

# WESTCOAST SCHOOLS INVESTIGATION

## INTRODUCTION

This investigation was born out of a meeting, held on 21 January 2007, arranged by concerned parents of Laingville in St Helena Bay regarding certain educational issues at certain schools in the Saldanabay Municipal Area. Cameron Dugmore, Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) for education in the Western Cape, was also invited to the meeting. The main problem was learners who had not been admitted to schools at that stage, which was one week after schools had resumed for the 2007 academic year.

Having listened to all inputs made by the general public at the meeting, MEC Dugmore undertook to establish a Task Team (TT) to investigate the allegations levelled at certain schools. The TT was to submit a Report to the MEC as soon as possible.

## TASK TEAM

**Table 1: Members of Task Team**

|    | Name             | Designation/Representative           | Contact Detail |
|----|------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1  | Mr H A Lewis     | Advisor to MEC; Chairperson          | 021 – 467 2523 |
| 2  | Mr J H Lyners    | DDG: Operations                      | 021 – 467 2541 |
| 3  | Ms T S Shayi     | Chief Director: Operations           | 021 – 467 2545 |
| 4  | Ms J Rault-Smith | Director:Curriculum Development      | 021 – 467 2623 |
| 5  | Mr J Beukes      | Director: EMDC-Westcoast / Winelands | 021 – 860 1200 |
| 6  | Ms A Schlebusch  | Senior Language Practitioner         | 021 – 467 2523 |
| 7  | Dr E C Appies    | SGB: Vredenburg HS                   | 083 261 6242   |
| 8  | Mr G Cloete      | SGB: Weston HS                       | 022 – 713 2083 |
| 9  | Mr F Schippers   | SGB: Hopefield HS                    | 083 284 9446   |
| 10 | Ms N du Preez    | SGB: Velddrif HS                     | 022 – 783 0028 |
| 11 | Mr P Jordaan     | Laingville Crisis Committee          | 022 – 742 1208 |
| 12 | Mr B T Africa    | Laingville Crisis Committee          | 022- 742 1208  |
| 13 | Ms F Owies       | Parent from Laingville               | 022 – 742 1208 |
| 14 | Mr G Cloete      | SADTU Representative                 | 021 – 930 8316 |
| 15 | Mr W Jantjies    | NAPTOSA Representative               | 021- 686 8521  |

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

MEC Dugmore officially approved the Terms of Reference (TOR) on 8 March 2007. The TOR is attached as **Annexure A**.

## **APPROACH TO INVESTIGATION**

The TT met for the first time in Cape Town on 20 March 2007. During this meeting the TOR was workshopped and the TT decided on the following approach to the investigation:

4.1 To establish a separate sub-committee under the leadership of Ms Rault-Smith to evaluate learner and educator portfolios at Vredenburg HS, Weston HS and St Helena Bay PS. The findings of this sub-committee would assist the TT with recommendations regarding curricular matters.

4.2 The TT further decided on:

4.2.1 A public meeting in Laingville on 27 March at 19:00 in the local Community Centre.

4.2.2 Visits to the respective schools (Vredenburg HS, Weston HS, Velddrif HS and Hopefield HS) on 28 March 2007 to meet the Senior Management Team (SMT) and School Governing Body (SGB) of each and to discuss the concerns raised in the TOR.

## MEETINGS/VISITS

The schedule for the two-day visit was as follows:

### WESTCOAST INVESTIGATION VISIT SCHEDULE

**Tuesday, 27 March 2007**

| Time  | Venue        | Role Players                 |
|-------|--------------|------------------------------|
| 19.00 | Civic Centre | Public Meeting in Laingville |

**Wednesday, 28 March 2007**

| Time          | Venue  | Role Players   |
|---------------|--|--|
| 09.00 – 10.00 | Municipality Venue   | Task Team  |
| 10.15 – 11.45 | Vredenburg High School   | Task Team meets SMT and SGB  |
| 12.00 – 13.00 | Weston High School   | Task Team meets SMT and SGB  |
| 13.00 – 14.00 | Lunch  | TBC  |
| 14.30 – 15.30 | Task Team to split into two Groups:<br>Group 1: Velddrif High School<br>Group 2: Hopefield High School | Task Team meets SMT and SGB<br><br>Group 1 (Mr Lewis)<br>Group 2 (Mr Lyners)   |
| 16.00 – 16.30 | Municipality Venue   | Task Team to:<br>Analyse the activities of the day.<br>Discuss the way forward |

## **6. DISCUSSION**

- 6.1. The work of the Laingville Education Crisis Committee is commended, especially the responsible manner in which the matter was dealt with. The learners that were not in schools were suitably accommodated.
- 6.2. All discussions (at the public meeting, as well as at the meetings with the respective schools) were open meetings and all role players contributed in an open and honest manner to the issues under discussion.

It was evident from the input received at the public meeting that the community of Laingville is definitely experiencing problems regarding the education of their children. Concerns were expressed with the success rate of Laingville learners who attend high schools in Vredenburg. These concerns included, amongst other:

- issues of racism;
- exclusion from/access to schools;
- the lack of proper curricular support;
- burden of high school fees
- difficulties with learner transport;
- the high failure/dropout rate and
- language (as medium of instruction).

- 6.3. The verification of the concerns mentioned above (paragraph 6,2) is not an easy task, because any person will have to make a judgement call and deal with information on the basis of a balance of probability. This fact, however, does not nullify the importance of the problems, whether experienced or perceived, raised by the community.
- 6.4. Racism is an attitudinal behaviour that will, unfortunately, dominate and impact on the South African society for many years to come. The manner

in which different race groups were socialised in during the pre-94 political era, still presents huge challenges to all of us in our pursuit to build a non-racist South Africa. Recognizing this, the onus rests on all of us, more so on our schools and educators as agents of change, to fearlessly anticipate, confront and resolve incidents of racism that present themselves in our educational institutions.

Having consulted some definitions of racism, it can be concluded that “racism” is a complex concept defined as follows:

*“Racism may be expressed individually and consciously, through explicit thoughts, feelings, or acts, or socially and unconsciously, through institutions that promote inequality between races.”*

[www.kids.net.au/encyclopedia-wiki/ra/Racism](http://www.kids.net.au/encyclopedia-wiki/ra/Racism)

and

*“Racism is defined broadly as stigmatization of those we perceive as different from us”;*

[www.geocities.com/paris/chateau/6110/europeconceptsterms](http://www.geocities.com/paris/chateau/6110/europeconceptsterms).

Having studied the file submitted by Vredenburg High School, the following has been noted from the newsletter of 2005. It reads as follows:

*“Die toevoeging van leerders van St Helenabaai het heelwat probleme veroorsaak. Die leerders kry akademies baie swaar, maar is ook akademies nie gefokus nie. Heelwat van die 91 leerders het reeds die skool verlaat. Tans staan die getal op 75. Hierdie probleem kan nie deur slegs die skool alleen aangespreek word nie; dis ‘n gemeenskapsprobleem”*

The same text has been used again (with only minor alterations) in the 2006 newsletter. In the 2006 newsletter it reads as follows:

*“Die toevoeging van leerders van St Helenabaai het heelwat probleme veroorsaak. Die leerders kry akademies baie swaar, maar is ook akademies nie gefokus nie. Van hierdie getal het 60 einde 2005 gedruip. Hierdie probleem kan nie deur slegs die skool alleen aangespreek word nie; dis ‘n gemeenskapsprobleem”*

Whilst the TT accedes that issues of poor scholastic performance should be communicated to all the parents of the school, it is concerned the way the learners from St Helenabay have been singled out. All evaluation of the two paragraphs in the two newsletters indicates that the St Helena Bay learners as an entity are problematised (over a 2 year period at least). They have been batched together as “nie gefokus nie”, etc.

These extracts are included as an illustration of how “stigmatisation, intentionally or unintentionally ”(c.f. the two definitions on p 5), has occurred at the school. The stigmatisation of these learners could have further negative consequences in terms of:

- ◆ how other parents view the Laingville learners;
- ◆ how fellow schoolmates view them;
- ◆ how their own parents interpret and view their children’s presence at Vredenburg HS;
- ◆ lower self-esteem;
- ◆ lower self-respect and
- ◆ undermining their dignity.

6.5 The findings of the sub-committee on curriculum matters are contained in Annexure B. The TT is acutely aware that the delivery of the curriculum should be the most important task of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and its schools.

The WCED's contribution towards building and strengthening the new South Africa, within the context of the Human Capital Development Strategy (HCDS), is to invest in our children and to enable and empower them to be successful at school in order to become focused and confident citizens that can make a meaningful difference in their respective communities in specific, but to South Africa in general.

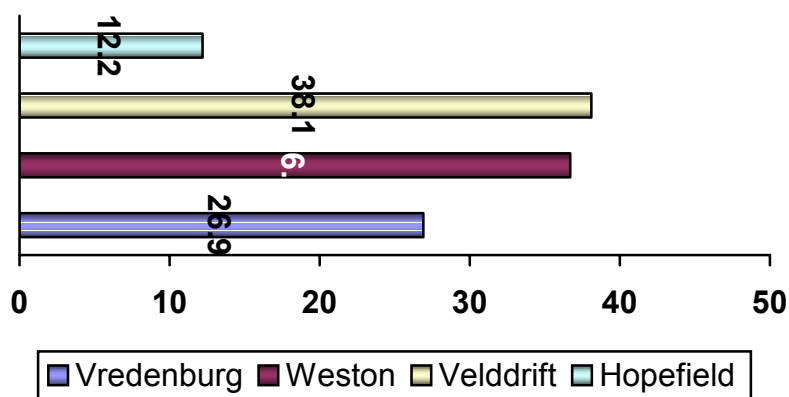
One of the indicators used to measure the success of curriculum delivery is the pass/failure rate of learners. Statistics analysed of the pass/failure rate at schools in the Saldanabay Municipal Area indicate that there are serious problems with the delivery of the curriculum in some schools and in specific phases of the curriculum programme.

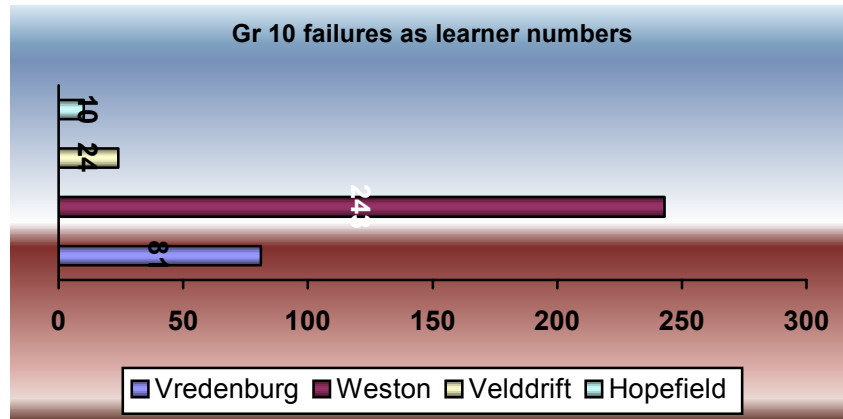
The most arresting information comes from a study of the Grade 10 pass/fail rate across the 4 high schools included in this survey. While a large part of the case put at the public meeting in January revolved around the failure rate at Vredenburg High School a study of the data showed a more widespread problem.

**Table 2: Grade 10 - Pass/Fail/Condoned**

|  | Vredenburg HS | Weston HS   | Velddrift HS | Hopefield HS |
|--|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Learners failed (as % of Gr. 10 enrolment) | 81 (26.9%)    | 243 (36.7%) | 24 (38.1%)   | 10 (12.2%)   |

**2006 Gr 10 Failures as a % of enrolment**



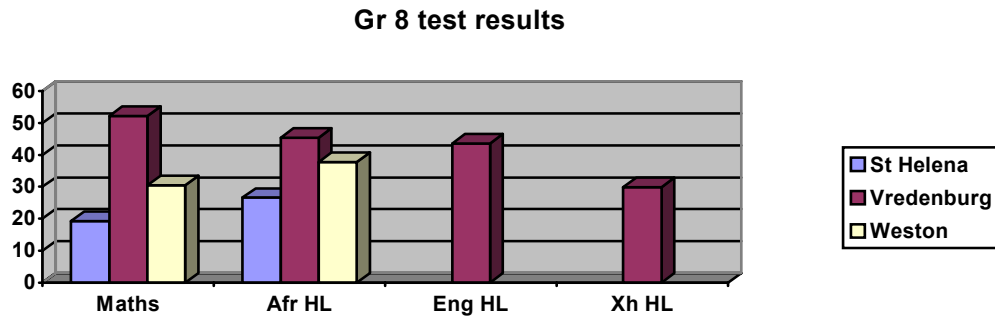


In context, therefore, the picture shows a high number of learners failing across the whole municipal area with Weston and Velddrift having a higher percentage of failures than Vredenburg and 358 learners across the 4 schools failing the year. If this is taken in conjunction with a community that suffers generally deprived conditions or relative unemployment then this is a disturbing trend.

If one looks further towards contributing factors, the Grade 8 results on provincial literacy and numeracy tests are revealing.



**Table 3: Provincial Literacy/Numeracy Grade 8 Test results**



|                                    | St Helena Bay | Vredenburg HS | Weston HS | Velddrift HS | Hopefield HS |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| Pass rate in Maths                 | 19.33%        | 52.13%        | 30.56%    | 45.36%       | 48.97%       |
| Pass rate in Afr. (Home Lang.)     | 26.6%         | 45.3%         | 37.77%    | 47.14%       | 40.11%       |
| Pass rate in Eng. (Home Lang.)     |               | 43.57%        |           | 40.54%       | 57.13%       |
| Pass rate in isiXhosa (Home Lang.) |               | 29.92%        |           | 28.38%       |              |

Recently the WCED also started a process to measure the Literacy and Numeracy levels of grades 3, 6 and 8 in our primary schools. Some of these statistics are as follows:

Table 4: Literacy and Numeracy levels at Primary School level (grades 3, 6 & 8);

Table 5: Examination statistics for grades 8 –11

Table 6: Vredenburg High School – Senior Certificate Results;

Table 7: Weston Senior Secondary School – Senior Certificate Results;

Table 8: Hopefield High School – Senior Certificate Results;

Table 9: Velddrift High School – Senior Certificate Results;

**Table 4: Literacy and Numeracy levels at Primary Schools**

| SCHOOL                           | GRADE 3                   | GRADE 6                    | GRADE 8                      |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| St Helenabay Intermediary School |                           |                            |                              |
| Literacy                         | 25% (2002)<br>41% (2004)  | 12.8% (2003)<br>40% (2005) | 26.6% (2006; Afr Home lang.) |
| Numeracy                         | 35% (2002)<br>46.2 (2004) | -<br>17.5% (2005)          | 19.33% (Mathematics)         |

|                          |                            |                            |   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Hopefield Primary School |                            |                            |   |
| Literacy                 | 10% (2002)<br>33.6% (2004) | 30% (2003)<br>22.5% (2005) | - |
| Numeracy                 | 18% (2002)<br>15.4% (2004) | -<br>0% (2005)             |   |
| Noordhoek Primary School |                            |                            |   |
| Literacy                 | 25% (2002)<br>25.5% (2004) | 15% (2003)<br>25% (2005)   | - |
| Numeracy                 | 18% (2002)<br>33.3% (2004) | 0% (2003)<br>2.5% (2005)   |   |

**Table 5: Examination Statistics for grades 8-11  
Pass/Fail/Progressed/Condoned in Grades 8 – 11 (composite)**

| <b>Grades 8-11 Progression (2006)</b> |                      |                  |                     |                     |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|                                       | <b>Vredenburg HS</b> | <b>Weston HS</b> | <b>Velddrift HS</b> | <b>Hopefield HS</b> |
| Learners progressed                   | 801                  | 537              | 112                 | 428                 |
| Learners condoned                     | 0                    | 326              | 25                  | 14                  |
| Learners failed                       | 152                  | 432              | 34                  | 45                  |

**Table 6: Vredenburg High School - Senior Certificate Results**

| Year | No of learners | Pass % | Endorsement % |
|------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 2004 | 164            | 98.8%  | 47.6%         |
| 2005 | 159            | 98.1%  | 42.8%         |
| 2006 | 138            | 99.3%  | 45.7%         |

**Table 7: Weston Senior Secondary School - Senior Certificate Results**

| Year | No of learners | Pass % | Endorsement % |
|------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 2004 | 226            | 85.2%  | 12.1%         |
| 2005 | 263            | 77.2%  | 7.6%          |
| 2006 | 254            | 78.8%  | 12.0%         |

**Table 8: Hopefield High School - Senior Certificate Results**

| Year | No of learners | Pass % | Endorsement % |
|------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 2004 | 40             | 100%   | 15%           |
| 2005 | 54             | 100%   | 16.7%         |
| 2006 | 34             | 100%   | 23.5%         |

**Table 9: Velddrift High School - Senior Certificate Results**

| Year | No of learners | Pass % | Endorsement % |
|------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 2004 | 21             | 100%   | 19            |
| 2005 | 21             | 100%   | 14            |
| 2006 | 17             | 82.4%  | 12            |

The TT is conscious of the fact that the pass/failure rate cannot be ascribed to shortcomings in the delivery of the curriculum only, The delivery of the curriculum happens within a social context and the social context from which most of our learners come, does not provide fertile ground for curriculum delivery. Most of our children come from poor socio-economic conditions characterised by unemployment and lack of recreational facilities. In these communities one may find lack of discipline and lack of quality parental support. These communities get increasingly exposed to drugs and violence.

6.6 The infra-structure usage at the four schools, is as follows:

**Table 10: Learner Capacity at High School**

| SCHOOL                  | CAPACITY | 2007 ENROLMENT |
|-------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Vredenburg HS           | 1250     | 1013           |
| Weston HS               | 1600?    | 1696           |
| Hopefield HS (Combined) | 525      | 414            |
| Velddrift HS (Combined) | 210      | 176            |

6.7. The school fee structures for the respective schools are as follows:

**Table 11: Annual School fees at High Schools**

| <b>SCHOOL</b>           | <b>ANNUAL SCHOOL FEE</b> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Vredenburg HS           | R 3 500 p/a              |
| Weston HS               | R 380 p/a                |
| Hopefield HS (Combined) | R4 600 p/a               |
| Velddrift HS (Combined) | R 2 600 p/a              |

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The TT has attempted to divide the recommendations into two categories, viz. an institutional management and governance category and a curriculum category.

### **INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

- 7.1. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) should at all times be pro-active in assisting parents with the placement of learners. The WCED should not delay the process of placement of learners until an emotional situation develops within the community. The delay in placing learners suitably at schools makes it easier for the community, being emotional, to ascribe the exclusion of their children to a myriad of other reasons. If schools exclude learners for whatever reasons, the WCED should confront and mediate the situation immediately. At the same time the parents should be encouraged to apply early to schools for admission. The MEC reminds parents each year that they should apply timeously for admission to schools.
- 7.2. Some intensive work on diversity management is recommended. The TT wants to recommend that a service provider be appointed to deal with diversity management (with both learners and educators) at the four

schools. Monitoring mechanisms should be put in place to regularly evaluate progress.

Further, it recommends that future diversity management programmes be implemented at the beginning of each year when the new cohort of learners and teachers are admitted to the school (irrespective to which grade).

7.3. The TT recommends that diversity training should also be aimed at learners staying in hostels, e.g. the Hopefield HS Hostel.

7.4. Vredenburg High School must be submitted to a 'Discrimination Audit' – one similar to the one that has been recommended by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) in other similar cases. This exercise will help the school in more than one way:

7.4.1 The results of such audit can either confirm or reject the perceptions of racism that the community holds of the school; and

7.4.2 Whatever the results, it can be used as a point of departure for the school in terms of the nature and degree/intensity of diversity training programmes. The results can also serve as a baseline to measure/evaluate future progress on diversity management at the school.

7.5. The finalisation of the Provincial Education Provisioning Plan will have to address the problem of infrastructure utilisation. It cannot be left to SGB's or SMT's to manage this situation. Weston HS is overcrowded and numbers need to be managed down. An even spread of learners to all schools will have to be secured. The provincial Education Provisioning Plan will also have to address the issue of Language, seeing that little

provision is currently made for the accommodation of the increased growth of African learners within the boundaries of the municipal area.

- 7.6. The determination and collection of school fees is legally a School Governing Body (SGB) function. Neither the MEC nor the WCED has jurisdiction over this function.

However, the TT alerts SGB's to peg school fees at a level that is reasonable and affordable to the community. Furthermore, SGBs will have to follow the correct procedures to inform parents of their rights in terms of being able to apply to the SGB for full or partial exemption of these. Further, the availability of these exemption application forms, as well as the process and application dates must be properly and clearly communicated to parents. Parents must also be made aware that they can appeal to the Head of Education if they are not satisfied with the quantum of exemption granted to them by the SGB.

- 7.7. The EMDC: West Coast/Winelands must closely monitor the transport of learners through the Learner Transport Scheme (LTS). The arrival time of buses to schools must be properly recorded. If the community is aware that the bus is arriving late to pick up learners then such a matter should be reported immediately to the school. If required, steps need to be taken against any service provider (contractor) who does not comply to contract conditions.

## **CURRICULUM**

- 7.8. The high failure rate of entry level learners into high schools across the Saldanabay Municipal area, is a clear indication that most learners are unprepared for high school. Hence, certain strategies and interventions are necessary to remedy the situation. The EMDC needs to focus in

general on support for those who teach learners in primary schools and up to grade 9 in order to raise the level on which these learners are currently operating. The curriculum basis has to be established firmly. Therefore learners who are not yet capable of demonstrating the expected outcomes in literacy and numeracy at the completion of a grade should be allowed more time, especially in the early grades, with the condition that they need to be sufficiently supported at all times.

- 7.9. The Department/School Management Team (SMT) needs to ensure that teachers are adequately qualified when appointed for the grades they will be teaching. Curriculum advisors and circuit managers must also monitor whether teachers are ready to teach the grades assigned to them by the SMT. Further, intensified curriculum support training and development for primary teachers in general, but to grades 8 & 9 teachers specifically, is recommended. This training could be effected through the Cape Teaching Institute (CTI). This intervention of curriculum support training must be spread over a number of weeks. Teachers can be drawn to the CTI or support personnel from the CTI can move to the Saldanabay Municipal area to deliver the required training or support to teachers. Principals, through the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), should be held accountable for the application of new skills and knowledge by these trained/empowered teachers.
- 7.10. A curriculum team should visit each primary school in the municipal area at least once a term, depending on available capacity, to render support on assessment shortcomings in order to strengthen teachers' assessment skills.
- 7.11. One of the shortcomings identified by the Curriculum sub-team, is the lack of meaningful feedback to learners on projects and assignments. Learners must receive feedback on projects and assignments as a

remedial step to enable them to engage the teacher on the shortcomings of their projects and assignments. This feedback can serve as a valuable educational process, which will assist learners in their approach to ensuing projects or assignments. The WCED training and internal and external moderation processes could focus on supporting teachers in how to set and assess projects and assignments.

- 7.12. Thought should be given to the selection of lead teachers to put them through an assessment course, arranged by the curriculum directorate. These teachers can, on completion of the course, be used as mentor teachers in the Saldanabay Municipal area to assist and support other teachers with the difficulties of assessment.
- 7.13. Extra focus should be placed on the numeracy and literacy programmes at primary schools in the municipal area.
- 7.14. Strong emphasis should be placed on career guidance programmes, especially in grade 9. Learners should be alerted to other educational and career options after completion of grade 9. Learners must be made aware that there are numerous possibilities, which they can pursue in order to make a success of their lives. Career guidance will also serve as an extra motivation to excel in school.
- 7.15. The WCED will have to assess which methodologies to apply to validate the decision to make Weston High School a focus school for Technology. The currently overcrowded school provides not only a curriculum in Technology subjects, but also for the general curriculum (which could be followed in other surrounding high schools). The learner numbers at Weston HS must be managed down. Learners enrolled at Weston HS from surrounding towns, who follow a general curriculum, must be advised to attend the schools closest to their homes. Thought should



further be given to the idea of separating the two streams (technical and general) at Weston HS because the infrastructure at the school favours such suggestion. This move will allow space and opportunity for the Technical focus section to come into its own right. A contingency plan should be drawn up by the school indicating an adjustment admission policy for the school, linked to expected outcomes for the focus areas and how subjects will be phased out parallel to learner movement to other schools.

7.16. Support to schools in the area is something to be reviewed and to be managed differently. The re-design process of the WCED will definitely help in securing better support to schools and teachers on the ground. Support to schools and teachers implies closer monitoring of the management of schools and of the effective and efficient delivery of the curriculum.

7.17. The WCED should consider the establishment of a dedicated “Proto Team” (consisting of various specialists) to facilitate the proposed implementation, support and monitoring to these schools and ensure that the recommendations are implemented.

## **COMMUNITY CO-OPERATION**

7.18. A strategy needs to be developed to assist parents and empower them to properly support their children. The EMDC can, in consultation with the St Helenabay Crisis Committee, mobilise the community in order to start a community education support initiative. The following could be elements of this intervention strategy with parents:

7.18.1 To alert parents to the importance that discipline plays in the education process,

7.18.2 To help parents develop and support study programmes for their children. Assistance should also be rendered to parents to provide an environment at home that is conducive for learning. If the desired conducive environment at home cannot be accommodated, the strategy should be to get a place within the community (community centre/church/school) where learners can congregate to do schoolwork under supervision.

7.18.3 To provide career guidance to parents and to the high number of learners who have not completed their formal schooling – this could take the form of exposure to the study options at FET Colleges, etc.

7.18.4 To expose parents across the board to the same kinds of diversity activities, as the schools will be experiencing – the kinds of tensions being talked about in the public meetings are real and need sensitive attention.

7.19. Special focus should be placed on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. A strong local emphasis on Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centres and Early Childhood Development (ECD) could help with a strong emphasis on family literacy.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The Task Team further proposes that, after the MEC has approved the Report, the content of the Report to be shared with the relevant stakeholders, i.e. the schools, their SGBs and the Laingville Education Crisis Committee. The EMDC must set up processes to admit learners (2008) to schools timeously to prevent a repeat of this year's occurrence. Close monitoring of the recommendations, if implemented, remain key to the success thereof. A special team to monitor implementation is strongly suggested.

## ANNEXURE A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

### INVESTIGATION INTO EDUCATION PROVISIONING IN THE SALDANHA MUNICIPAL AREA

#### 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

MEC Mr. Cameron Dugmore attended a community meeting in Laingville community hall, St Helena Bay on Sunday, 21 January 2005. The MEC explained to the meeting that he had agreed to attend this meeting, though on short notice, to acquaint him with the situation within the community regarding complaints of school-going children not attending school at the beginning of the school year 2007.

A local grouping in St Helena Bay, calling themselves the “Education Crisis Committee” highlighted this problem by organizing the Sunday meeting.

Parents, Learners, Teachers, Principals and Senior Officials of the WCED attended this meeting. The Local MP Mr. Maxwell Moss, MPL Mrs. Mathilda Ventura, Local Government Councilors Abdol and Mgoqi and representatives, also attended the meeting from the Media.

Parents and Learners were given an opportunity to inform the MEC about the problems experienced. The Local Education Crisis Committee also shared their concerns with the Minister regarding the wider scope of the problem. Aspects included:

- Concerns about perceived “racism” at Vredenburg High

- Large numbers of learners from certain areas not progressing/passing at that school
- Difficulty getting into the school of choice
- Varying fee structures
- Transport issues
- Learners dropping out of school – very poor throughput to Grade 12.
- Language issues

Although the majority of concerns raised were about Vredenburg High School, the concern was also more widespread and related to education and opportunity in the area in general.

In response the MEC announced the following:

1. That he acknowledges the concerns from the community and agrees to an immediate intervention to address the community concerns.
2. That prioritization should be given to the West Coast in developing an Integrated Education Development Plan. This plan needs to address issues of Transformation, Language Policy including Multilingualism and the starting of a process to investigate the feasibility of a separate high school for St Helena Bay.
3. The appointment of an ad hoc Task Team by the MEC to:
  - Investigate, report and offer recommendations on complaints mentioned by members of the audience regarding allegations of racism at Vredenburg High School. This Task Team to also investigate previous complaints made by parents to Education Authorities (e.g. Circuit Manager) in the area.
  - Report on the process of integration of schools since 2005.

- This Task Team will also investigate the academic progress of students coming from St Helena Bay Primary that attended Vredenburg High School in 2005 and 2006.
- Evaluate all processes re academic progress e.g. interventions in assisting students. etc.
- Advise on solutions regarding school fees in the region

Note: It was agreed that the finalisation of the TOR would rest with the MEC.

## **2. MEMBERS OF THE TASK TEAM**

2.1. The MEC indicated that the Task Team would be constituted as follows:

- Chairperson – Mr. Archie Lewis, Advisor to the MEC
- Mr. John Lyners – DDG Operational Management
- Ms Sindi Shayi – Chief Director: Rural
- Mr. Jannie Beukes, West Coast Winelands EMDC Director
- Ms Anne Schlebusch - Office of the MEC Transformation and Language
- Ms Jenny Rault-Smith – Director Curriculum Development
- Head Office Curriculum Advisor - Languages
- Representatives from the School Governing Bodies – Hopefield High school, Velddrift high School, Weston High school, Vredenburg High School
- Two (2) members of the Local Education Crisis Committee St Helena Bay.
- 1 Parent
- 1 Councilor from Local Government
- 1 Representative from each of the teacher unions as observers

- 2.2. The Minister has the authority to include any other members onto the Task Team as he deems fit.
- 2.3. The Task Team has the mandate to call upon the expertise of any WCED official in the execution of its mandate.
- 2.4. The Task Team may also appoint administrative staff in support of its work.

### **3. WORKING PRINCIPLES and GUIDELINES**

- 3.1. MEC to formally inform and ask all relevant parties to participate and cooperate.
- 3.2. Process to be transparent and open.
- 3.3. This is an ad hoc committee.
- 3.4. Ensure no victimization. Investigations to be conducted in the spirit of promoting reconciliation and appreciation of diversity.
- 3.5. Happen within the laws of the country, amongst others the Constitution, the Labour Relations Act, SA Schools' Act and other relevant legislation
- 3.6. May call on other bodies to assist the process e.g. SAPS, Human Rights Commission etc.
- 3.7. The media will be excluded during aspects of the process of investigation to prevent victimization and possible legal repercussion, except in the case of public hearings.

- 3.8. The Task Team will report to the MEC and has no jurisdiction to liaise with the media, unless the MEC directs otherwise.

#### **4. SCOPE OF WORK**

- 4.1. Task team to investigate the situation at Vredenburg High School where learners from St Helena Bay complained of alleged racism and report to the minister with recommendations.
- 4.2. Investigate and advise on school fees at relevant schools (in the region).
- 4.3. Look at utilization of available space and provisioning issues within the relevant region, including learner transport and its effectiveness.
- 4.4. Ensure that any learner still not in school, is suitably placed as soon as possible.
- 4.5. Review pass and failure rates of Grade 10 students for the period 2005 – 2006 at the Vredenburg High School, with special reference to the learners from the Laingville area.
- 4.6. Review relevant teacher and learner portfolios at Vredenburg High School.
- 4.7. Expand this brief by process of due negotiation should emerging evidence indicate the need or, conversely, condense the brief should this be indicated.

## **5. TIME FRAMES**

- 5.1. It is suggested that the process commence as soon as possible and that re-assessment of relevant teacher and learner portfolios are completed within two weeks of commencement of duty.
- 5.2. The entire process to be completed by no later than the end of March 2007, subject to the fact that the MEC and the Task Team have satisfied themselves that it has fulfilled its mandate sufficiently.

## **6. SECRETARIAT AND SUPPORT and other resources needed**

- 6.1. No remuneration for members of the Task Team, other than expenses incurred in terms of existing guidelines and policy.
- 6.2. WCED to provide infrastructure, secretarial services and resources. This will be organised by the office of Mr. John Lyners.

## **7. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGIES TO BE EMPLOYED DURING THE PERIOD**

- 7.1. Protection against victimisation
- 7.2. MEC office to provide legal advisory capacity to safeguard the process.

## **8. DISSOLUTION OF TASK TEAM, FINAL REPORTING AND FURTHER ACTION.**

The Task Team can make recommendations, which the MEC may or may not accept. The MEC will indicate the dissolution of the Task Team upon completion of their duties.



## **ANNEXURE B: RESULTS FROM CURRICULUM INVESTIGATIONS**

### **WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT DIRECTORATE: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

#### **MINISTERIAL INVESTIGATION: ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL ASSESSMENT & STANDARDISED TESTS**

**30 MARCH 2007**

Grade 3, 6 and 8 tests are standardised tests intended to provide a systemic picture and enable WCED to identify schools where learners are reaching the expected level of performance. Progression from Grade R to Grade 8 and promotion from Grade 9 to 11 takes place based on the assessment of the teachers at the school.

#### **ST HELENABAAI INTERMEDIERE SKOOL**

Grade 3 tests: Numeracy results at Grade 3 level have been average in terms of provincial standards. The 35% pass rate of 2002 showed a significant improvement to 46.2% in 2004. All learners could complete all the work at Grade 1 level.

Likewise literacy results showed an excellent improvement from 25% in 2002 to 41% in 2004. Again, all learners were literate at Grade 1 level.

Grade 6 tests: Numeracy - the good work at Grade 3 level is not evident in the Grade 6 results. 0% learners were numerate at Grade 6 level in 2003. This improved very slightly to 2,5% in 2005 and only 17.5% of the Grade 6 learners were numerate at Grade 5 level.

Literacy results showed a substantial improvement from 12.8% in 2003 to 40% in 2005.

Grade 8 tests: In 2006 learners attained a pass rate of 19.33% in Mathematics and 26.64% in Afrikaans Home Language.

### **HOPEFIELD PRIMARY**

Grade 3 tests: Numeracy results have been very poor – 18% pass in 2002 and 15.4% pass in 2004. In 2004, 38.5% of Grade 3 learners were unable to answer any questions, i.e. they were below Grade 1 level in Grade 3. Generally learners were unable to do divisions of fractions and could not do problem-solving.

Literacy results showed a pass rate of just 10% in 2002, rising to 33.6% in 2004. 10.3% of the Grade 3 learners are not literate at Grade 1 level.

Grade 6 tests: Numeracy results in Grade 6 present a shocking picture. In both 2003 and 2005, 0% of Grade 6 learners could achieve at Grade 6 level. Only 5% of Grade 3 learners could pass at Grade 4 and 5 level.

Literacy achievement has decreased from 30% in 2003 to 22.5% in 2005.

### **NOORDHOEK PRIMARY**

Grade 3 tests: Numeracy was at a low level of 18% in 2002 but improved significantly to 33.3% in 2004. Just 5.1% of the learners in Grade 3 could not achieve at Grade 1 level.

Literacy at the school remains weak, having increased by only .6% from 25% in 2002 to 25.6% in 2004. 2.6% of the grade 3 learners are not literate at Grade 1 level.

Grade 6 tests: Numeracy results at Grade 6 level improved from 0% learners achieving at Grade 6 level in 2003 to 2.5% achieving at Grade 6 level in 2005. Only 5% of Grade 3 learners could achieve at Grade 5 level. Literacy results are better. 15% of the Grade 6 learners were literate at Grade 6 level in 2003. By 2005, 25% of Grade 6 learners were literate at this level.

## **VREDENBURG HIGH SCHOOL**

Grade 8 tests: In 2006 a pass rate of 52.13% was attained in Mathematics, 45.3% in Afrikaans Home Language, 43.57% in English Home language and 29.92% in isiXhosa Home Language.

Grade 8 – 11 progression/ promotions: In 2006, 801 learners were progressed, none passed with condonation while 152 did not make the grade, 81 at grade 10 level.

Senior Certificate: Pass rate:

| Year | No of learners | Pass % | Endorsement % |
|------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 2004 | 164            | 98.8%  | 47.6%         |
| 2005 | 159            | 98.1%  | 42.8%         |
| 2006 | 138            | 99.3%  | 45.7%         |

## **WESTON SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Grade 8 tests: In 2006, a pass rate of 30.56% was attained in Mathematics and 37.77% in Afrikaans Home Language.

Grade 8 – 11 progression and promotion: 537 learners progressed/ were promoted while a further 326 learners were promoted with condonation. 432 learners were not promoted, 243 of these in Grade 10.

Senior Certificate:

| Year | No of learners | Pass % | Endorsement % |
|------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 2004 | 226            | 85.2%  | 12.1%         |
| 2005 | 263            | 77.2%  | 7.6%          |
| 2006 | 254            | 78.8%  | 12.0%         |

**HOPEFIELD HIGH SCHOOL**

Grade 8 tests: In 2006 a pass rate of 48.97% was attained in Mathematics, 40.11% in Afrikaans Home Language and 57.13% in English Home Language.

Progression & promotion Gr. 1 to Gr. 11: 428 learners were promoted at the end of 2006, 14 were promoted with condonation and 45 learners had to repeat the year. This includes 19 learners in Grade 10 who did not pass.

Senior Certificate:

| Year | No of learners | Pass % | Endorsement % |
|------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| 2004 | 40             | 100%   | 15%           |
| 2005 | 54             | 100%   | 16.7%         |
| 2006 | 34             | 100%   | 23.5%         |