KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





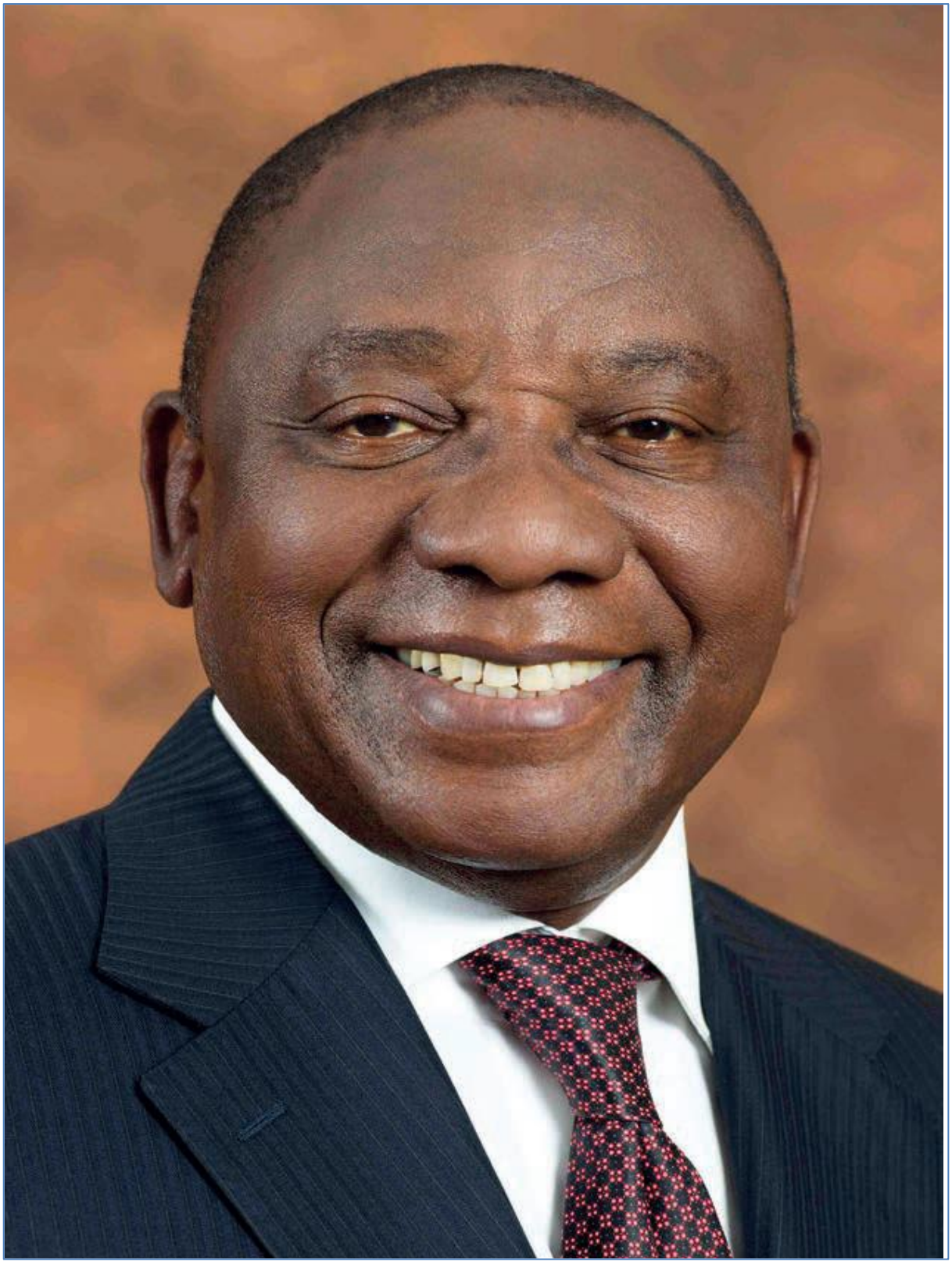




READING AND LITERACY IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

2025 - 2030

KZNDOE kzn_education DBE_KZN kzneducation Department of Education KZN



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President of the Republic of South Africa



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Minister for Department of Basic Education



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KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT

OF EDUCATION

READING AND

LITERACY IMPROVEMENT

STRATEGY

2025 – 2030

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EXECUTIVE STATEMENT BY MEC FOR EDUCATION KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the KwaZulu-Natal Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy 2025-2030. This comprehensive roadmap represents our collective commitment to transforming literacy outcomes across the province and ensuring that every child in KwaZulu-Natal is equipped with the foundational skills needed to thrive in school and in life.

At the heart of this strategy is a renewed focus on early childhood learning, strongly supported by the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Act. The BELA Act rightly emphasises the critical importance of the early years in instilling discipline, a genuine love for reading and a lifelong passion for learning. By making Grade R compulsory and strengthening early intervention, we aim to build strong foundations so that our children can read with understanding, grasp concepts effectively and prepare themselves for success in their later studies and future endeavours.

While teachers remain the cornerstone of classroom instruction, their efforts are most effective when reinforced by a strong partnership with parents and caregivers. Parents play an indispensable role in supporting the work of teachers. The home environment is where the foundations of literacy are first nurtured — through daily reading routines, meaningful conversations, creating spaces for homework and modelling a positive attitude towards books and learning. When parents actively engage in their children's education, they extend the classroom into the community and help bridge any gaps that may exist. This strategy calls upon all parents in the province of KwaZulu-Natal to embrace this responsibility with commitment and enthusiasm. Your involvement is not supplementary; it is essential to our success.

The Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy 2025–2030 outlines clear targets, evidence-based interventions and collaborative mechanisms that will mobilise educators, parents, communities and all stakeholders. It builds on existing successes while addressing persistent challenges with urgency and innovation.

I call on every educator, parent, traditional leader, businessperson and citizen of KwaZulu-Natal to rally behind this strategy. Together, we can ensure that our children not only learn to read but develop a deep love for learning that will propel them towards excellence.

Let us work hand in hand to build a literate, skilled and prosperous KwaZulu-Natal.

Mr. Sipho Emmanuel Hlomuka

MEC for Education KwaZulu-Natal

FOREWORD BY THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

The ability to read with comprehension is a critical foundation for lifelong learning, academic achievement and meaningful participation in society. In KwaZulu-Natal, we recognise that literacy extends beyond a curriculum requirement; it is a fundamental human right that enables learners to access knowledge, express themselves with confidence and contribute to the socio-economic advancement of our province and country.

We therefore present the KwaZulu-Natal Education Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy 2025-2030 with deep appreciation and a firm commitment to it. This strategy represents the Department's intentional and unified response to persistent literacy challenges across all phases of schooling, with particular emphasis on the foundational years of learning. The strategy aims to improve reading and literacy outcomes through a structured, inclusive and learner-centred approach that recognises KwaZulu-Natal's linguistic and cultural diversity. It also highlights the essential role of Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education (MTBbE) in fostering conceptual understanding, cognitive development and effective language acquisition. By embracing multilingualism and strengthening reading instruction across Schools, we seek to create supportive environments in which every learner can succeed.

This strategy aligns with national priorities and the broader vision to enhance educational quality and learner performance. It fosters collaboration among educators, school management teams, parents, communities, development partners and all education stakeholders to promote a culture of reading across the province. Effective implementation of this strategy requires commitment, innovation, accountability and sustained support at every level of the education system. Educators remain central to this transformation and the Department remains committed to providing the professional support, resources and guidance needed to strengthen classroom practice and improve learner outcomes.

We are encouraged by the collaborative efforts already underway among districts, schools, curriculum officials and literacy partners to promote reading and literacy development. Through this strategy, we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that no learner is left behind and that all children in KwaZulu-Natal acquire the literacy skills essential for academic growth, personal development and active citizenship. We sincerely hope that this Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy will catalyse sustainable change and renewed commitment to building a literate, capable and empowered generation.

Mr. GN Ngcobo

Head of Department for KwaZulu-Natal Education

PREFACE BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL



With a recognition that learners are different, therefore the most scientific way to teach reading is by not applying the same rigid methods to every child. The best instruction is to meet learners where they are, not where they should be. In an article edited by Jabulani Sikhakhane, April 2025, here are five evidence-based tips to promote reading for all learners that combine phonics, balanced literacy and other methods.

1. **Maintain the home-school connection.** When schools send kids with developmentally appropriate books and strategies, it encourages parents to practice reading at home with their kids and develop oral fluency.
2. **Embrace all reading.** Academic texts are not the only kind of reading. Parents and educators should encourage children. They can use menus, magazines and other print materials at home to acquire literacy skills.
3. **Make phonics fun.** Teachers are encouraged to teach phonics on words that are embedded in stories and texts that children love.
4. **Pick a series.** High quality children's literature promotes early literacy achievement.
5. **Tutoring works.** To add on what educators and parents are doing intensive, high-impact tutoring can help. Once a week 30-minute session can help learners who fall behind others.

But there's hope: According to the 2023 National Reading Barometer, 52% of adults who live with children read with them, which is a significant increase from 35% in 2016.

Mr. MJ Mazibuko

Deputy Director General for Curriculum Management and Delivery

Acronyms

APP	Annual Performance Plan
EFAL	English First Additional Language
ELITS	Education Libraries Information and Technology Services
GET	General Education and Training
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
NECT	National Education Collaboration Trust
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SMTs	School Management Teams
SNES	Special Needs Education Services

Legislation and Policies mandates

The following legislations informs this KZNDOE Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act. 108 1996.
- National Development Plan – 2030
- Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement.
- Language in Education Policy
- White Paper 6
- Actional Plan for 2029 towards schooling 2030
- National Reading and Literacy Strategy (2024-2030)
- Provincial Annual Performance Plans (APPs)
- National Strategy on Learner Attainment (NSLA)
- White Paper 5

The MTDP 2024-2029 Priorities

The Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP):

The MTDP for 2024-2029 serves as the framework for the administration's priorities, aligning with the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030. It focuses on policy coherence, capacity building and fostering partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society.

Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges:

The administration recognizes the need to tackle the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. This includes implementing structural reforms and enhancing service delivery across all levels of government.

a) Drive Inclusive Growth and Job Creation:

The administration aims to drive economic growth that benefits all South Africans, with a particular focus on creating jobs and reducing unemployment. This includes boosting investment in key sectors such as agriculture, mining, tourism and services.

b) Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living:

Addressing poverty is a central goal, with initiatives aimed at enhancing food security, improving basic services and providing social safety nets to vulnerable populations.

c) Building a Capable and Ethical and Developmental State:

The administration emphasizes the importance of good governance, accountability and transparency. This involves combating corruption and ensuring that government services are delivered effectively and efficiently.

Five goals for the five years of the seventh administration

1. A dynamic, growing economy;
2. A more equal society, where no person lives in poverty;
3. A capable state delivering basic services to all citizens;
4. A safe and secure environment; and
5. A cohesive and united nation.

A. THE COMPELLING LITERACY CONTEXT

2.1 Background

Reading is a foundational educational skill, an indicator of a nation's trajectory in education and a vital component in the pursuit of sustainable development goals. Literacy frameworks have often been influenced by the structures and logic of English, leading to instructional misalignments that hinder optimal literacy practices. Despite numerous initiatives implemented for teaching reading and improving reading skills, South Africa remains on the incorrect course to achieve the Action Plan 2030 goals, (Reynolds, et. al., 2022).

Given this backdrop, the KwaZulu-Natal Reading Plan fosters a home language-based approach inclusive of the unique linguistic attributes of the African languages located the province.

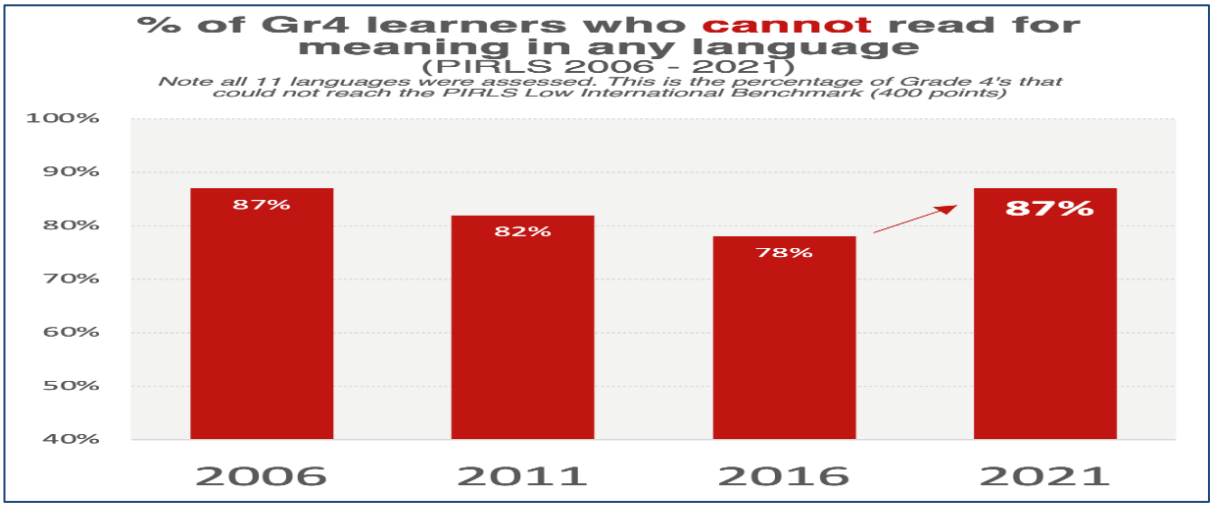
Through this Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy, KwaZulu-Natal envisions elevating every learners to the pinnacle of literacy through integrated, comprehensive and culturally resonant reading practices in schools.

2.2 Reading challenges

Most teachers treat reading as an oral performance which is called "oratorical reading." In this kind of reading approach, the emphasis is on reading aloud, fluency, accuracy and correct pronunciation at the expense of reading with comprehension. Pronunciation, accuracy and fluency are important in mastering reading but they are valueless without comprehension.

Evidence from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) of 2021, which sought to establish the extent to which learners comprehend what they read, revealed that 81% of South African grade 4 learners fell below the lowest levels of the PIRLS scale of achievement.

PIRLS TRENDS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE



(Mullis et al., 2023)

One of the reasons for poor learner performance in reading is that teachers are not capacitated in the methodology of teaching reading. This implies that the KwaZulu-Natal Reading Plan must incorporate teacher development and support. Teacher training must also be accompanied by a paradigm shift in assessment practices to assess reading comprehension and not only oral reading performance.

2.3 Critical considerations

This Provincial Reading Strategy guides participants to ensure that *"every 10-year-old will be able to read for meaning,"* and collaboration with communities to *"mobilise the entire nation behind a massive reading campaign"* as mandated in President Cyril Ramaphosa's State of the Nation Address in 2019.

The proposed interventions that guide the KwaZulu-Natal Reading Strategy include:

a) The infusion of African Language Logic: Prioritise the value and logic of African languages in the reading plan.
b) Robust policy creation: Formulate a comprehensive reading policy that is culturally and linguistically attuned to KZN's unique tapestry.
c) The development of culturally, linguistically and age-appropriate relevant materials.
d) Empowerment for agile and highly skilled teachers.
e) Engagement of parents, communities, NGOs and sister departments.
f) Monitoring, support and evaluation of the implementation of the reading plan

2.4 Provincial profile

According to Statistics South Africa (2022), KwaZulu-Natal is the second most populated province in South Africa with a population of about 12,4 million and about 25.8% attending schooling. The most spoken language in the province is IsiZulu, followed by English. It has twelve education Districts that range from urban to rural Learner Population

Learner performance in language subjects has been a concern, with assessments indicating low literacy levels. For instance, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) highlights that many learners in KZN struggle with reading comprehension.

The province faces challenges related to teacher qualifications, particularly in language instruction. There is a pressing need for continuous professional development to equip educators with effective strategies for teaching reading and managing multilingual classrooms.

OVERALL MEAN SCORES OF GRADE 6 LEARNERS AND TEACHERS IN READING IN SEACMEQ V

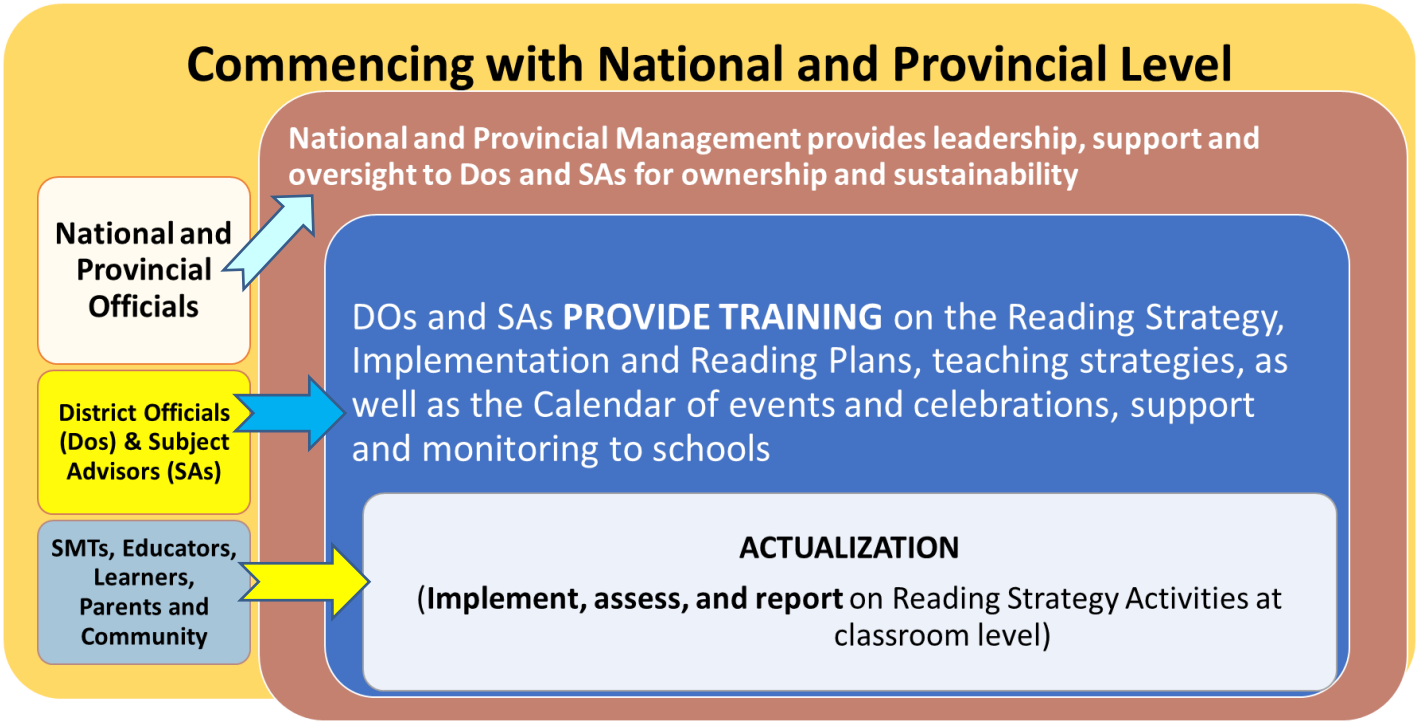
Provinces	Learners	Teachers
	Reading Mean	Reading Mean
Eastern Cape	485	776
Free State	492	807
Gauteng	540	837
Kwazulu-Natal	**492**	**806**
Limpopo	480	810
Mpumalanga	507	823
Northern Cape	512	843
North West	513	812
Western Cape	534	820
South Africa	505	811

Table 1: SEACMEQ V

2.5 Theory of change

The KZN Reading Strategy is grounded in a theory of change which maintains the principle that:

IF educators are equipped with effective teaching methodologies, delivering quality age-appropriate, language and culturally relevant materials and nurturing a collaborative supportive ecosystem of parents, NGOs and the community yield, THEN substantiable foundations for improved learner reading performance, improvement of confidence and participation could be guaranteed.



Adapted from, Kanjee, A. (2025)

2.6 Priorities of the South African National Literacy Strategy 2024 - 2030

a) Literacy Policy Implementation

b) Ring-fence funding for age-relevant and culturally appropriate LTSM

c) An environment for agile and highly skilled Teacher Development

d) Bold parent, community and Organized Education Unions involvement

The Provincial Strategy is linked to various programmes and future interventions for the Kwazulu-Natal Education Department to improve the capacity of teachers to teach reading skills with the aim of improving learners' reading performance. It is informed by the four pillars as adopted from the National Reading Strategy and Plan – 2024 – 2030, which highlights the importance of adopting a holistic approach to improve reading achievement.

2.7 Pillars for the KZNDOE Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy

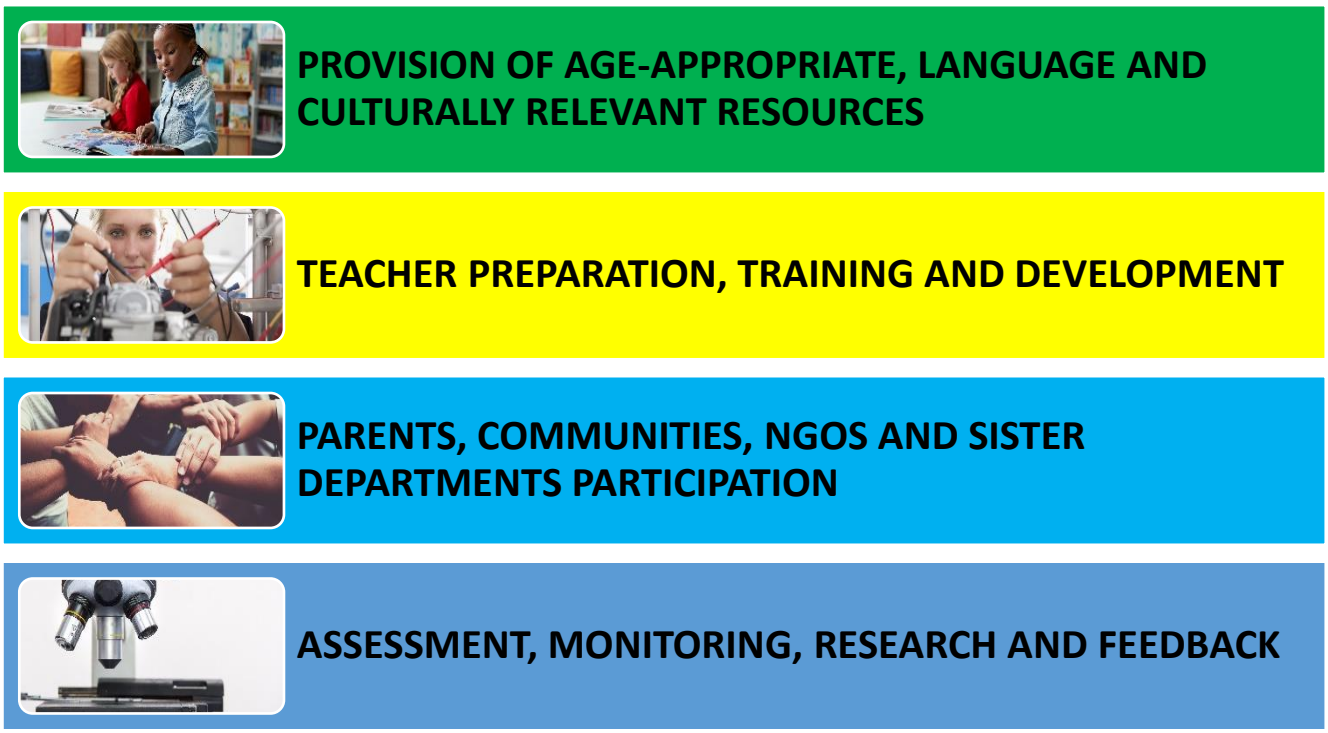


Figure 1: KZN Education Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy Pillars

2.8 Success conditions for the Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy

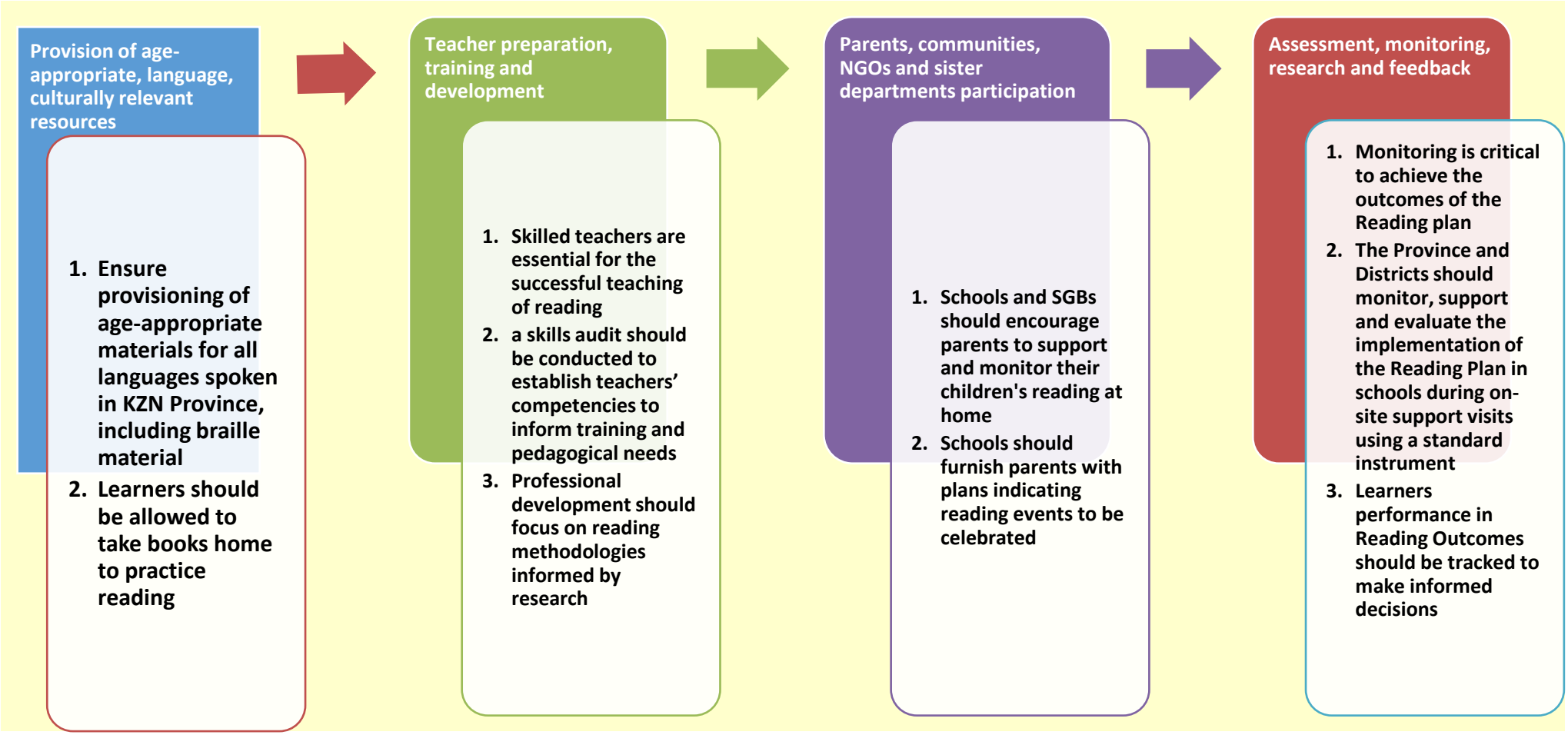


Figure 2: Success conditions

B. JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE

3.1 Introduction

A compelling case exists for a change in the reading practices of the province due to historical, linguistic and systemic challenges that have impacted literacy levels. These challenges emanate from several sources.

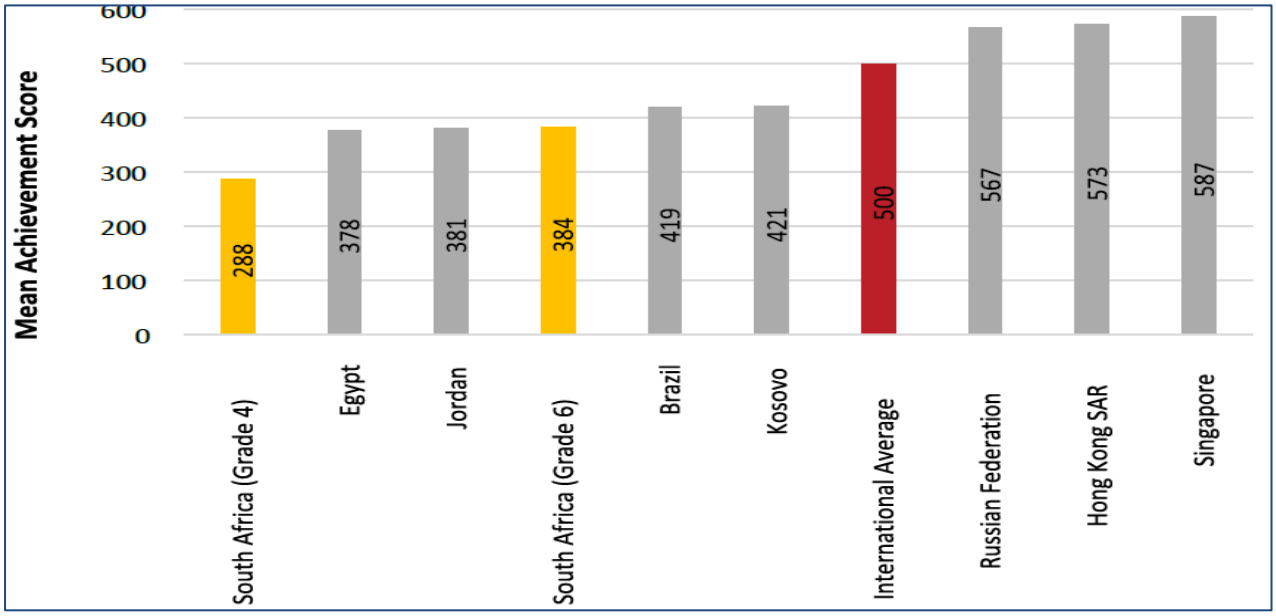


Figure 3: Mean scores (PIRLS, 2021)

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 Language Barriers

Many learners are taught in English, despite it not being their home language. This mismatch presents challenges in developing learner's reading fluency and comprehension skills, hindering overall literacy acquisition.

3.2.2 Inadequate Literacy Frameworks

Past literacy frameworks have been influenced by approaches designed for Germanic languages such as English and Afrikaans. These frameworks may not fully support early literacy instruction in African languages since they require teaching methods that emphasise morphology and meaning, rather than phonemic decoding. Although phonics-based approaches are well-suited for English, African languages benefit more from whole-language methods, which prioritise comprehension and contextual understanding.

3.2.3 Limited Access to Reading Materials

Schools and communities often lack sufficient reading materials, especially in indigenous languages which is a significant challenge that affects children's' literacy development. Without early exposure to books in a familiar language, learners' reading engagement and fluency are negatively impacted.

3.2.4 Socioeconomic Challenges

Poverty, overcrowded classrooms and limited parental involvement contribute to low literacy rates among learners. Many children do not have access to books at home and parents may not have the time or resources to assist in early literacy development.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW KZN READING STRATEGY

It is important to change the narrative about learners' reading performance and this calls for a re-evaluation of current reading instruction practice. A new KwaZulu-Natal reading strategy focuses on the following three core objectives:

4.1 Development of Strong Learning Foundations

Early-grade educational quality must be improved in the province. By ensuring proficiency in home-language reading by Grade 3, learners will be set up for academic success in later years. In support of this objective, the province has fully embraced Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education (MTBbE).

Teachers are key to the realisation of this objective, therefore teacher training is factored as a crucial component of the provincial reading plan. Research demonstrates that teachers who are competent and confident to teach reading, to identify and diagnose problems have influence in learner achievement in reading.

Equitable access to quality educational resources and learning environments play a significant role to ensure that learners, regardless of their backgrounds, have the same opportunities to thrive academically.

Businesses, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and Education Partners play a significant role in expanding access to resources by sponsoring educational programs and donating resources material.

4.2 Investment in Human Capital

Kwa-Zulu-Natal's prosperity depends on the skills and abilities of its citizens. Prioritising early literacy and educational development will foster a knowledgeable and capable workforce, essential for economic growth and innovation. When individuals acquire strong reading skills, they develop critical thinking, problem-solving and communication abilities that are essential for personal success and societal advancement.

Investing in foundational literacy will yield long-term dividends as the allocation of resources toward improving educational access and quality help create opportunities for future generations, ensuring sustainable growth and a well-equipped workforce.

3.4.1 Overcoming Socio-economic Barriers

While educational disparities perpetuate poverty and inequality. A strong literacy foundation enables learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to unlock opportunities for upward mobility.

While socioeconomic barriers often limit access to quality education, education is undoubtedly a powerful tool for breaking cycles of poverty and enables learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to unlock opportunities for upward mobility. The acquisition of strong literacy skills will enable them to gain access to better educational and employment opportunities. Investing in early literacy programs, ensures that learners from all backgrounds have a fair chance to succeed.

4.3 Rethinking Literacy Instruction

The reading challenges faced by learners do not diminish with time, instead they increase as they progress through school, creating gaps that becomes harder to close. Therefore, it is imperative to establish foundational reading skills in children's home languages, particularly as they transition to Grade 4, a critical stage in their educational development.

Learners who struggle with reading comprehension experience what is known as the "Matthew Effect," which means early advantages or disadvantages in literacy increase over time. Essentially, learners with strong reading skills continue to excel, while those with initial challenges face increasing academic difficulties.

Despite several interventions by the provincial Department of Education, there has been little measurable improvement in early-grade literacy. The 2021 PIRLS results reveal that 81% of South African Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in any language. Moreover, literacy rates for indigenous African languages lag behind those for Afrikaans and English, exposing fundamental inadequacies in how these languages are integrated into literacy instruction. This results in ineffective reading habits where learners merely recite words or "bark at text", rather than read for meaning.

Reading for meaning is more than an educational target, it is a developmental imperative. Education and skills development are drivers for long-term success and foundational literacy plays a crucial role in fulfilling these aspirations.

If current literacy practices remain unchanged, then:

- The President’s aspiration that all ten-year-olds should read with understanding will remain unattainable.
- The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 goal for South African learners to perform on par with similarly developed nations will not be realised.

4.4 Embracing the MTBbE in KwaZulu-Natal schools

The KZN Department of Education is embracing MTbBE and MTbRL as transformative curriculum strategies that places language at the centre of learning success. By strengthening isiZulu and other home languages as tools for teaching, learning and reading, the province is laying a strong foundation for improved literacy, numeracy and lifelong learning. The goal is to ensure that learners:

- Understand concepts deeply.
- Read fluently and with comprehension.
- Build confidence in their language and identity.
- Transition successfully to bilingual and multilingual competence.

a) *The significance of the Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education (MTBbE) In teaching practice*

Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education (MTBbE) is important for literacy improvement because it supports learners' understanding and development of reading and writing skills in several ways:

- Learners understand concepts better when taught in a language they already know. This makes it easier to grasp reading and writing skills
- Using the mother tongue helps learners develop basic literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking) more effectively, which can later be transferred to a second language.
- A strong foundation in the mother tongue makes it easier to learn additional languages, such as English.
- Learners perform better overall when they clearly understand instruction, especially in early grades.
- It promotes learners' cultural identity and values, making learning more meaningful and relevant.
    - MTBbE is significant because it strengthens understanding, builds literacy foundations, improves confidence and supports overall academic success.

b) Contextualizing MTBbE

According to the Department of Basic Education (2024), Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education implies the utilization of more than one language as a Language of Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LOLTA).

The Department notes that the reading problem stems from the language issues and necessitates *"African solutions for African problems".* Therefore, contextualizing MTBbE dictates adapting and teaching to learners' language, culture and environment so that learning becomes meaningful and relevant.

- Teaching key concepts in the learners' mother tongue.
- Allowing learners to discuss and express ideas in their home language.
- Using examples from the local community (e.g. markets, homes, transport, farming).
- Relating lessons to what learners already know.
- Use local stories, songs, folktales and games.
- Include cultural practices in lessons to make learning relatable.
- Developing teaching aids that reflect the learners' environment.
- Introduce English (or another language) gradually.
- Encourageing code-switching where appropriate.
- Assessing understanding in both the mother tongue and the second language where possible.
- Focusing on understanding, not just language accuracy.

c) Benefits for implementation the MTBbE in teaching and learning

- Learners grasp concepts more easily when taught in a language they understand, leading to deeper learning.
- Learners develop reading and writing skills faster in their mother tongue, which supports learning in additional languages.
- Clear understanding of content leads to improved results across subjects.

- Using the home language encourages active involvement in class activities and discussions.
- A strong foundation in the mother tongue helps learners learn languages like English more effectively.

d) Implications for not learning In the Mother Tongue based Reading and Learning

- Learners struggle to understand concepts when taught in a language they are not familiar with, leading to confusion and shallow learning.
- Reading and writing skills develop more slowly because learners are trying to learn both the **language** and the **content** at the same time.
- Learners often perform poorly in assessments due to language barriers rather than lack of ability.
- Learners may feel anxious or shy to participate, ask questions, or express themselves in a language they do not fully understand.
- Struggling to cope academically can lead to higher chances of repeating grades or dropping out of school.
- Learning in an unfamiliar language can limit development of 21st Century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity as articulated in CAPS.
- Learners may become disconnected from their language, culture and heritage.

e) Implementation strategies for the MTbBE in public schools

- **Translanguaging:** Purposefully allowing students to use their home language to understand complex concepts while learning English terminology.
- **Bilingual Materials:** Using dual-language textbooks and resources where technical terms are provided in both the mother tongue and English.
- **Phased Language Split:** Implementing a structured transition: Grade 4 (80% Home Language/20% English), Grade 5 (70/30), Grade 6 (60/40), and Grade 7 (50/50).
    - **Focus on STEM**: Targeting Natural Science, Technology and Mathematics for the first phase of implementation.

- **Assessment in Both Languages:** Conducting tests and assessments in both the home language and English to ensure content knowledge is tested, not just language proficiency.
- **Terminology Development:** Utilizing standardized terminology developed by bodies like PanSALB to ensure scientific concepts are accurately translated in African languages.

NB. *For detailed subject-based ATPs, workbooks and public publications, DBE Guidelines should be consulted.*

The Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education is thus embraced in KwaZulu-Natal for the learners' experiences, language and culture to be recognised in classroom instruction and learning.

4.5 Integrating the national holistic and inclusive approach

In order to realise the functionality of this strategy, four strategic pillars have been infused as consulted across the stakeholder forums.

- A clear policy directive underscoring the strategy's vision.
- Development and dissemination of culturally resonant and age-appropriate reading materials.
- Empowering educators through rigorous training, ensuring they are adept at delivering the reading development programme.
- Engaging parents and communities to create a supportive reading ecosystem for learners.

The National Reading Strategy pillars are:

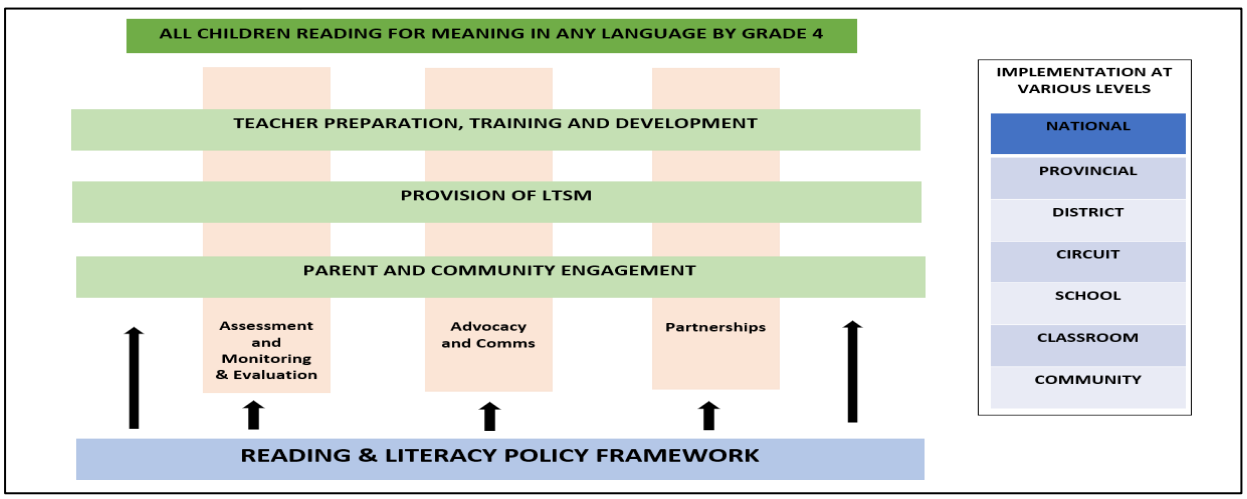


Figure 4: South African National Literacy Strategy and Plan: 2024-2030

4.6 FP to FET Reading Improvement Communication Design

FOCUS AREAS	ACTIVITIES	INTERNAL COMMUNICATION	EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION
RESOURCE PROVISION	• Provision of print and multimedia resources for all language levels: HL, FAL, SAL as well as MTbBE material	Advocacy through Circulars and meetings	Advocacy through: • Communications Directorate • TDCs • ICT Hubs • Circulars • Facebook • Instagram • Twitter • Etc.
TEACHER DEVELOPMENT	• Train Subject Advisers, teachers, Department Heads and PLC reading coordinators on reading and assessment methodologies	Advocacy through Circulars and meetings	
TEACHER SUPPORT	• Training and support, provision of resources,	Communication through Circulars and meetings	

4.7 Target-Oriented Communication Strategy







TARGETED AUDIENCE
- SMTs
- Educators
- Organized Education Unions
- Paublishers
- Learners
- Parents
- Community Leaders
- CBOs, FBOs, Associations, Business, NPOs

KEY MESSAGES
- Significance of reading improvement
- Strategies to teach reading for meaning
- Roles of reading Crusaders
- How to establish Reading Clubs, reading spaces, etc.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS
- KZNDOE Website & digital/social platforms
- Circulars
- Internal and Stakeholder Engagements
- Advocacy Campaigns & Celebrations

Conclusion

The literacy challenges faced by learners demand urgent and strategic intervention. It is assumed that by restructuring the current reading instruction frameworks to accommodate linguistic diversity, all learners in KwaZulu-Natal, regardless of their home language, will receive an equitable and effective literacy foundation.

This Strategy recognises that literacy flourishes best when rooted in one's own linguistic heritage and paves the way for tailored instructional packages because a single, rigid focus on any one literacy method is restrictive, negates the advantages that come from blending different approaches.

The KwaZulu-Natal Education Reading Literacy Improvement Strategy imbues a holistic and inclusive approach. It is thus our belief that a strong literacy foundation is a necessity to empower learners and to pave the way for academic successes and future socio-economic growth in KwaZulu-Natal.

IMPLEMENTATION AND RISK MITIGATION PLANS

a) The Five-Year Provincial Implementation Plan

PILLAR 1	PROVISION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE, LANGUAGE AND CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESOURCES								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
1. Distribute 100 stories (digital) to schools once per term.	Stories distributed to schools	1 000 story bools	1 500 story bools	2 000 story bools	2 500 story bools	3 000 story bools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• TD • NECT • LTSM	• Improved Academic Achievement
2. Schools procuring Reading Material using their norms and standards allocation	Schools have sufficient, age and grade appropriate reading material.	100 Schools	200 Schools	300 Schools	400 Schools	500 Schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • SMT • SGB and • CMs • NECT • NGOs	• Increased access to school procured Reading Material
3. Provide reading materials including library books, picture books and readers to selected primary schools.	Primary schools provided with library books, picture books and readers.	40 Schools	50 Schools	70 Schools	90 Schools	100 Schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• LTSM • ELITS • SMTs • NGOs	• Primary schools use reading library materials

PILLAR 1	PROVISION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE, LANGUAGE AND CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESOURCES								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
4. Establish classroom libraries for Foundation Phase learners of 12 selected schools.	Schools have classroom libraries in their Foundation Phase classes	12 classroom libraries	12 classroom libraries	12 classroom libraries	12 classroom libraries	12 classroom libraries	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• ELITS • NGOs • PLCs	• Functional classroom libraries available for Foundation Phase
5. Provide Digital Library resources to selected primary schools	Digital Library resources distributed in one event to selected schools.	30 schools	30 schools	30 schools	30 schools	30 schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• ELITS Directorate • IT Directorate	• Digital Library resources accessible to public school learners
6. Schools participate in central public libraries.	Schools participating in central or/and public libraries	12 schools	12 schools	12 schools	12 schools	12 schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning • KZNDSAC	• ELITS • KZNDSAC • SMTs	• Central libraries accessible to public school learners
7. Monitor the effective usage of reading corners in schools	Schools visited to monitor the effective use of reading corners.	60 schools	60 schools	60 schools	60 schools	60 schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • SMTs	• Effective usage of reading corners evident in public schools

PILLAR 1	PROVISION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE, LANGUAGE AND CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESOURCES								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
8. Supply and direct teachers to where reading materials can be sourced.	Teachers and learners access to a variety of resources for reading instruction delivery.	60 schools per District	60 schools per District	60 schools per District	60 schools per District	60 schools per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• District LTSM • Curriculum Management • Circuit Management • SMTs	• Teachers use and reading materials sources in class
9. PLCs and Clusters promote reading, capacitate members on how to teach, coach and mentor teachers on reading instruction delivery.	PLCs and Clusters are actively involved in promoting and supporting reading and teachers have the buy in and learner attainment improves across the curriculum.	12 PLCs per District	12 PLCs per District	12 PLCs per District	12 PLCs per District	12 PLCs per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• Education Management • Curriculum support • Circuit Management • SMTs	• Functional PLCs and Clusters promote reading and capacitate members

PILLAR 1	PROVISION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE, LANGUAGE AND CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESOURCES								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
10. Service schools with the Mobile Library Services available at their disposal.	Schools use Mobile Library services.	20 schools per District	20 schools per District	20 schools per District	20 schools per District	20 schools per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• Curriculum Management • Circuit Management • Curriculum Support • TD Officials • SNES	• Learners in schools with no libraries access Mobile Library Services
11. Provisioning of reading resources	Number of schools using the received materials	4045 schools with grade R	4045 schools with grade R	4045 schools with grade R	4045 schools with grade R	4045 schools with grade R	• Equitable Share -Programme 5	• ECD	• Reading resources available and used in public schools with grade R
12. Provisioning of reading materials	Number of schools that have received and use print and multimedia resources for all language levels: HL, FAL, SAL as well as MTbBE material	292 schools	292 schools	292 schools	292 schools	292 schools	• ELITS • Schools Norms and Standards	• Circuit Management • ELITS	• Reading materials utilized in public schools with libraries

PILLAR 2	TEACHER PREPARATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
1. Capacitate teachers on developing reading materials across all subjects and exchange the material developed.	Teachers either than EFAL teachers are prioritizing reading in all subjects and in all Phases and Grades	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• Education Management • SAs • Circuit Management • PLCs • SMTS	• Teachers use reading materials across all subjects
2. Engage Foundation Phase (Grades R-3) teachers to brainstorm on Reading Promotion Strategies.	Grades R-3 teachers attended brainstorming session in Reading Promotion Strategies	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	900 teachers Per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • TD • CM	• Foundation Phase (Grades R-3) teachers implement Reading Promotion Strategies.
3. Train Library Assistants as reading mentors to promote reading activities	Library Assistants trained as reading mentors	12 per District	12 per District	12 per District	12 per District	12 per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• ELITS	• Library Assistants utilized as reading mentors

PILLAR 2	TEACHER PREPARATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
4. Conduct Training EGRI for FP's IsiZulu HL teachers	FP Educators trained in EGRI.	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • TD • CM	• FP Educators implement EGRI
5. Conduct training on EGRA for Grade R – 3 teachers	Grade R-3 teachers trained in EGRA	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • TD • CM	• Grade R-3 learners with improve reading for meaning
6. Train Grade R – 3 teachers on Methodologies to improve reading skills in both EFAL and IsiZulu Home Language	Grade R-3 teachers trained on Methodologies to improve reading skills.	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • TD • CM	• Grade R-3 learners with improve reading skills
7. Train Grade R – 3 teachers in PSRIP	Teachers trained in PSRIP.	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	120 teachers per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • CM	• Primary school learners acquire improve reading skills
8. Train FP Departmental Head	Departmental Heads trained to support	382 teacher	382 teacher	382 teacher	382 teacher	382 teacher	• Budget allocation	• GET • ELITS	• Effective support and

PILLAR 2	TEACHER PREPARATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
to support and monitor the implementation of the Reading Strategy.	and monitor the implementation of the Reading Strategy.	s per District	s per District	s per District	s per District	s per District	• HR Provisioning	• TD	monitoring of the Reading Strategy implementation
9. Promote participation of schools in activities and competitions like Spelling BEE, SLEA, readathons, Reading Clubs, etc.,	Schools showing their participation in Spelling BEE, Reading competitions and in Reading Clubs	120 schools per District	120 schools per District	120 schools per District	120 schools per District	120 schools per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• DBE • ELITS • SMTs	• DBE Spelling BEE, Reading competitions and Reading Clubs learner participation increased
10. Conduct workshops on reading methodologies for both SMTs and teachers and render continued support.	Language teachers and eventually content subjects teachers are trained on reading methodologies	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• Curriculum Management • Circuit Management • Curriculum Support • TD • SNES	• Language teachers and content subjects teachers apply reading methodologies in class
11. Capacitate SMTs on supporting reading across the curriculum	SMTs outstandingly supervise and support language teaching and render	60 SMTs per District	60 SMTs per District	60 SMTs per District	60 SMTs per District	60 SMTs per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• Curriculum Management • Circuit Management	• Reading across the curriculum supervised and supported

PILLAR 2	TEACHER PREPARATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
	continued support to language teachers.							• Curriculum Support • TD Officials • SNES	
12. Conduct teachers workshops on reading assessment that also caters for learners with reading barriers.	SMTs support reading across the curriculum and reading is the concern of teachers not just language teachers only.	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	382 teachers per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• Curriculum Management • Circuit Management • Curriculum Support • TD Officials • SNES	• Reading assessment practised across the curriculum

PILLAR 3	PARENTS, COMMUNITIES, NGOS AND SISTER DEPARTMENTS PARTICIPATION								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
1. Engage parents to participate in school reading programmes including World Read Aloud Day, etc.	Parents participating in reading programmes in school: e.g., World Read Aloud Day, etc.	300 schools per District	320 schools per District	340 schools per District	360 schools per District	400 schools per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• District Reading Collectives/Committees • GET • School Principals.	• Parent participation in reading programmes evident
2. Engage stakeholders, NGOs, Sister Departments, etc. to participate in reading activities	NGOs and Sister Departments participating in reading activities of the district.	10 stakeholder entities per District	20 stakeholder entities per District	30 stakeholder entities per District	30 stakeholder entities per District	40 stakeholder entities per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• District Reading Collectives/Committees • GET	• NGOs and Sister Departments participation in reading campaigns improved
3. Hold meetings with primary school principals with special focus on motivating the implementation of the Reading Strategy	Primary schools have developed and are implementing the reading strategy.	382 schools per District	392 schools per District	382 schools per District	420 schools per District	500 schools per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• District Directors • H/O Directors • GET • ELITS • FET • TD • G&M & CMCs	• School principals promote the implementation of the Reading Strategy

PILLAR 3	PARENTS, COMMUNITIES, NGOS AND SISTER DEPARTMENTS PARTICIPATION								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
4. Collaborate with NECT for reading material and capacity building	Primary schools have functional District Reading Collectives/Committees	120 DRCs per District	240 DRCs per District	320 DRCs per District	420 DRCs per District	520 DRCs per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM	• Capacity building and provision of reading material embedded as collaboration initiative
5. Forge collaboration with KZNDSAC in programmes to improve reading for meaning among Grade 4 learners.	KZNDSAC is a standing member of the District Reading Collectives/Committees and appears on the register of meetings and campaigns.	KZNDSAC active in 12 Districts	KZNDSAC active in 12 Districts	KZNDSAC active in 12 Districts	KZNDSAC active in 12 Districts	KZNDSAC active in 12 Districts	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM • TD • G&M • KZNDSAC	• Collaboration plans with KZNDSAC for improving reading in schools

PILLAR 3	PARENTS, COMMUNITIES, NGOS AND SISTER DEPARTMENTS PARTICIPATION								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
6. Establish partnerships with NGOs for the promotion of reading in primary schools.	NGOs with reading programmes active in the DRCs and appear on the register of meetings and campaigns.	12 NGOs per Districts	12 NGOs per Districts	12 NGOs per Districts	12 NGOs per Districts	12 NGOs per Districts	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM • TD • G&M • KZNDSAC	• Standing partnerships agreements with NGOs for the promotion of reading in public schools
7. Advocacy of the Provincial Reading Plan	Advocacy sessions conducted in each District	Once off	Once off	Once off	Once off	Once off	• DDGs budget	• Provincial Committee	• Provincial Literacy Improvement Plan in place and implemented
8. Advocacy of the Provincial Reading Plan	Advocacy sessions conducted in each District	Once off	Once off	Once off	Once off	Once off	• DDGs budget	• Provincial Committee	• Provincial Advocacy Programme in place and implemented
9. Province to monitor that Districts develop their own reading plans and conduct advocacy with schools	Availability of District reading plans and advocacy with schools	Per term	Per term	Per term	Per term	Per term	• DDGs budget	• District Reading committees	• Districts and schools conduct advocacy on their own and Province conducts oversight

PILLAR 3	PARENTS, COMMUNITIES, NGOS AND SISTER DEPARTMENTS PARTICIPATION								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
10. Adapt current tools and monitor usage of monitoring tools	Monitoring tools are implemented and reports compiled	Per term	Per term	Per term	Per term	Per term	• DDGs budget	• Provincial and District Reading Collectives	• Monitoring tools customized at all levels

PILLAR 4	ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, RESEARCH AND FEEDBACK								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
1. Engage stakeholders on the framework of legislation and policy guidelines on the envisaged South African education and practices leading to its attainment.	Stakeholders have access to Legislative Framework and policy guidelines on strategies of achieving quality education for South Africans.	2 meetings per District	2 meetings per District	2 meetings per District	2 meetings per District	2 meetings per District	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM • TD • G&M • KZNDSAC • NGOs	• Legislative Framework and policy guidelines on strategies of achieving quality education supported by stakeholders
2. Distribute the Reading Strategy of KwaZulu-Natal to schools.	Schools have the Reading Strategy of KwaZulu-Natal.	500 schools	1 000 schools	2 500 schools	4 500 schools	5 500 schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• District LTSM • ELITS	• KwaZulu-Natal Reading Strategy accessible and applied in public schools

PILLAR 4	ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, RESEARCH AND FEEDBACK								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
3. Advocate the Read To Lead Promotion Campaign.	Schools participate in Reading Promotion workshops	500 schools participate	1 500 schools	2 500 schools	3 500 schools	4 000 schools participate	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM • TD • G&M • KZNDSAC • NGOs	• Increased participate of schools in Reading Promotion and Literacy Improvement workshops
4. Support schools to customise the pillars to their level	School customise the pillars	500 schools	500 schools	500 schools	500 schools	500 schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM • TD • G&M • KZNDSAC • NGOs	• Reading Strategy pillars customised by schools for Promotion and Literacy Improvement
5. Advocate the pillars using the hybrid (F2F and Virtual) sessions	Schools have participate in the hybrid (F2F and Virtual) sessions	500 schools	1 500 schools	2 500 schools	3 500 schools	4 000 schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM • TD • G&M	• Reading Strategy pillars used

PILLAR 4	ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, RESEARCH AND FEEDBACK								
Activities	**Indicators**	**Annual FY Target**					**Enabling Resources (Financial, Physical, etc.)**	**Responsibility**	**Evidence of impact**
		2025/26	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**			
								• KZNDSAC • NGOs	
6. Support schools in developing Reading Policies/Plans aligned with the pillars.	Effective implementation of the schools Reading Improvement Policies/Plans	500 schools	1 500 schools	2 500 schools	3 500 schools	4 000 schools	• Budget allocation • HR Provisioning	• GET • ELITS • FET • CM • TD • G&M • CM	• School Reading Improvement Policies/Plans implementation

b) District-based Reading and Literacy Improvement Plans

OPTION 1

1. **Amajuba District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED AMAJUBA READING PLAN.pdf	2. **Harry Gwala District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED HARRY GWALA DISTRICT RE/	3. **Ilembe District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED ILEMBE READING PLAN.pdf	4. **King Cetshwayo District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED KING CETSHWAYO READIN
5. **Pinetown District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED PINETOWN READING PLAN.pdf	6. **Ugu District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED UGU READING PLAN.pdf	7. **Umgungundlovu District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED UMGUNGUNDLOVU	8. **Umkhanyakude District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED UMKHANYAKUDE RE/
9. **Umlazi District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED UMLAZI READING PLAN.pdf	10. **Umzinyathi District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED UMZINYATHI READIN	11. **Uthukela District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED UTHUKELA READING PLAN.pdf	12. **Zululand District Reading Promotion Plan** SIGNED ZULULAND READING PLAN.pdf

OPTION 2

You can also click HERE to access District-based Reading Promotion Plans

OPTION 3

Otherwise use the LINK below:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FCr9bpP6BLkAl0cqAEp22c-jMQk9Ep5I?usp=sharing

OPTION 4

District-based Reading Promotion Pl

c) Risk Mitigation Plan

RISKS	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	MITIGATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	EARLY-WARNING INDICATORS
Inadequate teacher training	High	High	Phased delivery and cluster model	Teacher Development	
Training not changing practice	High	High	Coaching and observation	Curriculum Management	
Late LTSM delivery	Medium	High	Procurement milestones and tracking	LTSM	
Shortage of isiZulu graded materials	High	High	Development and partner agreements	Curriculum Management	
Weak district implementation capacity	Medium	High	Differentiated technical support	District Operations	
Excessive data collection	Medium	Medium	Minimum indicator set	EMIS	
Assessment inconsistency	High	High	Standardised tools and moderation	Examinations and Assessments	
Budget shortfalls	High	High	MTEF prioritisation and phased rollout	Financial Services	
Partner duplication	Medium	Medium	District partner register and MoUs	CM&D	

d) Accountability Levels

ACTIVITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	RESPONSIBLITY	SUPPORT
FP-SP reading training	Directors: Teacher Development, ECD, SNES, GET, FET	District language subject advisors	Teacher Development, ECD, SNES, GET, FET
School coaching and Compliance	District Directors	Circuit managers and subject advisors	DHs and SMTs
Resource provisioning	Director: LTSM, ELITS, SNES	District LTSM, ELITS, SNES officials	Curriculum and schools
Learner assessment	Director: Assessments & Quality Assurance	Schools and district assessment teams	• Assessments & Quality Assurance • Research and monitoring units

Validity

The KwaZulu-Natal Education Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy 2025-2030 should be subjected for review and updating when the end of its implementation approaches.

This Reading and Literacy Improvement Strategy is approved for implementation across the Curriculum, in all public-school grades and by all Provincial Education Departmental institutions.

Singled-out References

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DOODLE PAGE

DOODLE PAGE

Acquiring literacy is an empowering process, enabling millions to enjoy access to knowledge and information which broadens horizons, increases opportunities and creates alternativesfor building a better life.

Kofi Annan

