advertised in the press by September 2003, for application in a prescribed form. Deserving cases will be assisted within the financial constraints of the Budget concerned.

My Department continues to build the capacity of principals of institutions, schools-based educators and all levels of management through ordinary programmes of in-service training and education driven by the needs in the education management and support services and the corporate service branches.

Budget 2003/2004

Chairperson, I have spoken about the initiatives and programmes carried out by the Department of Education. I do not propose to discuss the budget in detail because I know that the Honourable Members of this House have reviewed the detailed budget statements and are fully informed of these. However there are a number of highlights for the 2003/2004 financial years and it is important to address these:

The budget of the Department has increased from R10.1 billion in 2002/3 to R11.8 billion in 2003/04, an increase of 16,9%. For the first time, more than 15% of the budget is now available for the operations of the Department. My Department will work to ensure that this pattern is maintained and improved in the future.

In line with the provincial priority to invest in infrastructure, the biggest increase is in the Budget for physical infrastructure (76.9%) and the provision for learner

support materials (169%). Chairperson, it is indeed heartening to see the commitment of the Province to channeling more resources to cover the classroom backlog and to partner with parents in reducing the cost of education by increasing funding towards learner support materials.

The allocations for Capital Works and Norms and Standards, in millions, for the MTEF period are:

	<i>2002/03</i>	<i>2003/04</i>	<i>2004/05</i>	<i>2005/06</i>
Capital Works	263	422	544	627
Norms and Standards	372	769	805	833

The allocation for capital works projects has been increased to begin addressing the infrastructural backlogs so that basic amenities can be present at all schools. The allocation for Norms and Standards has been significantly increased over the MTEF period to provide basic education, redress and equity among all schools.

Included in the allocations over the three years is an amount of over R300 million provided by National Government for the purchase of Learner Support Material. This amount has been ring-fenced and included in the allocations made available to schools. All schools have been informed that the ring-fenced portion of their allocations may only be spent on textbooks and pupil stationery.

Reconciliation of Structural Changes

In order to achieve national uniformity and in terms of the Uniform Programme Structure for the education sector, this Department has changed its Programme Structure with effect from 2003/2004. The reconciliation is on page 157 of the White Book and, for ease of reference, is attached as an addendum to this speech.

Closing remarks

Chairperson, I am new in the Portfolio but I would like to tell this Honourable House I am exhilarated by the challenge which lies ahead and uplifted by the quality of the senior officials with whom I have been in close interaction over recent weeks. I believe the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, based as it is on criteria of merit in personnel selection – yet at the same time reflecting the demographics of this province – is well placed to play its vital role in taking the province into an era of rising employment and prosperity.

In closing, I would like to record my thanks to the Provincial Legislature, the Education Portfolio Committee, the Finance Portfolio Committee, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and the Education and Culture Committee - and the people of KwaZulu-Natal as well - for their commitment to improving the learning environment in the province and for the support rendered to my Department during the year.

I especially thank the Provincial Minister of Finance and the Provincial Treasury who continued to provide expert guidance and support to my Department during the year.

Finally, my sincere appreciation to the Chief Executive Officer and staff of my Department for their work during the year in developing quality education and support.

Approval of Budget

Chairperson, I now propose that the sum of R11.8 billion, being the Budget for my Department for the 2003/204 financial year, allocated per programme in the White Book, be approved by this Honourable House.

Annexure - Reconciliation of structural changes

In order to achieve national uniformity and in terms of the uniform programme structure for the education sector, the Department of Education has changed its programme structure with effect from 2003/04. The table below, expressed in thousands of Rands, presents a comparison of these structural changes.

Current programme	2000/01 Actual	2001/02 Est. actual	2002/03 Voted	2003/04 MTEF	2004/05 MTEF	2005/06 MTEF	New programme
5	162 752	96 194	26 075	0	0	0	11
6	121 076	135 617	152 755	201 064	214 398	227 971	5
7 (ABET)	19 761	27 599	40 923	46 803	49 569	52 647	6
7 (ECD)	22 337	42 374	58 064	24 248	34 563	40 123	7
8	6 568	11 747	16 030	20 485	21 427	22 872	9
9	10 446	22 575	19 889	32 063	33 233	37 652	10
10	205 993	262 402	347 314	420 952	444 701	473 845	8

This does not represent any change in funding from that originally presented to this House but a re-allocation of the programme structure.