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Basic Education Budget Vote Speech, 2014/15 By Mrs Angie Motshekga, Minister of Basic Education, National Assembly, Cape Town: 15 July 2014

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members and colleagues
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen,

Honourable speaker, we thank you for this Debate on Vote 15, Basic Education.

During the State of the Nation Address, the President reminded us that as we enter the second phase of our transition from apartheid to a national democratic society, we have to embark on radical socio-economic transformation. This we must do in order to push back the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment, and this change can only come about with far-reaching interventions.

The President also confirmed that South Africa is a much better place to live in than it was in 1994, and that the lives of millions of our people have improved.

In Basic Education, we continue to open the doors of learning and culture with high levels of participation at 99% enrolment in compulsory basic education. 86% of our schools have been declared no-fee schools, and over 9 million learners are fed at school through the National School Nutrition Programme. Through the pro-poor package we will achieve more than R8 billion funding for non-fee paying schools to ensure that no child is left behind because of poverty. The per-learner amount for 2014 is **R1, 059.00** for non-fee schools.

Honourable Speaker, as we present the 2014/2015 budget we wish to confirm that as we embark on this radical transformation, both the National Development Plan and the ANC Manifesto will guide our programmes. Our medium to long range plan elaborates the work to be done between now and 2030.

The NDP states that education is a means to building an inclusive society and providing opportunities for South Africans to realise their full potential. It further says that education provides the tools to people to solve their problems. We are very encouraged to note that the President confirmed that the ruling party continues to rate basic education as the apex priority for this government.

We will continue to promote universal access to education by ensuring that all children between ages 7 and 15 are in school. We will increase the number of Grade 12 learners who can gain entrance to university, moving incrementally from 172 000 in 2013 to 250 000 in 2019, and work to improve the quality and quantity of passes.

We will continue to eradicate mud schools and other inappropriate structures particularly in the Eastern Cape, and to provide the necessary resources needed for proper schooling to take place.

Our own internal assessments and international benchmarking assessments confirm that whilst progress has been made on access, equity, and redress, the emphasis in this administration will be on attaining quality efficiently.

The focus for 2014 - 2019 is consolidating achievements made so far and then driving home the theme of improvement on quality and efficiency throughout the entire schooling sector with a renewed emphasis on curriculum coverage, and the need to strengthen **quality, efficiency** and accountability in our provinces, districts and schools.



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In the next 5 years we will make more aggressive, radical changes and appropriate interventions to turn our education system around.

We have moved boldly, therefore, to reconfigure the Basic Education department internally for an even better performance. In line with heightening accountability and enhancing service delivery the department is invoking Sections 3 and 8 of the National Education Policy Act of 1996 to hold districts and provinces that are not performing accountable. The time has come to place responsibility and accountability where it belongs.

We will track learner performance more closely, in order to ensure that our interventions are working and that we are decreasing the drop-out rate and increasing retention levels in our schools.

The Council of Education Ministers held its first meeting a week ago and all the MECs agree that the time for radical transformation has come. In the first week of August we will hold an education *Lekgotla* with all provinces to detail and align our plans to improve quality and efficiency.

Budget for 2014/15

Honourable Members, today we stand here to account and to seek a fresh mandate for the 2014/15 programme on the gains made in recent years.

The overall budget for 2014/15 for the Department of Basic Education is **R19, 680 billion**. Last year it was **R17, 592 billion**. This is an increase of R2, 088 billion. This, once again, confirms government's commitment to education.

The budget allocation to Provincial Education Departments is **R186,147 billion**. It will exceed R200 billion in 2015/16.

Umalusi is allocated R107.4 million in 2014/15 and will reach R112.7 million in 2015/16 to cover its expanded mandate. The National Education Evaluation Development Unit continues to do important work for the Department. For 2014/15, **NEEDU is allocated R14.2 million**.

Kha Ri Gude receives R634.9 million. This mass literacy campaign has impacted the lives of millions of our people. To this we have allocated **R62.2 million particularly for EPWP: Kha Ri Gude**, as a contribution to job-creation by recruiting and training volunteers.

Improved Quality of Basic Education

Honourable Members,

2014 is the watershed year as it marks the completion of the implementation of CAPS throughout the education system. It is a year that sees the first cohort of Grade 12 learners sitting for a CAPS-aligned NSC. This signals stability in the curriculum landscape.

An amount of R30 million has been allocated in 2014/15 for the National Initiative to improve Learning Outcomes which will reach R40 million in 2015/16.

National School Nutrition Programme

As at June 2014, over 9 million learners in more than 21 000 quintile 1 - 3 primary and secondary schools benefitted from the school nutrition programme. This increase is attributed to the successful extension of the programme to public secondary schools.

The conditional grant for the **National School Nutrition Programme** has increased by R288.8 million in 2014/15 to R5, 462 billion. It will reach R5.704 billion in 2015/16.

School Health Programme

Although the Department has made strides to meet the basic right to nutrition to millions of learners in schools, it has become necessary to consider a national de-worming programme linked to the NSNP, to maximise the health and cognitive benefits of school meals.

We will continue enhance learner safety and well being by fighting drugs and substance abuse as well as youth criminality in our schools and communities in general.

Focus on History

A country that chooses to hide its heritage and historical footprints from its children takes the risk of having them repeat the mistakes of their predecessors.

We are currently conducting comparative studies and research on countries offering History as

a compulsory subject. Research has shown that as a subject, History has a number of positive effects such as contributing to nation building, national pride, patriotism, social cohesion and cultural heritage.

Languages

We are working on a language development framework and we have prioritized the implementation of South African Sign Language investment. We have made progress in the development of African Languages including implementing the policy on the Incremental Introduction of African Languages. We are strengthening the utility and proficiency in English as the First Additional Language and the Language of Learning and Teaching through the strategy of English across the Curriculum.

Early Childhood Development

In respect of Early Childhood Development, the *National Development Plan* underlines the need for access for all children to at least 2 years of pre-school education. The ANC in its manifesto echoes this sentiment of making two years of pre-school education compulsory, and due to success in rolling out early childhood development programmes, legislative review to make schooling for young people aged 5 to 15 years compulsory is on the cards.

Honourable Members, the Department has made significant progress in increasing access to grade R. **16 909** of the **18 475** public primary schools have grade R classes with an enrolment of **779, 370** learners (*2013 School Realities*). The *General Household Survey 2013* indicated that a total of **481, 000** 5 year old learners were in preschool institutions.

The first ever impact evaluation of Grade R on learning outcomes was conducted in 2013 with the support of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation. The report was presented to Cabinet of 19 March 2014. In response to the recommendations made, a management plan has been approved to strengthen the quality of implementation and provision of Grade R schooling in our country - especially in relation to teaching.

The National Curriculum Framework for children under 4 (four) years will also be rolled out in registered Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres from January 2015. All preparations like practitioner training and supply of resources have already started and will be completed this calendar year.

Our interventions are bearing fruit

Honourable Members,

As indicated earlier, in the 5th administration quality education and efficiency will dominate our work. The Department is committed to maintaining the improvement of learners in the NSC results during this academic year and beyond and to strengthen strategies to improve the quality of passes to 171,000 in 2014 through the strengthening of existing strategies.

The growth from 67.8% in 2010 to 78.2% in 2013, as announced, which actually reads 80.8% after the supplementary examinations, is a challenge that the new administration must better, thus propelling us further towards better performance.

Annual National Assessment

Education experts point to the fact that the first five (5) years in education are the most crucial in the educational careers and outcomes for children. We will continue to strengthen learning in the foundation and intermediate phases and ensure that the senior phase provide a solid base for studies in Grade 10 to 12 or the Further Education and Training Band.

Mathematics, Science and Technology

Due to our focus on quality and efficiency, the recommendations of the Ministerial Task Team's on Reading and Maths, Science and Technology have been integrated into our plans and excellent progress has already been made in implementing these recommendations.

The MST directorate and the office have been established in this regard.

International Maths Olympiad

Before leaving this subject of Maths, let me congratulate the 6 learners from KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape who represented South Africa in the International Maths Olympiad held here in our country between 6 and 12 July for the first time on the African continent. In particular I thank Grade 12 learner Robin **Visser** who did South Africa proud, earning a **bronze** medal at the Olympiad. I also thank Professor Johann Engelbrecht from the South African Maths Foundation and the entire mathematics community who ensured that we host a very successful event as a country.

Learner Teacher Support Material

Honourable members, the Department of Basic Education has made great strides to positively change the learning and teaching landscape in South Africa over the years, with various

research findings and reports bearing testimony to this. Expanded access to learning and teaching material has been at the centre of this positive shift.

Textbooks and Workbooks

Since 2011/12, the sector has spent **R7, 7 billion** on the roll out of **textbooks** for the implementation of CAPS over the last 3 financial years. 2014/15 has been targeted as the year by which the sector will be moving towards one textbook, per learner, per subject.

The sector has developed, printed and delivered 204 million Grade R to 9 Language and Mathematics **workbooks** to 24,000 public schools, twice a year since 2011 and will continue to do so in the coming years.

Low retention and retrieval of these valuable resources has militated against the provision of a textbook for each learner per subject at the commencement of the school calendar year.

Budgets provided in PEDs for the 2014/15 financial year and beyond are therefore used to provide top-ups for damages, non-return and shortages as a result of the inward migration of learners.

Following a national screening process a single core textbook will be listed for each subject on the national catalogue to ensure universal coverage. There will no longer be eight titles per subject simply because the high costs involved demand a more rational and cost-effective approach.

Millions of textbooks and workbooks have been delivered to schools; the focus from here onwards will be to continue to monitor utilisation to improve learning outcomes and impact. Parents, educators and officials have an important role to play to ensure that the tax payers' investment in the future of our children is not wasted.

Ministerial Committee on the NSC

I have received the Ministerial Committee Report from the team that was chaired by Prof Brian O'Connell, the outgoing Vice Chancellor of the University of the Western Cape. I am currently studying the report and I will make an announcement shortly on the recommendations that I will take forward. This should be done soon after presenting it to the Council for Education Ministers.

The **allocation for 2014/15 for workbooks is R896.7 million** and for textbooks the estimated budget is **R4.2 billion allocated to PEDs**.

School Infrastructure

The total allocated infrastructure budget for 2014/15 financial year is **R 10.1 billion** and this includes a portion of Education Infrastructure Grant amounting to **R 6.9 billion**. The Education Infrastructure Grant increases to R9.4m in 2015/16, R10m in 2016/17 and R10.5m in 2017/18.

ICT in education

The Action Plan to 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025 requires the e-Education strategy to play a central role in the attainment of its goals by improving accessibility, inclusivity, quality and efficiency across the education system. The DBE has reformatted the existing workbooks to be interactive so that they can be accessible via electronic ICT devices.

Together with the Departments of Communication we have developed a Broadband Policy and the consultation process is underway with provinces. The implementation date for the broadband policy is 2015 after the consultation process has been finalised. We will announce detailed plans in due course.

Teacher development

The old cliché that says every education system stands and falls on its teachers is very true. Study after study from our local assessments and evaluation programmes to international tests confirm the central role of teachers.

Honourable Members, everything to do with teachers from their conditions of service, their recruitment, deployment, utilisation and development including their general professional development and conduct occupies a high position in our list of priorities. The Department of Basic Education and Department of Higher Education and Training, through various bilateral engagements and initiatives, are working together to strengthen this very important area of our work.

The *Funza Lushaka* Bursary scheme has increased from R424 million in 2010/11 to R893.9 million in 2013/14, when 14 500 bursaries were awarded.

In partnership with Vodacom, we have equipped and connected **40** Teacher Centres across the 9 provinces. 31 of these teacher centres were equipped and connected in the last financial year. In this financial year, Vodacom will further equip and connect **20** new teacher centres. This means that a total of **60 teacher centres** will be fully digitised by the end of this financial year.

In collaboration with the British Council, the Department has developed educational resources

for English First Additional Language (EFAL) Grades 1-12. The Department has also further developed Mathematics Grades 1-12 educational resources. These educational resource items are ready to be piloted.

The full implementation of these self-diagnostic assessments for teachers will be introduced in 2015. It is aimed at identifying content deficit and for teacher development purposes.

South African Council for Educators in collaboration with the DBE is currently phasing-in the implementation of the Continuing Professional Teacher Development Management system. This is done according to the three cohorts starting with Principals and Deputies in this year, HoDs in 2015 and Post Level 1 Teachers in 2016.

The Department has reviewed the current Integrated Quality Management System, in consultation with teacher unions, and developed a revised instrument the Quality Management System for school based educators. For the current year, **the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is allocated R42.2 million.**

We are conducting research on the inclusion of **Grade R teachers** in mainstream and the impact this will have on the post provisioning model and their conditions of service.

Fellow South Africans,

Strengthening Districts for better outcomes

Schools are a centre piece for our entire work as the Department of Basic Education. Education districts have a pivotal role in supporting schools, improving their functionality and developing the country's education institutions in order that national learning outcomes are achieved.

Our analysis of district performance over a period of four years indicates that we must strengthen the processes and systems by which districts support schools, and capacitate officials and managers who work at district level in order to provide much needed support to underperforming districts, and to spread good practice between districts which have managed to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

Our district monitoring unit has been strengthened and will now comprise a branch which will focus more carefully on capacity, systems and processes required to strengthen district planning, management, support, reporting and accountability for improved quality basic education.

Education Collaboration Framework

The Education Collaboration Framework that we set up in July last year has started bearing fruit in the education system. Through the National Education Collaboration Trust, that coordinates the implementation of the ECF, we profiled all of the 21 target districts to understand, in detail, the challenges in both the district offices and the schools.

Over 120 members of communities, teacher unions, traditional leadership and businesses have been mobilised into district steering committees who are working with the district offices, schools and communities so as to drive improvement activities in the target schools. While we are working to improve the performance of the district offices to better support and monitor schools, 291 schools that require urgent and focused attention. These schools are being provided with more differentiated and responsive attention thereby enabling them with the opportunity to make a fresh start. We invite more South Africans to join hands around these ideals and to participate in supporting schools and districts targeted by the NECT in order for them to achieve more swift and in-depth improvement.

Honourable Members,

SGB ELECTIONS

We have just emerged from the country's successful elections in May this year. Over 250 000 governors are elected every three years to serve in our public schools, united by a common purpose, to make education a *real* societal issue.

School Governing Body Elections will take place from 6 to 28 March 2015 and we encourage all parents to support the elections by standing as candidates or by participating as voters in the SGB elections as voters.

Without parental and community support, education can never be a societal issue as envisaged by government.

Tributes

I wish to thank Deputy Minister Surty, Chairpersons of the Education Portfolio and Select Committees and their respective members, education MECs, HoDs and our Acting DG, Mr Paddy Padayachee, for their support. We are grateful to teachers, principals, parents, learners, SGBs, individuals, officials and staff members for advancing the nation's educational goals.

We have enjoyed productive collaborations with various ministries and will strengthen these in

the coming financial year.

Allow me to acknowledge and pay tribute to my special guests Mr Marthinus Coetzee, the 2013 National Teaching Awards Lifetime Achievement Award Winner and Mrs Dorah Moloï, the 2013 Top District Director for Sedibeng East in Gauteng. I thank both for their exemplary leadership and dedication to ensuring quality education for our children.

Conclusion

There is good progress in respect of delivery in the current electoral mandate.

If we continue to improve at the speed we have done in recent years, the lives of ordinary South Africans will be fundamentally transformed and we will face a brighter future.

We are resolved, with provinces, to step-up monitoring and evaluation, to improve accountability, and to enforce better planning for faster implementation and more lasting change.

I thank you.

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