



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



STRATEGY TO UNIVERSALISE ACCESS TO QUALITY ECD (EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT)

The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people

Strategy to Universalise Access to Quality ECD (Early Childhood Development)

PLAY, LEARN AND LIVE...

First published in 2021

Enquiries:

Limpopo Department of Education
Postal Address Private Bag X9489, Polokwane, 0700
Physical Address 113 Biccard Street, Polokwane, 0700

Telephone (015) 290 7702
Facsimile (015) 297 0885
Web address www.edu.limpopo.gov.za

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ACRONYMS

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CES	Chief Education Specialist
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DCES	Deputy Chief Education Specialist
DoH	Department of Health
DSD	Department of Social Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFAL	English First Additional Level
IEA	Institute of Economics Affairs
INTERSEN	Intermediate and Senior
LDOE	Limpopo Department of Education
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MEC	Member of Executive Council
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
REQV	Relative Education Qualification Value
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SOPA	State of the Province Address
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

GLOSSARY

COMPETENCES	Set of demonstrable skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to perform a task
ECD	<i>Developmental period from conception to 9 years - a critical stage to develop lifelong learning skills among children</i>
ECD Function Shift	<i>Migration of the ECD function from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Basic Education. This migration is intended to enable the transit of children from home to formal schooling within one, seamless sector.</i>
Foundation Phase	<i>First phase of formal schooling and covers teaching and learning from Grade R to Grade 3</i>
Grade R	<i>Reception year before Grade 1 for the four year olds turning five by 30 June in the year of admission</i>
Grade RR	<i>A year before reception year for the three year olds turning four by 30 June in the year of admission</i>
Life skills	<i>The name of the Foundation Phase Curriculum Programme to equip learners with personal, well-being, creative arts and physical education competences</i>
Literacy	<i>The name of the Foundation Phase Curriculum Programme to equip learners with reading for meaning, relevant vocabulary, alphabetic knowledge and phonological awareness competences</i>
Numeracy	<i>The name of the Foundation Phase Curriculum Programme to equip learners with number properties, number operations, measurement, algebra, geometry and data analysis competences.</i>
Play-based learning	<i>A carefully selected practice or pedagogic method that utilizes play to develop Life Skills, Literacy and Numeracy competences</i>
Practitioners	<i>Appointees who are temporarily appointed to teach pre-Grade 1 learners and receive stipends</i>
School readiness	<i>A measure of how prepared the learner is to succeed in a formal school. The preparedness of the learner to succeed in a formal school is holistic and covers physical, social, psychological, cognitive and emotional readiness.</i>

FOREWORD



In his 2020 State of the Nation (SONA) address, President Cyril *Ramaphosa* identified the development of appropriate skills and capabilities as significant contributors towards inclusive socio-economic growth. One of the key contributors towards such appropriate skills and capabilities is a strong ECD (Early Childhood Development) foundation and effective early school learning.

Premier *Chupu Mathabatha* amplified the President's call to mainstream ECD by appealing to the Limpopo Department of Education to focus on laying of a solid educational foundation for all children.

In my 2020/2021 Budget Vote Speech, I indicated that ECD is one of the six priorities for the Education Sector and finds expression in the Education Sector Plan "Action Plan to 2024, Towards the Realization of Schooling 2030". This ECD Strategy has been developed to achieve the following sector goals:

- a. Universalise access to Grade R and RR by 2030 and 2035 respectively, and
- b. Ensure that all Foundation Phase learners exit Grade 3 with enhanced life, enumerating and reading competences.

In order to achieve these goals, this ECD Strategy is underpinned by the following six thrusts:

1. Early identification of possible barriers to learning
2. Improvement of literacy and numeracy levels
3. Promotion of use of play-based learning
4. Provision of ECD infrastructure
5. Optimal resource provision of ECD programmes and
6. Expanded training of ECD practitioners and educators

We envisage that the implementation of activities in each of the six thrusts will lead towards improved number of learners exiting the Foundation Phase with life skills as well as improved abilities to enumerate and read for meaning. Such a foundation will stand learners in good stead when they proceed to higher grades and ultimately exit schooling with requisite competences for lifelong learning and sustainable livelihoods.

I invite all officials, teachers, ECD practitioners, learners, school governing bodies, parents, ECD centres, community members, sister departments, teacher unions and professional bodies to work with Government in ensuring that this ECD Strategy is efficiently and effectively implemented, monitored and supported.

MEC for Education in Limpopo

Ms Polly Boshelo

Introduction

The ECD has been identified as one of the six priorities of the Education Sector for the sixth administration. The prioritization of the ECD in the Sector plan is informed by the President's State of the Nation Addresses and the Executive Authorities Budget Vote speeches.

The reason for the prioritization of the ECD is based on the urgent need to get the basics of education right. These basics can only be developed adequately in the early learning phases of schooling in order to put in motion efforts to improve education system's outcomes from Pre Grade R to Grade 12.

Our meaning of ECD

Early Childhood Development (ECD) in education refers to the developmental period from birth to 9 years. This developmental period is a critical stage to develop lifelong learning skills among toddlers and young learners. The Grades that this ECD Strategy will focus on during the sixth administration are from Grade RR (that is two years below Grade 1) to Grade 3.

Various research studies argue that effective ECD provisioning does not begin when the child is born but at the onset of conception (UNICEF May 2017, White Paper Number 5, DBE). Success for early development begins with parent education on nutrition and behavior that is geared towards giving birth to potentially healthy babies with opportunities to develop and reach full potential (Education White Paper 5; Guidelines for Maternity care in South Africa 2007). Neurological Science Studies have revealed that what happens before a child is born, has a direct impact on brain development.

Parents of all social backgrounds need to be educated on maternal health. Health and lifestyles that do not support positive living and behavior may pose risks to the unborn babies leading to difficult provision of ECD programmes and interventions. The collaboration with other departments, especially the Departments of Health and Social Development, is key towards effective ECD management.

The ability of children to thrive and learn is developed way before they approach formal institutions of learning or play. The following extract from UNICEF put this matter succinctly:

"The first 1000 days of life - between a woman's pregnancy and her child's second birthday - is a unique period of opportunity when the foundations for

optimum health and development across the lifespan are established. The right nutrition and care during the 1000 day window influences not only whether the child will survive, but also his or her ability to grow, learn and rise out of poverty. As such, it contributes to society's long-term health, stability and prosperity". (UNICEF May 2017 "First 1000 days The Critical Window to ensure that Children thrive).

The above quote emphasizes the fact that learners would have developed at home and centres before they commence with formal schooling. The development involves a strong partnership that extends beyond Government Department to include Non-Governmental Organisations, philanthropists and business with an interest in Education.

When learners enter the formal Foundation Phase (that is Grade R-3), they build on the foundation laid at home and other institutions such as pre-schools, crèches and care centres. The Foundation Phase thus forms the last part of the ECD and seeks to strengthen foundational learning that will hold learners in good stead when they proceed to higher grades.

The current ECD landscape

According to research studies (PIRLS, 2016 and NEEDU, 2018), learners in the early grades are not able to read for meaning and comprehend what they have read in their home languages by grade 3. The inability to read and comprehend in one's own/home language is a barrier to read for learning and access information beyond the Home Language, as the Home Language *is a critical enabler in reading and learning other languages and subjects.*

The Home Language, which serves as a proverbial door to other languages, especially where it is also the language of teaching and learning (LoLT), must be sufficiently developed in the learner, and adequate resources should be provided as a critical enabler to creating a rich language experience for the learner.

The early introduction of other additional languages, whether at first additional level or second additional level, does not provide enough time for a rich and robust home or first language experience which should be a bridge to other languages.

Numeracy levels are also very low as numeracy, especially in ECD, is closely linked to Literacy and Life-Skills. Children in their early childhood emerge from a world or environment that is not divided into Language, Mathematics and Life-Skills. They emerge from a world that integrates all of these subjects from the time they wake up to the time they go to sleep. There is a need to teach the early learner to realize the world as a set of related and interconnected systems which operate in concert with one another and with each other. The infusion of indigenous forms of knowing in Mathematics which are everyday practices in every home, like estimation (used in every day practices such as cooking, cleaning, building, etc.), elements of sets, counting, prediction, measurement and shapes should be used as a base to transition learner's experiences from what they

know to that which they need to learn. African communities have been and continue to keep livestock and use counting to determine if all are back in the kraal. Many examples can be given about children who use different mathematical formulae to survive in their indigenous settings.

The ineffective utilization of the child's immediate environment (a child's lived experience as a resource for learning and teaching) creates a barrier towards the achievement of early learning outcomes. The teaching of perceptive knowledge, skills and values in the early years is closely linked to the child's immediate environment and background especially in reading, learning to discriminate between sounds, textures, stimuli and learning to explore the space through interaction with others. This forms part of the concepts that can be taught within the immediate environment of the child by exploring different resources such as trees, grass, leaves, listening to different animal sounds, insects, etc. and the rich cultural experiences which form the basis for vocabulary expansion.

Learners can begin to value the importance of every organism in the value chain; how the worm adds value to the soil, to the bird, and the bird to our rich and beautiful nature and how this is linked to food production.

In summary:

1. Many learners enter the formal schooling system under-prepared
2. The Literacy and Numeracy levels of learners in the ECD are low by the standards set by the Department of Basic Education.
3. The yawning gap between Grades 3 and 4 is revealed by many national and international research reports and affect learning performance in the INTERSEN (Intermediate and Senior) phases.
4. Parental involvement has not been systematically included as a form of meaningful support to children's educational development.

The ECD Strategy: Why?

Given the above-mentioned challenges and shortcomings, this ECD Strategy has been designed to develop adequate foundational learning competences to sustain learning performance in higher grades and enhance lifelong skills for sustainable livelihoods.

Goals of the ECD Strategy

This ECD Strategy has been developed to achieve the following sector goals:

- All Grades R and RR learners will be in formal schools and registered ECD centres by 2030 and 2035 respectively; and
- All Foundation Phase learners will exit Grade 3 with enhanced life, enumerating and reading competences.

Goal 1: Universalise access to Grades RR and R

The National Development Plan has identified access to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) as an important step to lay a solid foundation for further learning. The President, in his State of the Nation address of 2019, also indicated the need to introduce two years of compulsory ECD for all children before they enter Grade 1.

In order to actualise this intention, the LDoE will use this ECD Strategy to facilitate the universalization of access to Grades RR and R in public primary schools and ECD centres during the sixth term of administration. It will do so by expanding a pool of Grade R practitioners with a qualification at NQF Level 6 and above, and ensure their appointments in the schooling system. This will build a sustainable pool of educators needed to achieve the goals of this ECD Strategy.

Goal 2: All Foundation Phase learners will exit Grade 3 with enhanced life, enumerating and reading competences

The improvement in the performance of the education system relies heavily on the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Phase. The Grade 3-4 gap will need to be narrowed if the performance decline between these two grades is to be arrested.

This ECD Strategy will be able to achieve goal 2 if, among others, it protects the Foundation Phase from a plethora of uncoordinated and, sometimes, conflicting programmes introduced by different players.

In order to unearth talent and potential, this ECD Strategy would continue to use competitions among learners. More importantly, it will promote the use of home languages to facilitate learning of languages, mathematics and life skills.

Thrusts of the ECD strategy

The Limpopo ECD Strategy seeks to achieve its goals by focusing on the following six thrusts:

1. Early identification of possible barriers to learning
2. Improvement of literacy and numeracy levels
3. Promotion of use of play-based learning
4. Provision of ECD infrastructure
5. Optimal resource provision of ECD programmes and
6. Expanded training of ECD practitioners and educators

The measurable targets for these thrusts are included in the section labelled “Indicators of Success”.

Early identification of possible barriers to learning

In order to give every child an opportunity to develop to their optimal potential, as envisaged in White Paper 5 on ECD; every child must be screened to identify possible barriers to learning. The SIAS Policy provides guidance on the management of the screening of learners with the intention of identifying learning barriers that will need to be addressed at an early stage.

Improvement of literacy and numeracy levels

In order to ensure all learners read, write and enumerate with meaning and understanding by the age of 10, learners need to use the Home Language for a period of at least six years before switching to another language of learning. Children acquire the additional language better if their Home Language is well developed.

The ECD Phase will strengthen the implementation of Home Language instruction so as to give learners an opportunity to build appropriate abilities to learn and read with comprehension. In doing so, it will also promote the teaching of numeracy and mathematics in their home languages. This will go a long way towards building sustainable capabilities for further learning once they exit the Foundation Phase.

Promotion of use of play-based learning

Play-based learning foregrounds the skills needed for Literacy, Numeracy and Life–Skills. It is during play that the language competences of children emerge and develop. The muscles involved in play prepare children to develop other motor skills that will be needed later in life.

The value of play is such that learning happens in a non-judgmental atmosphere, with blurred age, race, ethnic and gender differences. The teacher who teaches play can be both a player and inquirer in the process of play. Probing during play sharpens young learners' cognitive and emotional skills, improves their functioning and accelerates their physical, cognitive, psychological, emotional and social development.

The attention span of young learners is such that activities need to be varied to avoid monotony.

In short, play-based learning ensures the variance in activities which provide a stimulus for impactful learning.

Provision of ECD infrastructure

The appropriate and suitable infrastructure for the birth to 5 cohort of children/learners is unevenly spread out in different institutions in the communities. All centres offering early childhood services will need to register with the Basic Education Department. Where necessary, services for Quintiles 1-3 children will be subsidised. Such registration will

ensure the meeting of basic requirement needed to ensure suitability of the centre for young children and the people involved in their early learning and development.

Creative ways can be explored to optimally avail such institutions to all communities. Merged schools are but one form of infrastructure that can be converted into early learning centres or pre-primary schools.

In public schools, early learning centres could be built away from other classes and fenced with their own ablution facilities.

There will be a need for each education district to build a model ECD Centre which will be established as a benchmark of an ideal ECD centre.

Optimal resource provisioning of resources of ECD programmes

The ECD resourcing covers, among others, human and physical resources.

The provision of more human resources focuses on competences that will be required to roll out many curriculum programmes that are continually introduced, trimmed, re-organised and adjusted as a response to COVID-19. In the classroom, teacher developed resources will continue to be one of the key activities in ECD.

The physical resources cover, in the main, outdoor equipment and manipulatives which promote play-based activities. The department will continue to strengthen and secure partnerships to resource libraries and avail outdoor resources in the form of jungle gyms.

The natural environment remains a very useful resource in early learning development, including books and toys.

Expanded training of ECD practitioners and educators

If learners are to develop sustainable life skills as well as enumerating and reading competences, they need to be taught by a capable and qualified workforce. The Pre Grade R practitioners need to be in possession of a recognised qualification and also trained in National Curriculum Framework for birth to 4 year-olds. Currently the activity of Pre Grade R training is located elsewhere outside the dictates of the organizational structure. This will need to be aligned to the activities of this ECD Strategy once the function shift has been concluded. The details of the ECD function-shift are discussed later in this Strategy.

The Department will not only continue to expand the pool of Grade R practitioners with requisite higher education institutions but will ensure their institutionalization in the schooling system. The creation of Grade R posts in the system is one way to be explored by this ECD strategy to ensure expansion of a pool of ECD practitioners and educators in the schooling system.

Create integrated ECD sector with potential to enhance foundational learning competences

In order to achieve the goals of this ECD Strategy, there will be a need to synergise efforts by the Departments of Social Development and Education as well as the creation of a seamless ECD infrastructure and resource provisioning.

In his 2019 State of the Nation Address, the President expressed the need for the migration of the ECD function from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Basic Education. In order to expedite this ECD migration, this ECD Strategy will ensure that the centre-based and non-centre based ECD programmes are registered with the appropriate institution/s with the view to ensuring that all Grade R learners are in schools by 2030.

The migration of Grade RR learners located in more than 3000 ECD centres is expected to be concluded by 2035. This ECD Strategy seeks to use the terms of the sixth administration to ensure that the necessary building blocks are in place which include:

- Promulgation of the necessary legislation,
- Registration of the institutions that will rollout ECD programmes,
- Funding,
- Resourcing and
- Training of Practitioners and educators to teach learners in ECD programmes.

Indicators of Success for the ECD Strategy

Figure 2 provides a high level set of indicators of success against which the successful implementation of the ECD Strategy will be measured.

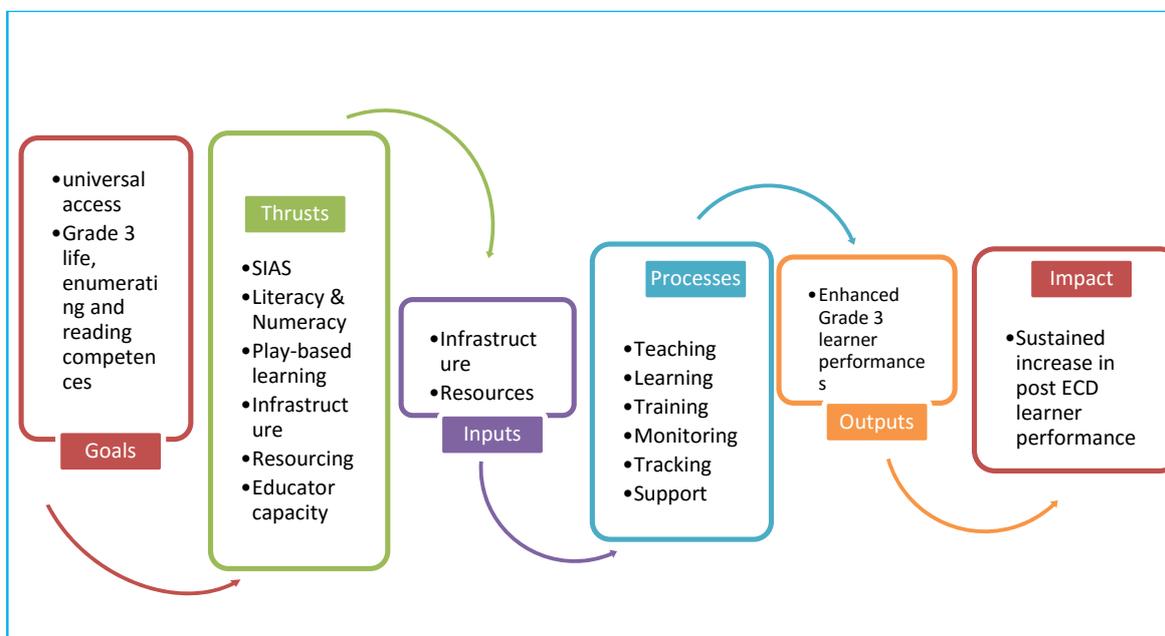


Figure 1: The diagrammatic representation of the ECD Strategy indicators of success

The high level indicators of success enunciated in **Figure 2** above are elaborated in the following sections.

Input indicators: Infrastructure and resources

The input indicators outline the resources and infrastructure needed to create a physical environment enabling efficient and effective delivery of the ECD Strategy. The tangible deliverables for this indicator are provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Tangible deliverables for input indicators

Thrusts of the ECD Strategy	Indicators of success
Provision of ECD infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equipment (including outdoor equipment, toys and toy libraries) [See approved allocations in the Annual Performance and Operational Plans] and ▪ LTSM¹ (reading materials, reading technologies, stationery, text-books and interactive media) [Approved allocations are captured in the Annual Performance and Operational Plans]

¹ LTSM = Learning and Teaching Support Materials

Optimal resource provision of ECD programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optimal funding for the institutionalisation of two new grades below Grade 1 (the DBE is engaging Treasury on the matter). ▪ The proposed allocations based on baseline are human resources, especially Grades RR and R practitioners (the formula to be implemented will be guided by the framework agreed to by the DBE and National Treasury)
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Process indicators: Activities to optimise learning

The process indicators outline routine activities needed to be taken to ensure the delivery of the ECD Strategy is rolled out smoothly. The tangible deliverables for this indicator are provided in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Tangible deliverables for the process indicators

Elements of the ECD Strategy	Indicators of success
Early identification of possible barriers to learning	Increased number of records and reports of early identification of barriers to learning
Improvement of literacy and numeracy levels	Increased learner participation in language and reading competitions
Promotion of use of play-based learning	The play-based methodologies are effectively used - including coding skills, robotics and indigenous games
Expanded training of ECD practitioners and educators	Throughput rate for training of Grade R practitioners

Output indicators: Learning gains after Grade 3

The output indicators outline tangible deliverables to be attained after reaching the milestones outlined in the ECD Strategy. The tangible deliverables for this indicator are provided in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Tangible deliverables for output indicators

Thrusts of the ECD Strategy	Indicators of success
Early identification of possible barriers to learning	Increased number of learners with barriers showing learner performance improvements
Improvement of literacy and numeracy levels	Increased learner performance in language and reading competitions 60% of learners in Grade 3 are able to read for meaning and infer from text 40% of Grade 3 learners to obtain more than 50% in Mathematics implemented

Promotion of use of play-based learning	44% of ECD subjects use play-based learning to promote and lay a solid foundation for science, technical and technology competences
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Impact/outcome indicator:

The main outcome indicate for the ECD Strategy is the sustained increase in the 'production' of high performing learners in grades beyond the Foundation Phase.

Implementing the ECD Strategy

The detailed information on the implementation of the ECD Strategy will be included in the Departmental Annual Performance Plans and Operational Plans. Such Plans outline activities per year, financial and human resources needed to roll out the activities, clear roles and responsibilities of different players and stakeholders in the delivery of activities and measurable targets puts per year.

Exploiting Opportunities

The ECD strategy will maximise and strengthen its efforts to achieve its outputs and impact indicators by:

- Utilising information from the Curriculum Coverage and Assessment Baseline reports to address identified difficult topics in its tuition interventions;
- Using PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and diagnostic reports on (inter) national assessments to address identified shortcomings and gaps;
- Integrating the Provincial ECD (Early Childhood Plan) Strategy into the district-based and school-based improvement plans.
- Exploiting the enabling political-legal space to accelerate the implementation of the Strategy to Universalise Access to ECD.

Key players

Stakeholders and role-players

The following are key stakeholders without whom the rollout of the Limpopo Strategy to Universalise Access ECD Strategy will be poorer:

- Treasury and the Departments of Social Development, Health and Basic Education
- Education Labour Relations Council
- Labour organisations
- Professional Bodies and Associations
- Non-Governmental and Community-based Organisations
- Parents
- Donors

- Sponsors

Technical support organisations

The following organisations will provide the necessary technical support required to efficiently and effectively roll out the ECD Strategy:

Table 4: Technical support to achieve ECD Strategy's impact

Name	Interest	Department's interest	Impact
Molteno	Grade R Programme	Improvement of schooling readiness and Play Based Learning	Learners being ready in Grade 1 teachers using multimedia resources to teach Grade R
Room to Read	Literacy Support in Home Language	Improved reading skills	Learners being able to read fluently by Grade 4 Provision of Libraries supporting the Read to Lead Campaign
Funda Wandu	Literacy support	Improved Language levels	Learners reading by Grade 4 Provision of Teacher assistants and resources for reading
NECT (National Education Collaboration Trust)	Support in Languages and Mathematics	Improved outcomes in Mathematics and Languages	Learners accessing science subjects in upper grades
Jolly Phonics	Literacy (E-FAL)	Improvement of proficiency in first additional languages	Learners being able to read in the Language of Learning and Teaching by age 10
The British Council	Teacher Development	Teachers are at the centre of the delivery of the ECD Strategy	Support in the immediate environment

Roles and responsibilities

The key Departments that will play an important role in building a strong ECD system are the Departments of Social Development, Health and (Basic) Education. The following are the roles expected to be played by the various Departments in executing the ECD Strategy.

- The Department of Social Development is expected to ensure universal availability and adequate quality of socio-cultural access to inclusive learning opportunities. The available infrastructure and resource capacities need to be used to support especially the zero-to-four year olds.
- The Department of Health is expected to provide health and nutrition support to infants and children in centre and non-centre facilities. Such support could take the forms of learning and play through health facilities and home visits to children at risk of poor development outcomes.
- The Municipalities also have a role in terms of infrastructure and support functions.

Provincial roles and responsibilities

The DBE, in collaboration with the LDoE, will focus on:

- The development of early learning curriculum;
- Facilitating continuity and synergy between early learning and Grade R;
- Integrating key social and health messages into the school curriculum;
- Facilitating seamless transfer of ECD functions (especially for Grades RR and R by 2035) from DSD to DBE; and
- Tracking and monitoring implementation of the ECD Strategy.

Key Deliverables for the next five years²:

The high-level key activities and deliverables that will be delivered by 2025 are captured in **Table 5** below.

Table 5: Five-year deliverables for the ECD Strategy

ECD Strategy Thrusts	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Early identification of possible barriers to learning	Field-test plans to strengthen application of SIAS in ECD	Integrate SIAS into district, circuit and school-based improvement plans	SIAS is mainstreamed in the Foundation Phase	Registration of learners with learning barriers is readily available and used to inform teaching and learning interventions
Improvement of literacy and numeracy levels	Programme to recover time lost during COVID-19 is implemented over a period of three years			Reviewed & modernised curriculum
	Implement generic trimmed ATPs	Implement trimmed ATPs customised to districts and schools	Differentiated trimmed ATPs use assessment baseline to intervene per learner	Reviewed and modernised ECD curricula are implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Protect the Foundation Phase</u> from invasion of programmes that do not contribute to early 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use Life Skills Programme/Subject to promote <u>Afro-centred Foundation Phase curriculum</u> and moral well-being of children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use Life Skills Programme/Subject to promote <u>Afro-centred Foundation Phase curriculum</u> and moral well-being of children 	

² Note that the finances to fund these activities will be contained in the Department's Annual Performance Plans

	<p>strengthened learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use <u>Provincial and National competitions</u> to strengthen competency in Mathematics and Languages Provide <u>professional support to Grade 3s</u> in order to ensure learners will have mastered the minimum <u>Language</u> and <u>Numeracy</u> competencies at the end of Grade 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Protect the Foundation Phase</u> from invasion of programmes that do not contribute to early strengthened learning Use <u>Provincial and National competitions</u> to strengthen competency in Mathematics and Languages Provide <u>professional support to Grade 3s</u> in order to ensure learners will have mastered the minimum <u>Language</u> and <u>Numeracy</u> competencies at the end of Grade 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Protect the Foundation Phase</u> from invasion of programmes that do not contribute to early strengthened learning Use <u>Provincial and National competitions</u> to strengthen competency in Mathematics and Languages Provide <u>professional support to Grade 3s</u> in order to ensure learners will have mastered the minimum <u>Language</u> and <u>Numeracy</u> competencies at the end of Grade 3 	
Promotion of use of play-based learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with DBE on adaptation of Grade R CAPS and National Curriculum Framework Collaborate with DBE on a guideline to utilise play based resources targeting Life Skills, emergent Maths and emergent Literacy teachers Pilot Play based learning in ten sites (subject to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with the Lego Foundation for the training of subject advisors on resources that develop critical thinking through play including Robotics Pilot Play based learning in ten sites A guideline to utilise play based resources targeting Life Skills, emergent Maths and emergent Literacy teachers is consulted on and approved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalise Play based learning in the Foundation Phase Approved guideline is used to utilise play based resources targeting Life Skills, emergent Maths and emergent Literacy teachers 	Play-based learning is integrated into a reviewed and modernised ECD curriculum

	restructured ECD			
Provision of ECD infrastructure	Register schools and centres that will offer Grade R curriculum to all eligible learners – pending promulgation of necessary legislation by the DBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Database of Grade R schools</u> and centres is finalised and used ▪ Plans to transfer DSD funds and personnel for ECD to LDoE are established 	Network of ECD institutions is used to roll out the activities of the ECD Strategy according to the function-shift plan	The shifted function of ECD from DSD to DBE is part and parcel of the reviewed and modernised ECD curricula
Optimal resource provision of ECD programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrate and place all ECD functions under one proverbial roof • Migrate and place ECD resources under one roof 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All financial resources (conditional grants, equitable share, donor funding and sponsorships) are managed under one roof • All resources are used to service the rollout of the ECD Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All financial resources (conditional grants, equitable share, donor funding and sponsorships) are managed under one roof • All resources are used to service the rollout of the ECD Strategy 	The ECD resources under one roof are aligned to the reviewed and modernised ECD curricula
Expanded training of ECD practitioners and educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand <u>training of Grade R practitioners</u> on NQF Level 6 qualification and integrate graduates into the system ▪ Train Practitioners on informal assessment of learners using the SIAS Policy ▪ Train educators and practitioners on assessment for learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand <u>training of Grade R practitioners</u> on NQF Level 6 qualification and integrate graduates into the system ▪ Compile a resource guide on <u>indigenous games</u> and <u>rhymes</u> that can be used to strengthen Life-Skills, Languages and Mathematics ▪ Apply assessment for learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand <u>training of Grade R practitioners</u> on NQF Level 6 qualification and integrate graduates into the system ▪ Use resource guide on <u>indigenous games</u> and <u>rhymes</u> that can be used to strengthen Life-Skills, Languages and Mathematics ▪ Apply assessment for learning approach 	Training of ECD practitioners and educators is integrated into the reviewed and modernised ECD curricula

ECD in the new normalcy

The challenges experienced during the COVID 19 lockdown has been a wakeup call in the system. Other modalities of learning and teaching need to be infused from ECD up to the entire system. The use of electronic media must start from ECD. There has to be novel ways of reaching learners and teachers in their homes, and ensure quality learning and teaching is offered on-site (face-to-face environment) and off-site (virtual environment).

Parents, more than ever before, need to be an integral part of the learning process of their children. They need to assist with school work and ensure feedback to teachers electronically. In order to achieve this goal, creative platforms such as the establishment of blended parent-teacher platforms need to be established to ensure speedy distribution of information anytime and anywhere.

The use of different platforms and media must ensure that learning still takes place in a fulfilled and fulfilling way in the ECD sector; through playing, living and learning.

Tracking performance

Performance will be tracked by:

- Designing blended instrument/s to track the rollout of the ECD strategy and
- Supporting the M&E³ Unit in its efforts to monitor and evaluate the rollout of the ECD strategy

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³ M&E = Monitoring and Evaluation

Cnr 113 Biccard & Excelsior Street, Polokwane, 0700
Private Bag X9489, Polokwane, 0700
Tel.: (015) 290 7600
Fax: (015) 297 6920/4220/4494

www.edu.limpopo.gov.za



@edu_limp



Limpopo Department of Education



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