Reading Policy Guidelines

KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education
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<td>ABET</td>
<td>Adult Basic Education and Training</td>
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<td>AIDS</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
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<td>Educational Library Information and Technology Services</td>
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<td>FET</td>
<td>Further Education and Training</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>KZNDE</td>
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Foreword

Reading is a lifelong, enjoyable habit that enables us to continue learning long after we have left our formal education behind. Reading for pleasure is an opening to other worlds, both internal and external, enabling us to extend our imaginations beyond the daily realities we face, and experience other realities, other worlds.

We are living in an era when the ability to read with understanding and enjoyment is more important than at any other time in our history. Literacy, the ability to read, can make the difference between life and death to a patient who cannot read written medication instructions.

In recent years a national assessment in our schools pinpointed reading as a critical aspect of education that needs our urgent intervention.

We must ensure that every school, ECD centre, public adult learning centre and FET College strives to improve reading among our learners. Our future needs us to be readers who are informed and independent, and who can enjoy reading for a lifetime.

Critical literacy - reading academic literature with understanding - can make the difference for a young school-leaver between passing and failing at a tertiary institution, or between winning and losing on the highly competitive job market.

Participation in the information society is dependent on the learner’s capacity to assimilate and exploit ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies). That capacity in turn is heavily reliant on the learner’s reading facility, the ease of switching between print literacy and digitally based information literacy.

It is therefore of vital importance that the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education adopts a systematic approach to the teaching and encouragement of reading in our education institutions. It is this Reading Policy that sets out how we intend to do that across the Department and at all levels of the system.

Let us now rise and build a reading province. Masisukume sakhe KwaZulu-Natali efundayo.

R. Cassius Lubisi, PhD
Superintendent -General
Definitions
(These words are bold-faced in the text.)

Additive approach to multilingualism
The use of the home language to support the acquisition of additional languages. Learning a second and third language does not displace the learner’s first language, but is phased in and learned as an addition to it.

Barriers to learning
This term refers to diverse challenges that make it especially difficult to learn. The barriers may be physical, emotional, intellectual and/or social, and such learners may need special care, conditions and support.

Education institutions
This broad term refers inclusively to early childhood development (ECD) centres, schools, further education and training (FET) colleges, adult basic education and training (ABET) institutions, as well as public adult learning centres (PALCs).

First Additional language (FAL)
This term refers to the language one learns after, and in addition to, the predominant first language of the home. In KwaZulu-Natal the most common FAL is English. Although English is a common FAL, it is an international language and used widely in public education institutions, libraries, in the world of work and for business transactions.

First language
See ‘Home language’.

Home language (HL)
This term refers to the language that a young child first learns to use. Thus, the HL is sometimes described as the first language or mother tongue. For the majority of children in KwaZulu-Natal, their HL is IsiZulu.

Illiteracy
Refers to the condition of being unable to decode (read) and make meaning of text.

Language of learning and teaching
Previously referred to as the ‘medium of instruction’; Language of learning and teaching concerns the language used in the learning and teaching of all learning areas, and does not refer to the language learning area.

Learning area
The grouping of subjects into broad areas of learning. Learning areas are fields of knowledge at all levels in the National Qualifications Framework.

Learning and teaching support materials
Refers to any materials that facilitate the learning process. The Department of Education, in its (draft) LTSM Policy, offers a very broad definition of LTSM, which includes the following: magazines, books: fiction and non-fiction, newspapers, atlases, games,
encyclopaedias, dictionaries, activity sheets, masks, puppets, picture books, puzzles, graded readers, audio-visual materials, models, charts and ICT software. Materials can also be created within a school to enhance the teaching and learning process. The definition also incorporates information and communication technology such as: computer applications and software, education portals, websites, learning management systems and item banks.

Library collection  
A sustained, organised and managed store of a) printed and visual educational resources for teachers and learners and b) equipment they can use to access, read and/or process the resources that are in non-readable and electronic forms.

Literacy  
Refers to the condition of being able to decode (read) and make meaning of (mostly text-based) information.

Reading Programme guidelines  
A standardised reading programme guideline that gives suggested aims and outcomes, procedures, activities and assessment, as well as suggested reading lists, for a specific education phase. For this Reading Policy, reading programme guidelines will be aligned with RNCS Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards.

Policy  
A statement about an intended course of action, giving the underpinning values and principles, the rationale for how the problem or matter of concern will be addressed, and predicting the outcomes.

Reader  
a) Someone who reads or b) a book intended to help learners develop their reading practice.

Reading  
This refers to the act of decoding and understanding texts for information and development purposes and/or enjoyment.

Reading programme  
A framework in which an educational institution plans its approach to reading. This framework would give guidelines on how reading should be taught and supported by all the teachers in that institution, and on how budget allocations would be made to purchase suitable reading materials to help learners develop their reading practice. Simply allocating a reading slot on the school timetable is not a Reading Programme.

Reading culture  
The favourable conditions, with sufficient reading materials, space and time, which support and nurture ongoing and developing reading practices.

School library  
The name ‘school library’ is used as a generic form that incorporates all forms
and models of collection development and delivery that provides materials relevant to a resource-based teaching and learning approach to learners and teachers in schools.

Second language  
See 'First Additional language'

Subtractive multilingualism  
This concept is the opposite of additive multilingualism; the first or home language is totally ignored.

Systemic evaluation  
An assessment of the extent to which the education system achieves set social, economic and transformational goals. This is done by measuring learner performance as well as the context in which learners experience learning and teaching.

Teacher-librarian  
A generic term for the various names used in schools for teachers who manage the resource collection, e.g. librarians, media teachers, media specialists, media centre teachers, resource centre teachers and information specialists.

Whole-school information literacy policy  
An institution’s policy about information literacy, which all teachers are implementing within their learning areas and classes and which they have made relevant to their context.
Executive Summary

This Reading Policy of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education gives the vision and direction for how the Department will tackle the important task of building a strong reading culture in education institutions in KwaZulu-Natal so that learners become enthusiastic lifelong readers. Underpinning this policy is evidence that poor reading levels, insufficient role models and lack of access to appropriate reading materials in education institutions, amongst other things, hinder a strong reading culture. This situation inhibits the progress of learners with a detrimental effect long into their adult lives. The Reading Policy is based on an understanding that reading is essential for on-going education and social life and therefore all teachers in each education phase must help learners develop their reading competence to higher levels. Several principles that shape and underpin the Reading Policy are acknowledged. They reflect the social values shared by government and its social partners. It is fitting, then, that the mission to promote a vibrant reading culture is conceived as being not the responsibility of teachers alone; parents, caregivers, librarians, school managers, publishers and other members of the community all have a role to play in promoting a reading habit.

To promote the vibrant reading culture that nurtures enthusiastic lifelong learners, the Department will pursue four strategic directions that are complimentary. The first is the development of Reading Programme guidelines that will be adapted and used in education institutions. A Standing Reading Committee, that brings together the relevant directorates and representatives district to provincial levels, will co-ordinate and facilitate the development of these Reading Programmes. This will be under the guidance and with the support of district-level advisors.

The second strategy concerns the selection and provision of reading materials. For this, each education institution will plan and build up a managed permanent collection of materials to be used in their Reading Programme, under the guidance of ELITS and Curriculum. To those schools starting a new library, the Department’s ELITS directorate will provide starter reading packs and other reading materials and give guidance on how to continue building the collection and promoting reading. The Curriculum directorate will also promote a broader understanding of learning and teaching support materials and reading in particular through the provision of lists and materials suitable for reading in schools. ELITS Directorate will also assist education institutions serving the poor to supplement their collections through the ELITS Book Donations Policy and by liaising with publishers.
The third and fourth strategies buttress the first and second strategies. In the third strategy the Department will develop the capacity of professional teachers to advance the Reading Policy. This will involve an advocacy campaign to promote better understanding about good reading practices, formal professional development training and refresher courses so that there is capacity to implement Reading Programmes in education institutions, district-level planning and goal-setting, monitoring how institutions are achieving their goals, as well as systematic evaluations at regular intervals. No one directorate of the Department can achieve the Reading Policy vision on its own. Therefore, the fourth strategy concerns the Department’s networking internally and externally with its social partners.

Internally there will be on-going and structured inter-directorate collaboration through the Reading Committee. In the external arena the Department will liaise with providers of initial teacher education and on-going professional development to design their courses so that new and experienced teachers are competent to teach reading in their specialisation areas and implement the relevant Reading Programme. The Department will also network with publishers to ensure the output of suitable reading materials that support Reading Programme guidelines. Further liaison with relevant social partners will be through the Reading Committee.

All these strategies and sub-strategies require political will marshalled around the shared vision of this Reading Policy, as well as human, material and financial resources. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education is intent on using the resources at its disposable and, in tandem with its social partners, to mobilise additional resources for the purpose of implementing this Reading Policy. Thus, a five-year implementation plan is appended.
Vision

Our vision is for all KwaZulu-Natal learners to be enthusiastic lifelong readers for knowledge and enjoyment.

Mission

Our mission is to promote a vibrant reading culture by:

• Ensuring that all teachers and learners have quality reading resources
• Assisting our education institutions to develop and implement reading programmes
• Ensuring professional support for teachers at all levels so that they are able to develop and sustain a reading culture among learners
• Working in effective partnerships with all stakeholders and role players.
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2003 a School Library Policy was adopted by KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education for implementation throughout the province. The Policy provides a framework for the planning, development and evaluation of school libraries in the province, and advocates the promotion of reading in schools for learners to become lifelong readers and critical thinkers, able to make valued contributions to our democracy. For example, the School Library Policy speaks of schools that should develop a whole-school information literacy policy that will have a ‘reading programme’ supported by all teachers’ as one of its components. In preparation for such school-based initiatives, the rollout of the Department’s School Library Policy is establishing teaching and learning support collections in schools and developing teachers with library management capacity. The Reading Policy provided in this document seeks to elaborate on those initiatives and provide the framework of structures and strategies that will lead and support schools in their reading programmes.

1.2 Why is a reading policy important?

Reading is an essential and basic competence for living and taking control of one’s life in this day and age. To reading we must add ‘writing for reading’. Though these two skills, reading and writing, are fundamental building blocks of education that involve learning to encode and decode language in the first years of schooling, they are competences that must be developed and flourish for the acquisition of higher order skills and knowledge at further and higher education levels. To leave that development to chance and hope that learners will turn into good readers and writers over the years would be irresponsible.

Our Department’s vision for this province (see box) compels us to apply ourselves to a systemic approach that begins with formulating a policy that will guide all teachers, regardless of the learning area and grade they are teaching.

Our vision is that of a literate and skilled society capable of participating in all democratic processes and contributing to the development and growth of the people of KwaZulu-Natal.
Arguably, what separates developing from developed countries is not so much the digital divide but the literacy divide. Unless education, which is underpinned by literacy, nurtures a lifelong passion for reading, we will continue to produce matriculants and graduates who carry certificates but cannot contribute meaningfully towards the development of our nation. Thus, reading and writing for literacy are essential elements of quality education and a Reading Policy is fundamental for the establishment of structures and the provision of resources that will promote and nurture reading and writing.

1.3 The need

The challenge to build literacy and a reading culture reveals a vast need that requires a complex response in our province, in which there is a total of around 6 000 public institutions, over 2.65 million school learners and about 75 000 teachers. Despite several years of teachers following an outcomes-based curriculum, the 2001 and the 2004 Systemic Evaluation Reports found that Grade 3 and Grade 6 learners in KwaZulu-Natal obtained some of their lowest scores in literacy. Their parents, grandparents and caregivers are unlikely to be able to contribute meaningfully to developing their literacy through homework support because about 23 percent of the adult population in the province have little or no education themselves. What has led to this situation?

1.4 The causes

Many factors obstruct and frustrate our education transformation goals of access, equity and quality. These include the linguistic, cultural and economic oppression of the majority over many decades so that deep poverty and unemployment are widespread, levels of illiteracy among the adult population, especially parents, remain unacceptably high and English dominates as the language of learning and teaching in schools. Another obstructive factor is the great number of employed teachers who, in their schooling and professional education and training, were not encouraged to become competent readers themselves and were not introduced to relevant, effective and varied methods for teaching and nurturing reading.
The 2003 Systemic Evaluation Report for KwaZulu-Natal made the following conclusions:

- Many learners have been denied access to quality education as a result of their impoverished or disadvantaged families and home environments, which do not offer access to reading materials as a feature of everyday life.
- The lack of access to early childhood education (ECD) at a crucial stage of learners’ cognitive development is a major factor affecting the performance of learners later in their schooling years.
- The absence of library collections in many schools also denies learners access to suitable learning opportunities.
- Ensuring access to quality education means that learning and teaching support materials (LTSM) must be made available to learners.

The 1999 Audit of South African school libraries found that where school libraries existed, the book stock comprised an average number of 359 reference books and 1314 non-fiction books. Only 1815 school libraries across the country included books written in isiZulu and, of that aggregated book stock, the number of fiction books written in isiZulu was only 105. These statistics are a significant indication that we serve a population that is predominantly under-resourced in terms of library materials, particularly in their home language.

Such evidence suggests that another critical obstacle to an effective and on-going reading culture occurs at management level in the education institution and manifests in four particular ways:

- Assumptions: Members of management teams and many teachers hold erroneous assumptions that learning to read and practising reading are only relevant in Foundation Phase grades and in adult basic education courses.
- School libraries and reading: The essential part that the school library and reading play in the curriculum, particularly in explicitly resource-based education, is not universally understood, and
therefore **libraries** and **library collections** are not always prioritised in schools.

- *Teacher-librarians*: At present, there are no substantive posts for **teacher-librarians** in schools. Most teacher-librarians are burdened with being both full-time teachers and managing the school **library collection**.

- *Reading in higher grades*: The practice of **reading** in other phases and higher grades, and the development of higher level reading skills and strategies, must continue through literature-based reading and knowledge-building activities. However, the use of literature in further education and training grades should not be so narrowly focused on passing examinations that it kills any pleasure in future reading.

2. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to advocate for and give strategic direction to:

2.1 The establishment and development of cross-directorate structures that will promote a reading culture in education institutions (such as schools, ABET centres and FET colleges) of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

2.2 The link between provincial level personnel and district-level advisors, school management teams and teachers, for the promotion of reading in all education institutions

2.3 Those producing publications and materials for use in programmes, projects and campaigns that promote a reading culture among learners in KwaZulu-Natal

2.4 The financing, provisioning and implementation of the Department’s institution-wide reading programmes

2.5 The development and training of teachers on how to teach reading effectively

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Our vision is that of a literate and skilled society capable of participating in all democratic processes and contributing to the development and growth of the people of KwaZulu-Natal.

[Our] mission [is] to provide opportunities for all our people to access quality education which will improve their position in life and contribute to the advancement of a democratic culture in KwaZulu-Natal.
2.6 The re-instatement of substantive teacher-librarian posts in public schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

3. Principles and Values

The Reading Policy incorporates general principles and values stated in other relevant national and provincial education policies and documents, such as the Constitution, National Education Policy Act, Batho Pele, the Language in Education Policy, the Revised National Curriculum Statement as well as the KZNDE vision and mission (see box). In addition, the following principles that relate specifically to reading and that merit special mention are enumerated below:

3.1 Reading and writing are integral to each other and are the hallmarks of an educated person

It is said that we read to write and write to read. But learning to read and write does not end once the basic reading skills of alphabet and phonic decoding is acquired. Reading is a developmental and mentored process. Learning to read and to express ideas in writing begins in the pre-school years and requires mentoring throughout a learner’s school career, even continuing into adult life, as the reader encounters, engages with and enjoys more complex and diverse texts. Building a reading culture during one’s schooling years provides a strong foundation for academic literacy in further and higher education and will reduce high dropout and failure rates noted in higher education.

3.2 First learning to read and write competently in his/her own home language gives the young child a strong foundation for going on to learn second (and third) languages

This is an additive approach to multilingualism. In KwaZulu-Natal, where the majority of children speak isiZulu as their home language, this would mean caregivers, teachers and librarians encouraging young
children to read and publishers and booksellers contributing to the writing and publishing of African language storybooks.

3.3 Reading requires role models

Initial role models are those involved in parenting or who have a caregiving relationship with a child. These adults, including those who are illiterate, can nurture the pre-reading skills of finding pleasure in storytelling and picture books. They also help the child become familiar with reading for understanding and using a variety of information sources. Other role models emerge as the child’s life experience is extended and may include teachers and librarians, friends, religious leaders and other adults in the local community, as well as the popular media and cultural icons. Education managers have a special ethical responsibility to the community to use education institutions such as schools and ABET centres to help these adults to become reading and listening role models.

3.4 Reading requires a wide and rich variety of resources and regular access to such resources, as well as opportunities to write, reformulate what has been read and understood in one’s own words

On their own textbooks do not nurture reading and therefore purchases of learning and teaching support materials ought not to be restricted to textbooks or printed texts. In their early years children need an initial exposure to picture books. For learners at all grades to grow and mature in their reading competence and develop a reading culture, they need daily sustained reading and access to a multiplicity of book titles and diverse genres of written texts (such as comics, different kinds of novels and short stories, biographies, poetry, newspapers, magazines, non-fiction and reference books) supplemented by recorded texts on cassette and CD, or electronically-sourced texts from the Internet. Following this principle, school managers must invest a greater portion of their time and budgets on the selection and purchasing of reading materials that are not textbooks, and that are in all official languages of the province.
3.5 *Reading requires a strong, sustained and effective methodology in the classroom*

This means that greater stress must be placed by higher education institutions and other training providers on reading and writing teaching methodologies in initial teacher education programmes and on-going professional development and support programmes. This should not be limited to the foundation phase teachers, but should apply to all phases in the schooling system. There should be greater emphasis on the teaching of reading for enjoyment in all learning areas and phases.

3.6 *Reading requires a cross-curricular approach*

This demands that every teacher be a teacher of reading and writing for literacy and reading enjoyment. Responsibility for promoting reading and writing for literacy does not lie with language teachers alone, but should be tackled collectively and collaboratively by education professionals in all learning areas within an institution through strategic goal-setting, planning, implementation in the classroom, and monitoring.

3.7 *Reading requires a collaborative Departmental intervention that brings together directorates for school library, information and technology services, GET and FET curriculum, quality assurance, teacher education, early childhood development, and adult basic education and training.*

It follows that advisors from each of these directorates must assist one another to understand and articulate the relevance of reading for their specialised fields in the education system, and find ways to implement that relevance in their programmes. Such work should also bridge spheres of government, enabling provincial and local government librarians to collaborate with KZNDE to promote reading programmes among all learners, young and old.
3.8 *Reading requires sustained mentoring and monitoring of teachers and learners.*

This principle necessitates that substantive teacher-librarian posts be established and filled at schools in a progressive and phased manner. Working in collaboration with school management teams (SMTs), the teacher-librarian is key to successfully developing a **whole-school information literacy policy** that will incorporate, implement and sustain a daily **reading programme** for each school grade. As managers of **library collections**, the teacher-librarians will work with teachers as well as SMTs to develop a whole-school reading programme. By jointly monitoring the reading programme’s effectiveness, teachers and teacher-librarians will slowly leverage improvements in reading and writing and ultimately improve the quality of teaching and learning in and beyond schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

3.9 *Reading strategies and materials for pleasure and information should be also for learners with special education needs*

These are learners with disabilities and needing remedial attention as well as those needing social support by being affected by **HIV** and **AIDS**. This may require a higher level of one-on-one guidance as well as the development of specialised electronic learning support materials.

### 4. Vision

Our vision is for all KwaZulu-Natal learners to be enthusiastic lifelong readers for knowledge and enjoyment.

### 5. Mission

Our mission is to promote a vibrant reading culture by:

- Ensuring that all teachers and learners have quality reading resources
• Assisting our education institutions to develop and implement reading programmes
• Ensuring professional support for teachers at all levels so that they are able to develop and sustain a reading culture among learners
• Working in effective partnerships with all stakeholders and role players.

6. Policy Outcomes

In keeping with this vision and mission, the Reading Policy seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

6.1 Awareness and understanding within and outside the Department about the importance of **reading** and writing for literacy.

6.2 A whole-school reading programme created in all schools as part of their school development plan and **Whole-School Information Literacy Policy**, including daily timetabled reading periods and reading promotion activities.

6.3 Significantly improved reading levels among all learners, including learners experiencing **barriers to learning** attending KZNDE education institutions.

6.4 Significantly improved levels of literacy among the adult population in the province so that we reach the literacy targets set in the Millennium Development Goals by 2010, five years in advance of the international deadline.

6.5 Each education institution in KwaZulu-Natal can demonstrate a reading culture in a managed library collection that actively supports their institution-wide reading programme.

6.6 On-going financial provision for the systemic infrastructure and inter-directorate co-ordination, as well as staffing and materials that support a reading culture within education institutions.

6.7 Effective utilisation of all available reading resources to instil a sustained reading habit among learners.
6.8 Effective and responsive partnerships with the publishing sector, higher education institutions and non-government organisations engaged in initial teacher education, on-going professional development and support, as well as research about reading and writing for literacy.

6.9 A professional development programme for teachers to understand and have competence in literacy teaching and learning, and to develop the habit of reading and therefore value and promote it in others.

6.10 Increased availability of appropriate African language publications for use in institution-wide reading programmes.

7. Strategies for Developing a Reading Culture in KwaZulu-Natal

7.1 Formation of a standing Reading Committee

7.1.1 A Standing Reading Committee must be developed within the Department's Curriculum Planning and Support Chief Directorate to co-ordinate and facilitate common Reading Programme strategies, approaches and campaigns across directorates. The composition of the Reading Committee will include representatives of other relevant directorates such as Quality Assurance and FET schools, as well as representatives from district to provincial levels.

The Committee’s role will be to:

- Oversee and commission reading experts to develop Reading Programme guidelines for each Phase and monitoring instruments for measuring reading achievements. Components for remedial reading interventions should be included in these Programmes.
- Provide advice on reading materials and Reading Programme support materials.
- Liaise with publishers on the reprinting of worthwhile out-of-print South African reading material in all official languages
- Liaise with higher education institutions to evaluate and incorporate effective reading methodologies in both pre-service and in-service teacher training
• Facilitate the collaboration of the Department’s relevant directorates.

7.2 Development of Reading Programmes

7.2.1 Reading Programmes for each learning phase need to be based on the principles mentioned above and use innovative learning strategies. The professional expertise for developing such Reading Programmes is not available in most schools. Therefore, an efficient approach is to centrally develop Reading Programme guidelines that can be adapted by institutions to suit their local conditions. Central responsibility for developing and periodically reviewing Reading Programme guidelines should rest with the Reading Committee. Reading Programme guidelines must be developed centrally to guide reading promotion practices at ECD centres, schools, FET schools and colleges and ABET centres, with specific programmes designed to be relevant for each learning phase and to cut across the curriculum in the province’s official languages. Reading Programmes must advocate and explain the School-wide Reading Programme approach, identify outcomes and include appropriate methods and activities such as timetabled reading and opportunities to draw in caregiver and role model participation. These should be for mainstream learners as well as those experiencing barriers to learning. At institutional level the Reading Programme guidelines must be adapted to suit local conditions and usefulness.

7.2.2 Within institutions, management teams, together with teachers, must devise and implement a relevant Institution-wide Reading Programme Plan, by adapting and making use of Reading Programme guidelines.

7.2.3 District-level advisors must provide teachers with guidance and advice for the development and implementation of their Institution-wide Reading Programme and monitor implementation.

7.3 Provision of Reading Materials

7.3.1 Institutional responsibilities: Within education institutions there needs to be a strategy to build up continuously a permanent managed collection of sufficient suitable reading materials that are available in the school library to support the institution’s Reading Programmes and which
enable teachers and learners to achieve their Reading Programme goals. Each institution needs to allocate a staff member as manager of the library collection and liaison person responsible for cross-curricular library use and reading programme development. The teaching load of such a person should be such that it allows that person to spend half of the school day in the library, and the other half in the classroom. Ongoing in-service training in teacher-librarianship for such personnel must be encouraged and enabled. Each institution, in liaison with the school library committee, needs annually to develop a strategic plan for continuously building up a permanent managed collection of reading materials and make provision in the annual budget for this.

7.3.2 **ELITS role and responsibilities:** The Department will provide support to those schools establishing new libraries as part of the ELITS school library development programme. This support will include the selection, preparation and provision of starter reading packs and other reading materials appropriate to the school’s own Institution-wide Reading Programme, as well as provision of reading promotion materials. The Department will advise schools with well-established libraries about their selection of reading materials appropriate to the school’s own Institution-wide Reading Programme, and provide them with reading promotion materials. ELITS will also monitor the effective use of libraries in the implementation of School-Wide Reading Programmes.

7.3.3 **Curriculum directorate’s role and responsibilities:** The Department will promote an interpretation of learning and teaching support materials (LTSM) that extends beyond textbooks, and in the lists and provision of learning and teaching support materials to all education institutions should include appropriate reading materials that foster a reading culture more generally.

7.3.4 **Education institutions serving the poorest communities:** The Department will assist these education institutions to benefit from the ELITS Book Donations Policy and liaise with publishers in order to build up these institutions’ collections of reading materials appropriately, especially in African languages.
7.4 Professional Development

7.4.1 Advocacy: A province-wide advocacy campaign targeted primarily at teachers and institutional managers, but also at training providers, learners and the public, should promote an understanding of the importance of reading and good reading practices, and home language initial reading.

7.4.2 On-going training: Subject advisors, institution managers and teachers will be provided with formal professional development training and refresher courses in order to understand the strategy of an Institution-wide Reading Programme, how to develop and adapt such a Programme for their institution, and be informed about the Reading Programme guidelines and how to adapt them. In particular, teachers will be trained on different approaches for teaching and developing reading in the classroom situation.

7.4.3 District goals and implementation plans: District managers will develop annual goals and implementation plans for the provision of professional development and support about the Reading Programme targeted at institutional managers and teachers.

7.4.4 Monitoring and evaluation: Under the guidance of the Reading Committee and Directorates, district managers, subject advisors and reading specialists will monitor the implementation of Institution-wide Reading Programmes within institutions and review how each institution is achieving their goals and succeeding in building up a permanent managed collection of reading materials. It is important to review the effective implementation of the province’s Reading Policy through systematic studies conducted at regular intervals.

7.5 Partnerships and networking

7.5.1 Internal networking: A critical factor that will contribute to the successful implementation of this policy is networking among directorates of the KZNDE. Networking means on-going and structured inter-directorate collaboration, through the Reading Committee. The purpose will be to improve learners’ reading and writing for literacy by mobilising all the
internal and external resources and finances needed for the implementation plan and making optimal use of those resources and finances.

7.5.2 *Initial teacher education:* The Department’s main partners in initial teacher education are higher education institutions in the province. These institutions design and deliver initial teacher education degree programmes. To ensure that new teachers promote a reading culture in their professional practice, the Department, through the Reading Committee, will liaise regularly with higher education institutions and assist them to understand the Department’s policy and its expectations of new teachers in relation to literacy, reading across the curriculum, and reading methods for all learning phases.

7.5.3 *On-going professional development and support:* A variety of training providers such as education institutions, non-government organisations and private enterprises offer short courses aimed at the continuing professional development of the Department’s officials. Many of these organisations have valuable expertise and experience in reading and writing for literacy, which the Department needs to harness for its training of subject advisors, institution managers and teachers.

7.5.4 *Publishers:* An important partner for Institution-wide Reading Programmes is the publishing industry. Research abroad has shown that without sufficient suitable reading materials, learners are unlikely to become avid and proficient readers. Thus, the Department’s Reading Committee will liaise closely with both established and emerging publishers so that they understand the Institution-wide Reading Programmes and, as partners, publish the range of reading materials approved and required for the Department’s institutions.

7.5.5 *Stakeholders:* The Department will liaise with relevant social partners as members in the Reading Committee, and together engage in advocacy for a sustained and strong reading culture in all KZNDE education institutions.
8. Conclusion

This Reading Policy document has identified the need for improving reading practices in education institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. The principles that guide the vision, mission and strategic direction of the Reading Policy are clearly stated. All these strategies and sub-strategies require political will, marshalled around the shared vision and mission of this Reading Policy, as well as human, material and financial resources. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education is intent on using the resources at its disposable and, in tandem with its social partners, mobilising additional resources for the purpose of implementing this Reading Policy.

Essential is a plan for the rollout of the Reading Policy, and to that end a five-year implementation plan and budget for 2006-2010 are planned.