Needs Surpasses the Budget

Budget is inadequate says, MEC for Education, Mr ES Mchunu

It was All Ready Steady and Go, the MEC for Education in KZN first briefed the media on the highlights of his Budget Speech and later welcomed an allocated budget of R37 028 billion for Education in the Province for the 2013/2014 financial year in the KZN Legislature on Thursday, 06 June 2013.

“Chairperson, the Department of Education welcomes the allocated budget of R37 028 billion for the 2013/14 financial year. The budget is in essence inadequate to address the historical backlogs of the period prior to 1994, although it would be able to fund education in its current form. Our budget has grown considerably from R265 119 billion in 2008/10, to where we are today. Our analysis of the financial situation though indicates that needs grow faster than the historical growth of the budget.

Both the Education and Finance portfolio Committees concede that real educational needs far outweigh the budgetary inputs.

The observable positive growth in budget allocations, is largely influenced by compensation of employees, that accounts for 87%, or R28 746 193 billion a consequent of wage increase agreements, and only 13% for service delivery which comes R8 262 386.

Conditional Grant funding for various national priorities such as National School Nutrition Programme [NSNP], expansion of No-fee Schools, Inclusive Education, Grade R and Infrastructure Development also have a positive influence in the growth of our budget.

The Department remains committed to service delivery beyond the call of duty.”, said the MEC.

MEC Mchunu reported that the education environment in the province is stable apart from recent work to rule by SADTU. He further added that stability creates the requisite ethos for quality education to take place in the classroom.

He informed the house that Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited in schools. Some educators have lost their jobs by ignoring this fact. The MEC reminded educators that there are Alternatives to Corporal Punishment without assaulting learners.

Exciting news for education, the MEC said that at the ruling party’s national conference in Mangaung, several resolutions were taken with regards to education in the country, which when implemented will resolve half of the current problems and will contribute to a stable learning and teaching environment.

“One such resolution is the establishment of a Presidential Commission on the remuneration of Public Servants.”, said the MEC.

“Chairperson we would like to confirm in the House that the Education System has seven fundamental challenges to overcome as we endeavor to delivery
on the broad objectives and quality education in our province, namely;

- Curriculum management and delivery;
- Transformation of the schooling system;
- Teacher Supply and capacity;
- Classroom support resources and equipment;
- Infrastructure;
- Management at different levels of the system;
- and Finance,

We have presented these challenges to all stakeholders within Education and in the broad community. We are confident that when these challenges are overcome, we would have a system nearing the aspirations contemplated in the Constitution of the Republic.” said MEC Mchunu.

Responding to a few questions in the House, the MEC said that the Department has eradicated the last mud school. He said that to achieve a 75% pass rate in the National Senior Certificate Examination is very good. He also said that the MEC for Treasury commended the Department of Education with full appreciation.

“We are concerned about underperforming schools, therefore we launched Operation Scaffolding, meaning to build on their performance.” said the MEC at a media briefing. He said that principals will get letters from the HoD, Nkosinathi SP Sishi [PhD] who will work under certain conditions. The Department has also fully funded 33 learners to study in Turkey.

On a positive note the MEC announced that the Department would build 14 brand new schools in the Province in the current financial year.