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No.0252 - 2024: First Session, Seventh Legislature

**GAUTENG PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE**

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS,  
TABLINGS AND  
COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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Monday, 02 December 2024

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

none

**TABLINGS**

none

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- 1. The Chairperson of the Community Safety Portfolio Committee, Dr. B E W Masuku, tabled the Committee's Focused Intervention Study (FIS) Report on "Assessing the effectiveness of School Safety interventions in fighting crime in Schools in Gauteng", as attached:**

**JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY AND EDUCATION PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE**

# DRAFT FOCUSED INTERVENTION STUDY REPORT ON “ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL SAFETY INTERVENTIONS IN FIGHTING CRIME IN SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG”

Committee Details		Department Details	
Name of Committee	Joint Community Safety and Education Portfolio Committee	Name of Department	Department of Community Safety and Department of Education
Financial Year	2023/24 – 2024/25 FY	Dept. Vote No. MECs	Vote 10 & 5 Hon. Panyaza Lesufi Hon. Matome Chiloane
Committee Approvals			
Hon. Chairpersons	Name: Hon. Bandile Masuku Hon Moipone Mhlongo	Signed	Date: 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2024
Date of Final Adoption by Committee 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2024		Scheduled date of House Tabling 04 December 2024	

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## 1. ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full Wording
BAC	Business Against Crime
CCTV	Close-circuit television
CPF	Community Police Forum
CPW	Crime Prevention Warden
DBSTS	District Based Support Teams


DSRAC	Department of Sport Recreation Arts and Culture
DSS	Department of Social Development
FBO	Faith-based organisation
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GTWs	Gauteng Traffic Wardens
LCR	Learner Council Representatives
LSEN	Learners with Special Educational Needs
NGO	Non-government organisation
NICRO	National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders
PTT	Push to Talk
SANCA	South African National Council of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
SAPS	South African Police Service
SBSTS	School Based Support Teams
SGB	School Governing Body
SMTs	Senior Management Teams
TISH	Townships, Informal Settlement and Hostel

**04 December 2024,**

The Hon. Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Community Safety; Hon Bandile Masuku, and Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Education; Hon. Moipone Mhlongo, hereby tables the Joint Portfolio Committee’s Report on the Focused Intervention Study on “Assessing the effectiveness of School Safety Interventions in fighting crime in schools in Gauteng”, for the 2023/24 FY

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents the details of the Focused Intervention Study (FIS) conducted by the Community Safety and Education Committees. The FIS was focused on assessing the effectiveness of programmes of various



government departments, which are aimed at creating safer learning environment at schools across the province.

Amongst others, the objectives of the study were to investigate factors contributing to the scourge of violence at schools, ascertain the level of implementation of safety plans, the multi-disciplinary diversion programmes, as well as the impact of the adopt-a-cop programme in deterring criminal behaviour at schools.

The Joint Committee considered presentations from three departments who were identified as key role-players this study. These were the Department of Education, Department of Community Safety and Department of Social Development.

The Department of Community Safety reported that school safety interventions were regularly conducted across the five corridors, which entailed school searches and school talks. The department also established and monitored school safety desks to address challenges faced by learners and teachers within the school environment. The department further implemented the prison visits programme, wherein learners from various schools were selected to attend prison visits with the intention to discourage them from becoming perpetrators of crime.

In the previous financial year, it was reported that Business Against Crime donated 100 CCTV cameras. About 40 of those cameras were to be installed in schools in efforts to leverage technology to improve safety. The Department further intended to roll out more CCTV cameras at problematic schools in the 2023/24 FY. The Committee would be interested in receiving a progress report on the status of the CCTV cameras.

The Committee noted the updated plans and progress made by the Department of Community Safety as reported at the meeting held on 29 October 2024. It was reported that a total of 995 Push to Talk gadgets with e-panic buttons were distributed to school patrollers. They also increased police visibility and support for patrollers at schools, to ensure improved rapid response by Law Enforcement Agencies.

The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) reported that through the National School Safety Framework (NSSF) 2016, the Department of Basic Education committed to preventing, managing, and responding to safety incidents that happen in schools.

The GDE had devised the Gauteng School Safety Strategy based on five pillars of the framework including standardized school policy development and implementation; psycho-social support and promotion of alternative forms of discipline; advocacy programmes; active law enforcement partnerships with provincial SAPS, Metro Police Departments, Community Police Forums (CPFs) and community patrollers; as well as physically securing the environs of schools.

In the 2023/24 financial year, the Department of Education achieved the following:

- The Department launched Operation Kgutla Molao: Restore Order at Qalabotjha Secondary School in responding to incidents of violence and suicide reported at schools.
- An Action Plan based on the Gauteng Schools Safety Strategy, Exco Resolutions and the National School Safety Framework was developed.
- 75 schools were prioritized out of a total of 245 schools at risk for the following interventions:



- Deployment of security guards to provide day-and-night professional guarding service,
- Distribution of hand-held metal detectors to assist with search for dangerous weapons,
- Activation of e-panic buttons for 3 000 staff members,
- Patrols by safety wardens around the schools, and
- Resuscitation and training of school safety committees.

At the Committee meeting held on 29 October 2024, the Department reported that it had planned to embark on a series of imbizos as a build-up to the school safety summit. These imbizos, taking place in November 2024, are intended to engage with communities and relevant stakeholders to address and develop sustainable solutions to avoid disruptions during teaching and learning and curb acts of violence in high-risk schools.

The Gauteng Department of Social Development reported that it renders an array of services to pupils affected by violence, bullying and gangsterism at schools. The Department runs programmes such as the School Social Work Programme, Crime Prevention Programme, Social Behaviour Change Programme and Ke Moja Programme.

The Ke Moja 'I'm fine without drugs' programme was envisaged to create a "substance abuse free environment" where young children enjoy their freedom, develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually, economically, physically, and live their lives responsibly. It was implemented through a mass base approach and modular approach.

The Department of Social Development's School Intervention Programme as part of the revised Interdepartmental Memorandum of Understanding will prioritise ongoing interventions and programmes through the following interventions, amongst others:

- Develop School Based Support Plans based on joint MDT assessments to be tracked and monitored through a joint Monitoring Team (GDSD, GDE and DOH).
- Provide Core Package of Social Services as outlined in the current MOU through Corridor Implementation Plans.
- Establish a Joint MOU Task Team to monitor Corridor Implementation plans.
- Develop and implement specialised programmes responding to crises issues impacting on learner wellbeing such as Child Exploitation (Child Trafficking and On-Line Safety for Children), Child Violence, Learner Bullying and Learner Suicide.
- Development of a joint referral matrix with GDE to refer/link at-risk learners to the Masupatsela and Drummies Programmes.
- The School Social Work Intervention Programme will be embarking on is the institutionalization of the Community of Practice for Grades R to 3.
- Implementation of intentional joint programmes such as Holiday Programmes aimed at increasing the safety and protection of children in primary schools.

The Gauteng Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation reported that it had a budget allocated towards funding school sports. The funding was sourced through a conditional grant, and it was intended to

increase citizens access to sport and recreation activities and facilitate sport and active recreation participation and empowerment in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

The purpose of the School Sport Unit was to strengthen participation amongst learners, promote healthy lifestyles and physical wellbeing. Also, the Wednesday League Programme was launched in September 2022, with the aim of ensuring regular participation of the no fee-paying schools on sporting activities mainly football and netball leagues.

It was also reported that many Townships, Informal Settlement and Hostel (TISH) schools were part of the integrated Special Interventions Programme (SIP) including high-risk schools in the War Cry programme, to empower learners to stand against anti-bullying and anti-racism messages. In 2024, the Department of Social Development in collaboration with the Department of Sport Recreation Arts and Culture introduced a Drum Majorettes programme to assist with girl learners in vulnerable areas to have a safe space to be taught discipline, teamwork, healthy lifestyles and safety.

Furthermore, the Dlala Ntombazana Programme activities include after-school programmes, club development, capacity building, and supporting schools on key issues that impact young people through awareness campaigns on anti-substance abuse, gender-based violence, know your status, wellness, life skills, mentorship and leadership.

During oversight visits conducted at several schools which were amongst the 75 high risks schools, gangsterism and tribalism were cited as most of the contributing factors to the alarming level of violence. The shortage of school furniture was also reported as a concern as learners often fought for tables and chairs. It was reported that acts of vandalisms, burglaries, and theft were also prevalent.


Of greatest concern was the various dangerous weapons and sharp objects which were being confiscated from learners by teachers or during school searches by law enforcement agencies. The Committees were also concerned by the report that some learners would bunk classes to partake in gambling activities and smoking illicit substance during learning time.

Communities are urged to utilise the ChildLine number 116 to seek professional assistance. Furthermore, the various departments must ensure that the line remains active.

### **Stakeholder inputs**

Community members and stakeholders raised serious concerns about safety at schools and indicated that the behaviours of learners at school reflected the impact of socio-economic challenges faced by society. For instance, communities with high rate of poverty, unemployment and gangsterism experienced higher rate of school violence, gangsterism, substance abuse and bullying.

Parental involvement was key to improve learner behaviour as discipline must start at home and parents should not abandon their parental role. It was proposed that the Departments should educate parents on how to engage and instil discipline to their children without resorting to physical punishment.



Communities must take responsibility of safeguarding schools within their areas of residency and report any suspicious or criminal acts including vandalism occurring at schools. It was proposed that unemployed youth in communities be utilised to safeguard schools especially as they are very aware of the happenings in their communities.

The lack of police visibility was reported as a serious challenge. It was further alleged that police would often turn a blind eye on criminals peddling drugs both within schools and communities. Furthermore, it was reported that when schools open criminal cases, the cases would be closed without proper investigation by the police.

Whilst stakeholders welcomed the presence of Gauteng Traffic Wardens (GTWs) previously known as Crime Prevention Wardens, they also raised concerns on how the wardens were selected and if they were properly trained. Also, it was reported that some of the GTWs were undermining and disrespecting patrollers deployed at schools.

It was proposed that dedicated psychologists always be available at schools as learners need to be provided with mental health care advice on regular basis. Learners felt they did not have alternatives to engage in healthy activities after school due to the lack of sporting facilities.

Socio-economic factors were also reported to be contributing to the increased crime and violence. Communities needed to be empowered with entrepreneurship skills which would assist in reducing the high rate of unemployment. It was also suggested that local businesses be encouraged to adopt schools for development, maintenance, and safe keeping.

Lastly, the scourge of illegal mining was raised sharply as communities were bearing the brunt of the illegal mining activities and this was severely impacting schools as well.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

A Focused Intervention Study (FIS) is a method to guide an in-depth investigation of a particular focus area determined by the Committee. The main aim of an FIS is to drive and influence the strategic direction for Committees' oversight over the executive.

The FIS was initiated by the Community Safety Committee, following the prevalence of violent crimes at schools. The FIS emanated from the consideration of the Departments of Community Safety's Budget Report for the 2023/2024 FY. The purpose of the FIS was to assess the effectiveness of school safety programmes to curb the scourge of violence at schools.

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess if all schools in Gauteng had safety plans, and if those safety plans were implemented accordingly to curb the scourge of violence in schools,



- To assess if all schools, especially those identified as hotspots had implemented the ‘adopt-a-cop’ intervention. If so, how effective was it in curbing violence,
- To assess if all schools had a multi-disciplinary diversion programme implemented in partnership with other departments, and how effective were the programmes in instilling discipline at schools, and
- To assess factors contributing to violence in schools.

#### 4. PROCESS FOLLOWED

- 4.1 On Friday, 03<sup>rd</sup> February 2023, the committee researchers presented the FIS Proposal, and the Committee adopted the topic: “Assessing the effectiveness of School Safety Interventions in fighting crime in schools in Gauteng”.
- 4.2 On Monday, 03<sup>rd</sup> March 2023, the Gauteng Department of Education Committee, Gauteng Department of Social Development, and the Gauteng Department of Community Safety made presentations related to the FIS Topic to a joint session of the Committees.
- 4.3 Committees Support Staff undertook pre- oversight visits to several selected high-risk schools from 15 – 17 March and 18 – 27 April 2023.
- 4.3 Both Committees jointly undertook unannounced oversight visits to selected schools in the province from 15 August 2023 to 08 September 2023 to the following schools: Eldorado Park Secondary School, Westbury Secondary School, Ntsako Secondary School, Nellmapius Secondary School, Orange Farm Secondary School, and Dinokaneng Secondary School.
- 4.4 On 31 August 2023, a stakeholder engagement session was held at Emperors Palace Conference Centre to discuss the FIS topic.
- 4.5 On Tuesday, 26 September 2023, a second stakeholder engagement session with learners and youth groups was held at Gold Reef City Conference Centre to solicit their inputs on the FIS topic.
- 4.6 The newly established Community Safety and Education Committees convened a meeting on Tuesday, 29 October 2024 to receive updated presentations on plans and progress made from the relevant Departments.
- 4.7 On Thursday, 21 November 2024, the Committees deliberated and adopted the report.

#### 5. COMPLIANCE AND QUALITY

The Committee in its previous engagements with the Department requested a progress report on the level of achievement and the report was submitted. In addition, the Committee embarked on the FIS process in accordance with the SOM and the GPL Standing Rules of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature.

#### 6. OVERSIGHT ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Department of Community Safety has the responsibility to improve the quality of policing ensure social crime prevention and create safer communities. The Department planned to use an integrated approach to curb violence at schools through school safety intervention programmes. Its programmes include the following.

- Conducting school searches in collaboration with the GDE and SAPS,
- Strengthen multi-disciplinary diversion programmes implemented in partnership with the Department of Social Development (DSD), Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and Department of Sport, Art, Culture and Recreation (SACR), and
- Participation of LEAs and schools in the 'Adopt a Cop' programme.

In the State of the Nation Address in February 2023, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Honourable Ramaphosa stated that a focus for Education was to be on the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative programme to deliver modern facilities to schools in rural and underprivileged urban areas across the country. Outcome 7: of the Gauteng Department of Education Strategic Plan seeks to create a safer schooling environment that embodies social cohesion, patriotism, and non-violence in Public Ordinary Schools. This goal will further school sports, school health, anti-drugs programmes, girl-child support, and guidance.

## **7. OVERSIGHT ON ANY OTHER COMMITTEE FOCUS AREA**

### **7.1 Committee Findings**

#### **7.1.1 Oversight Visits Findings and Stakeholder Engagement Session Inputs**

##### **❖ Dinokaneng Secondary School**

The school had 1058 enrolled learners and 34 educators. The school reported that substance abuse was a major problem. This was mainly attributed to over-age learners who were not adhering to the school's code of conduct. The school further alluded to challenges of diversity due to the location and learner population.

The school reported that it was working with the Department of Social Development agencies to address the prevalence of substance abuse. Through the fight back campaign against substance abuse, the school was allocated 4 patrollers from the Department of Community Safety. It was also reported that patrollers were assisting in patrolling the school. However, the adopt-a-cop programme and searches by the police were not implemented. The school also expressed concerns that the police do not respond when called to the school.

The school needed support in addressing issues of diversity between learners because of the different ethnic groupings. In addition, it was requested that safety be enhanced through deployment of security personnel, random searches, and life skills support to address challenges related to ethnicity and or tribalism.

##### **❖ Orange Farm Secondary School**

The learner enrolment at the school was 1 250 and 36 educators. It was reported that bullying was rife in the school where boys would mark their territory and fight for food over break time. Cyberbullying through humiliating each other was common among grade 11 and 12 learners and it was difficult to identify the culprits as fake accounts were used.

Gangsterism was common among learners coming from the RDP houses; learners living with extended families and those from abusive backgrounds. The absence of parents was also noted as a common factor from the problematic learners as they would join gangsterism groups to seek money for themselves and their siblings' survival.

Initiation schools were reported to be contributing to the violence in schools as learners who went to initiation school, often attacked and discriminated against those who did not go to initiation school. Also, marking boundaries and setting territories which resulted to more conflicts. Furthermore, toilets were segregated, with some reserved for those who went to initiation schools only.

The Thandeka NGO was reported to have adopted the school, assisting with psycho-social wellness services. The NGO also provided workshops for individual grades; one-on-one consultations with parents and learners which assisted the educators with the gaps identified. Also, support was provided by through Arekopaneng Child Line and Matthew Goniwe and DREAMS which is LSA school based.

The school indicated that an Adopt-A-Cop was allocated to the school and was fortunate to had been allocated a high-ranking officer (Colonel). It also had an SGB member who was in the Safety Community Committee who would visit parents of perpetrators as and when required. The school indicated that it had a relationship with the Social Development Department, and it was assisting the school with provision of food and uniform. Furthermore, teachers adopt classes to assist disadvantaged learners.

The school had three patrollers allocated, one patroller was deployed to work during the day while two work at night. A challenge was noted whereby there would be no one to relive the other in case of the absence of the other at night. The school lacked safety measures as burglaries were frequently happening and a fridge, food, and books were stolen. Criminal cases were opened at Orange Farm SAPS but thus far it was only one nutrition case where an arrest was made. The school fence was often cut to gain access to the premises. In another incident, spotlights were stolen within a week of installation. The DB and socket breakers were also stolen, leaving parts of the classrooms without electricity.

It was reported that there was a scrapyard next to the school, which was allegedly buying materials which had been stolen from the school. Furthermore, it was reported that principals' safety was compromised during the period when school funds were released. The criminals hijacked the principals and demanded that the school banking information be provided to access the school's funds. The CCTV and an alarm were installed at the targeted areas, although they were not contracted with any security company but linked to the principals' phone who will then alert the school's Adopted Cop.

#### ❖ **Westbury Secondary School**

The school had a functional School Based Support Team that rendered support to learners and staff. However, it was difficult for the SBST to address all the challenges because there was a serious challenge of gangsterism and substance abuse within the community that affects the school.

High level of unemployment within the community was reported as the leading cause of the challenges experienced within the community. Some of the challenges that were reported during the visits were:

- Bullying which included extortion of money and other items. Younger learners were also bullied into selling drugs within the school premises.
- Gangsterism, as some of the learners at the school were affiliated to gangs which operated within the community and educators were aware of the various gangs.
- Substance abuse was rife within the community and at the school. Drugs such as Lean, Xanax and Dagga were frequently found on learners. They test between 20 – 30 learners a week and about 80 – 90% of these learners would test positive for drugs.
- The foster care system was allegedly abused in Westbury whereby, one home was allocated over five children to gain access to the social grant. It was further alleged that there was a strong involvement of the Department of Social Development officials in the abuse of this system.
- It was reported that there were five mosques in Westbury. There were allegations that one of the mosques was housing undocumented immigrant children.
- Lack of parental discipline, it was alleged that some parents whose children were troublesome, objected to their children being disciplined. In one incident, a parent gave their child a gun to threaten the principal for disciplining them.

As an intervention, the school had relationships with University of Johannesburg (UJ), SANCA and Family Life Centre. The relationships were aimed at addressing challenges around bullying, sexual assault, substance abuse etc. SANCA was situated at the school premises to provide testing and counselling. They also provided learners with motivational talks, invited community leaders and religious leaders to address learners and hold anti-bullying and anti-drug initiatives within the school.

The school had the adopt-a-cop, the officer was visiting the school regularly, however random searches were not being conducted. A workshop to address school safety was conducted by the Department of Community Safety. GDE Quality Learning and Teaching campaign were also conducted to improve school safety. Challenges encountered at the school were vandalism, burglary and theft. Community members also stole some parts of the school fence which left the school premises unsecured. In addition, there were overgrown shrubs and trees where learners and criminals would hide.

### **Recommendations**

- Deployment of security guards to safeguard school premises.
- Increased police visibility around the school and in the community to address the high levels of crime.

#### **❖ Eldorado Park Secondary School**

Eldorado Park Secondary had 1233 learners categorised as a quintile 2, Section 21, with most of its learners coming from Eldorado Park and the neighbouring communities. The school previously served as a high-pressure school and was allocated additional 8 mobile classrooms which at the time of the visit were not in use due to a decline in learner enrolment. These classrooms had since been vandalised and were a security risk.

There was a lot of violence at the school affecting learners and educators. A learner was stabbed while the joint Committee was conducting an oversight visit at the school. There were several weapons confiscated by teachers from learners such as knives, scissors and other harmful items.



Some of reported challenges were.

- Substance and drug abuse, the most common drugs were nyaope, dagga and cocaine.
- Gangsterism, there were two known gangs operating at the school called Barados and Fast Guns.
- Gambling learners were bunking classes to gamble at a field next to the school.
- fighting with weapons, threatening lives of educators,
- unruly behavior amongst learners,
- Male students were invading female educator toilets,
- Vandalism of school property by learners, it was reported that a learner once poured sanitizers in the classroom and started a fire.
- Most classrooms were without doors and windows, and the school had no funds for maintenance.

There was defiance from learners, and no disciplinary measures to discipline learners who disregarded the rules of the school. Educators expressed that the abolishment of corporal punishment without replacing it with any other form of disciplinary measure contributed to the high level of ill discipline amongst learners. It was also reported that there was lack of support from the local police.

The school had a shortage of furniture such as tables and chairs, this resulted to learners fighting for furniture. The school had requested DoE to provide more tables and chairs. It had also requested that DoE assist in removing the dilapidated mobile classrooms. The cost to remove each unit was R35 000 and the school could not afford. However, there was no response from DoE in this regard. Furthermore, the school required that security be strengthened, as the current security was not sufficient, and they had no adequate funds to install a security system. The principal stated that they had however applied to be a non-fee-paying school for 2024.

It was proposed that more frequent searches be conducted by the police possibly external police officers and not those from Eldorado Park SAPS. It was also requested that Children's rules be conducted as they reviewed, as the current rules were exacerbating the rebellion behaviour. Also, enhancing programmes aimed at curbing drug abuse as well as theft.

The school had a social worker from the Department of Social Development deployed daily at the school to provide psycho-social support service and the programme was reported to had been effective.

#### ❖ **Nellmapius Secondary School**

The main cause of violence in the school was shortage of furniture and inadequate classroom space caused by overcrowding. The classes were built for 40 learners but there are 50 – 60 learners in a class. Learners also brought conflicts which started outside the school into the school. Learners bullied other learners for their money and valuables. It was mentioned that learners who come from poor backgrounds were lured into criminal acts for survival.

The school had a functional SBST that provides support to learners. Drug abuse was rife within the community. Older learners would forcefully take money from the younger pupils to buy drugs, and this



exacerbated the bullying behaviour. There were instances where learners were found selling drugs within the school and this was reported to the police.

The school experienced vandalism, theft and burglary. SAPS opened but there was no conviction or recovery of the stolen items despite a security footage of the burglary being provided. It was also reported that burglary incident occurred two weeks prior to the Committee Support Staff visit and a smartboard was stolen. SAPS only came to the school a week after the incident had occurred.

#### **Interventions made:**

- Adopt-a-cop was implemented, the cop was known to the school and had a relationship with the school.
- Random searches were done, and visits take place once or twice a quarter.
- There were 4 patrollers deployed to safeguard the school premises during the day.
- The school invited SAPS, religious leaders and community leaders to address learners.
- Nellmapius Youth Organisation worked closely with the school in supporting learners.
- There was a social worker based at the school. Although there was a strong support base from NGO's and social worker, most learners relapsed after referral because went their back to the community, they started taking drugs again.

#### **Recommendations**

- Deployment of security guards to safeguard school premises.
- Increased police visibility around the school and in the community to address the high levels of crime.
- Deployment of patrollers at night because current patrollers were deployed during the day only.
- Prioritization of cases of vandalism cases reported to the police.


#### **❖ Kagiso Secondary School**

The school did not have many challenges with learner bullying, violence etc. The challenge was the dangers posed by community members who were committing burglaries and vandalising the school. The school had an incident where someone came and started shooting randomly. One person was shot.

Learners who came from poor backgrounds and required support such as psycho-social support, school nutrition etc. The school held matric camps which provided learners with a conducive space to prepare for their matric exams.

Through the camp effort were made to instil discipline amongst learners and workshops were conducted on how learners must carry themselves. They also had prevention and support programmes focusing on drug abuse. The school had 4 patrollers of which two were male and two females. The challenge was patrollers were not adequately capacitated or resourced to deal with armed criminals.

The school had the adopt-a-cop programme, and an officer who had adopted the school was visiting the school regularly. However, there was no success in addressing burglaries and or recovering stolen items. It was requested that well-capacitated security guards be deployed to safeguard the school.



The school had a functional School Based Support Team that provided support to learners. Learners who were found to be using illicit substances or with behavioural problems were given referrals to see a social worker who was based at Westview Clinic. It was proposed that a social worker/or psychologist visits the school at least three times a week.

#### ❖ **Qalabotjha Secondary School**

It was reported that social ills within the community directly contributed to violence within the school. There was a high level of alcohol abuse and crime within the surrounding communities.

The school was also affected by the historical background of the area. Previously, the area was comprised mostly of isiZulu speaking people. Subsequently, other ethnic groups arrived, this resulted to a high level of tribalism where learners organised themselves according to ethnicity and fights ensued, resulting to the death of a learner. Learners who have gone through initiation schools discriminated against and bullied learners who had not gone to initiation schools.

The school had a fully functional SBST to support learners. The principal provided learners with motivational talks in efforts to improve social cohesion, at least within the school premises. Social Workers visited the school regularly. Educators felt unsafe and they were unable to effectively discipline learners which made classroom management more difficult.

The school had the adopt-a-cop programme and efforts were made by the officer responsible in addressing some of the challenges within the school. The local CPF was also conducting visits to the school. There were three patrollers deployed, however, this was not sufficient in safeguarding the school.

It was also reported that most incidents of burglaries and theft were committed by dwellers of the informal settlements around the school. It was recommended that armed security be deployed and installation of an access-controlled gate and stronger fence as well as encouraging the community to safeguard the school premises. Furthermore, it was requested that the community be empowered to address issues of tribalism.

#### ❖ **Reiger Park Secondary**

There were reports of bullying, sexual assault, substance abuse, cyber-bullying, amongst others. These were linked to the social challenges within the community. Gangsterism was rife in the community and surroundings of the school. There was also a high level of unemployment in the area. It was reported that not only boy learners, but also some girl learners were affiliated to gangs. Learners also used drugs within the school such as space cookies and dagga. The principal had informants who assisted with information of learners who were in possession of drugs, and this assisted in seizing some of the drugs which were circulating in the school.

It was also mentioned that the school was very overcrowded, and this also led to violence. The school had a functional SBST, and learners who were caught using drugs were referred to the local clinic and NICRO. Social workers were accessible, but they were overworked. It was requested that Social Workers visits the school at least once a week. The school conducted school plays, campaigns and motivational talks to instil discipline and positive behaviour.

There were four patrollers who were newly deployed, and two security guards who were being paid by the SGB. The patrollers were only deployed during school hours and not at night or on weekends. The school experienced challenges of vandalism and burglary. They experienced cable theft and had no electricity for 7 school days. They also experienced theft of school furniture. The school had an adopt-a-cop conducted regular visits.

#### ❖ **Altmont Secondary School**

Altmont Technical School is a Public Technical High School based in Soweto-Protea South with 1433 learners categorised as a quintile 1, Section 21, with most of its learners coming from informal settlements.

The school used to be between 80% - 85% matric pass rate and in 2022 dropped to 73,4%. The school reports that there were instabilities within school governance, continuous disagreements between the SGB and SMT. This matter was reported to GDE for intervention; however, it was not resolved. This had led to the SGB interfering extensively on teaching and learning, some members having meetings during contact time.

The following were reported as some of the challenges faced, gangsterism, substance abuse particularly dagga, gambling within school premises, and stealing of other learners' school bags, phones and drawing boards. It was also reported that was a group of learners called "Black Jet gang" which demanded money from other learners especially the grade 8's when they want to use the toilets.

The shortage of furniture in the classrooms was also reported as contributing to the fights amongst learners. It was requested that the department provide sufficient furniture, and implementation of recreational activities to minimise fighting.


SAPS conducts random searches and dangerous weapons such as knives and other sharp objects were confiscated. However, the searches were deemed ineffective because they were done occasionally, yet their safety is compromised daily. Psycho-social support services were offered by the Department of Social Development, and they were reported to be helpful.

It was reported that there was a programme initiated by some parents to search learners daily prior to entering the school premises. However, there were disagreements between other parents and some learners refusing to be searched, and opted rather not attend school. The SGB and principal resolved that the searches be stopped as they led to increased absenteeism by learners.

## **7.2 STAKEHOLDER INPUTS**

Community members and stakeholders raised serious concerns about safety at schools and indicated that the behaviours of learners at school reflected the impact of socio-economic challenges faced by society. For instance, communities with high rate of poverty, unemployment and gangsterism experienced higher rate of school violence, gangsterism, substance abuse and bullying.

Parental involvement was key to improve learner behaviour as discipline must start at home and parents should not abandon their parental role. It was proposed that the Departments should educate parents on how to engage and instil discipline to their children without resorting to physical punishment.



Communities must take responsibility of safeguarding schools within their areas of residency and report any suspicious or criminal acts including vandalism occurring at schools. It was proposed that unemployed youth in communities be utilised to safeguard schools especially as they are very aware of the happenings in their communities.

The lack of police visibility was reported as a serious challenge. It was further alleged that police would often turn a blind eye on criminals peddling drugs both within schools and communities. Furthermore, it was reported that when schools open criminal cases, the cases would be closed without proper investigation by the police.

Whilst stakeholders welcomed the presence of Gauteng Traffic Wardens (GTWs) previously known as Crime Prevention Wardens, they also raised concerns on how the wardens were selected and if they were properly trained. Also, it was reported that some of the GTWs were undermining and disrespecting patrollers deployed at schools.

It was proposed that dedicated psychologists be always available at schools as learners need to be provided with mental health care advice on regular basis. Learners felt they did not have alternatives to engage in healthy activities after school due to the lack of sporting facilities. Stakeholders also emphasized the need for enhanced psycho-social support at schools.

Socio-economic factors were also reported to be contributing to the increased crime and violence. Communities needed to be empowered with entrepreneurship skills which would assist in reducing the high rate of unemployment. It was also suggested that local businesses be encouraged to adopt schools for development, maintenance, and safe keeping.

It was also mentioned that the lack of sufficient furniture and classroom space caused hostility amongst learners leading to bullying physical violence.

It was requested that CCTV cameras be installed at schools. Also, the number of patrollers deployed at schools be increased and others be deployed at night. Furthermore, the patrollers must be properly capacitated and well-resourced to effectively prevent crime.

It was also mentioned that some educators were discriminating against some learners based on their background. This led to some learners committing suicide. Thus, educators should be encouraged to treat all learners with dignity.

Learners representing RCL's indicated that they were not included during development of school safety plans and other important school matters and requested that they be involved in the school governance as they best placed to represent learners.

The scourge of illegal mining was raised sharply as communities were bearing the brunt of the illegal mining activities and this was severely impacting schools as well.



## 8.3 DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATIONS

### ❖ Gauteng Department of Education Presentation

On the 03<sup>rd</sup> of March, the Department made a presentation on school safety and stated that through the National School Safety Framework (NSSF) 2016, the Department of Basic Education and the nine provincial departments of education are committed to preventing, managing, and responding to safety incidents that happen in schools. Some of the social challenges that the Department was providing to support learners and staff in schools, in collaboration with social partners such as sister departments, NGOs, faith-based organisations (FBOs) and other arms of government, were:

- Substance abuse – in and outside school by learners & educators.
- Bullying - negative contributor to low esteem, learner performance, dropout & gangsterism, bullying incident reporting.
- Violence – learner to learner, learner to educator/staff, corporal punishment, outsider to school community.
- Sexual violence - against girl learners in particular, collaboration with Psycho-Social.
- Gangsterism – involvement of learners both inside and outside premises, training of Safety Committees.
- Theft & malicious damage to school property – vandalism of property by learners is major concern, escalation to infrastructure.
- Teenage Pregnancy – though not a safety nor security matter, but given attention given.
- Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) – contributes toward a safe environment.
- Discipline and harmful religious practices – threat to safety in schools.
- Code of conduct for learners through training on a need basis for schools

In order to effectively deal with these challenges in an orderly and coordinated way, the GDE had devised the Gauteng School Safety Strategy based on five pillars of the framework including standardized school policy development and implementation; Psycho-social support and promotion of alternative forms of discipline; Advocacy programmes; Active law enforcement partnerships with the SAPS, Metro Police, Community Police Forums (CPFs) and community patrollers; and effectively securing the physical environs of schools.

The practical actions of the School Safety Framework taken at school were as follows:

- Parents and Learners sign school's Code of Conduct.
- Grade R to Grade 12 learners taught age-appropriate lessons on substance abuse, pregnancy, sexual harassment, and abuse and bullying as part of Life Skills and Life Orientation Curriculum.
- GDE also implements supplementary programmes to raise awareness, train and offer support to learners, educators, SMTs and SGBs:
- Scripted lessons for educator as part of Comprehensive Sexuality Education.
- Deployment of 500 Learner Support Agents as an early warning mechanism and peer counselling to support 1 200 schools.
- Childline 116 number is provided free of charge for learners, educators etc. to seek assistance from trained and accredited counsellors.
- Inter-departmental collaboration:
- Social Development deploys 120 social workers to assist with risk assessment of learners.



- 500 Ke Moja coaches are deployed in schools by Social Development to assist with substance abuse awareness.
- Work with Community Safety to deploy 5 000 patrollers in schools.

The Department provided additional details of Psycho-Social Support and Alternatives to corporal punishment such as strengthening of SBSTS and DBSTS and capacitation of these structures; Establishment of register of support networks; Prison Tours; Justice Programme; anger Management Programme; deployment of qualified social workers or psychologists or lay counsellors; Holiday, Arts and Culture Programmes and Parenting Support Programmes. The Department also engages in active collaboration with Law Enforcement Agencies to conduct searches and seizure operations; implement the School Patroller Programme; re-linking of schools to their local SAPS stations on a yearly basis and establishment of School Safety Teams; enforcement of liquor regulations; establish Scholar Patrol Teams; and conduct regular inspection of scholar transport (subsidized/non-subsidizes) vehicles – roadworthiness and obedience of traffic laws.

Some of the interventions undertaken by the Gauteng Department of Education to effectively secure the physical environs of the school include maintaining the school perimeter fence; conduct Disaster Management & First Aid Courses; implementation of Access Control Measures; scanning of advance environs; demolition or surveillance of unused structures; and duty rosters of educators.

The Department had implemented also implemented several school safety interventions including:

- Conducted intelligence-driven searches and seizure operations to look for dangerous weapons and illegal drugs.
- A request was made to VISPOL to assist in managing the 245 hot spot schools during December 2022 and January 2023 holiday period.
- Rapid response security was deployed during the holiday period of December 2022 to January 2023 to curb instances of vandalism and break-ins.
- Vodacom project - 37 ICT schools identified for installation of CCTV and linkage to the Boksburg control room.
- Business Against Crime (BAC) has installed cameras at 15 of the 40 identified hot spot schools, which will be linked to a control room. Work is currently in progress at two more schools.
- Various advocacy and awareness campaigns, in collaboration with SAPS and Faith Based Organizations, are done in schools with the aim of educating learners about the negative effects of getting involved with criminal activities.
- SGBs are workshopped on implementing disciplinary measures.
- The linking of schools to their local SAPS stations and establishment of School Safety Teams – communication link on proactive and reactive basis.
- Prison Tours – at risk learners are identified by schools who will be taken on guided prison tours.
- Matthew Goniwe held a MEC Safety Indaba on the 10 December 2022 to secure buy-in from local communities to protect their schools during the festive holidays.
- NSSF training for educators will take place from 17 February 2023 until June 2023. This training will be facilitated by Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance.

At the stakeholder engagements held on 31 August 2023 and 26 September 2023, the Department provided an updated presentation indicated the interventions made by the Department to ensure school safety. The

Committee is of the view that this illustrates that the Department is committed towards ensuring safety in schools.

**Progress Made by March 2023:**

- The Department of Education launched Operation Kgutla Molao-Restore Order at Qalabotjha Secondary School in reaction to incidents of violence and suicide reported in schools.
- An Action Plan based on the Gauteng Schools Safety Strategy, Exco Resolutions and the National School Safety Framework has been developed with the following components:
  - Improving Safety Features and environment in schools.
  - Stakeholder mobilisation; and
  - Training and Capacity Building.
- 75 schools have been prioritized out of a total of 245 schools at risk for the following interventions:
  - Deployment of security guards to provide day-and-night professional guarding service.
  - Distribution of hand-held metal detectors to assist with search for dangerous weapons.
  - Activation of e-panic buttons for 3 000 staff members.
  - Initiating patrols by safety wardens around the schools.
  - Resuscitation and training of school safety committees.
  - Deployment of patrollers to aid in access control at the schools.
  - CCTV cameras donated by business against crime to be installed in 9 schools.
- These measures were to be implemented to all 245 schools identified as being at risk. All schools have now received hand-held metal detectors.
- Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance has trained SGBs.
- Learners from 28 schools are currently undergoing training on First Aid Level 1 & 2 plus basic firefighting.
- 500 Learner Support Agents were deployed across the province to support 1 000 schools. The number was to be increased through other means.
- 500 Ke Moja coaches were deployed to improve awareness on substance abuse as well as screening and referral of potential users.
- MOU were being revised to deploy Social Workers in partnership with the Department of Social Development.
- The ChildLine number 116 was available for anyone in the school to seek professional assistance. However, awareness must be improved, and the line should always be active.
- Though uneven, schools had safety committees and school-based support teams.
- Matthew Goniwe conducted an Environment Scan in 2022 on School Safety.
- Survey on Substance Abuse by learners were being designed.
- A multi-stakeholder School Safety Summit was held.

The Committee welcomed the priority actions planned from October to December 2024, in collaboration with MGSL&G and Gauteng Department of Community Safety. These included appointment and deployment of 1 400 security guards at 75 schools; installation of CCTV Camera at 40 schools which were linked to the Provincial Integrated Command Centre and migration of all cameras to the PICC; linked 75 schools to safety wardens; provision of e-panic buttons to 3 000 members of staff at the 75 schools and training of School Safety Committees, amongst others.

The Committee also welcomed additional interventions which were to be undertaken beyond 2023 such as:

- Deployment of patrollers to 1 405 schools
- Provide Patrollers with the necessary tools of trade and enable them to serve as linkage to wardens.
- Annual Whole School Evaluation, safety audits & school safety plans.
- Increased police visibility in the vicinity of school premises.
- Protect school infrastructure from vandalism and theft.
- Ensure regular visits to schools at night and respond to emergencies.
- Linking of security companies through E2 (Eyes and Ears) Project.
- Effective utilization of smart safer city technology
- Enforcement of by-laws around the schools & limit sales of alcohol around 500m from schools.
- Implementation of the school holidays programme.
- Investigation of cases & restore stability in schools.
- Daily monitoring of disruptions and mitigation actions.
- Training on National School Safety Framework
- Development of school safety strategy and plans.
- Training of educators and SMTs.
- Education of parents of learners including learners with behavioral problems of effective parenting.
- Training of LSAs and RCLs.
- Appointment of training of SHE Reps.
- Educational programmes with Correctional Services on behavior and character building.

### **Updated Plans and Progress**

The Department planned to embark on a series of imbizos as a build-up to the school safety summit. These imbizos were intended to engage with communities and relevant stakeholders to address and develop sustainable solutions to avoid disruptions in teaching and learning and curb acts of violence at high-risk schools.

The Department reported that they had deployed security in 89 schools, 1600 patrollers were recruited and deployed at various schools, and traffic wardens were also assisting with patrolling in some districts.

### **Interventions**

- Research conducted on the extent of crime and violence in schools,
- Standardised and customised school safety policy developed,
- Functional School Safety teams established,
- Standardised and customised anti-bullying policy developed,
- Schools trained on NSSF,
- Schools linked to their local SAPS stations,
- Code of Conduct for Learners implemented,
- Misconduct Registers developed and implemented,
- Learners and teachers trained on peer mediation and positive discipline,
- NGOs, FBOs, lay counsellors and qualified social workers mobilised,
- Roadshows, dialogues, safety walks and runs conducted with partners,
- Winter and Spring Behaviour Modification Camps for learners in conflict with the law facilitated,

- Prison visits conducted with learners in conflict with the law,
- Active law enforcement partnerships with the SAPS, Metro Police, Community Policing Forums and Community patrollers,
- Coordinate the deployment and payment of school patrollers,
- Partnering with the Liquor Board and Metro Police to enforce liquor regulations in taverns and shebeens within 500m radius of schools,
- Effectively securing the physical environment of schools,
- Implementation of Road Safety programmes in schools, and
- Coordination of requests for perimeter fencing for public ordinary and special schools.

#### ❖ **Strengthening interventions**

The Department indicated that there were four major areas that required strengthening as follows:

- enforcement of discipline at home and schools as charity begins at home,
- effective monitoring of the interventions, there was a need for a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system,
- social cohesion, need to build strong relationships with communities near and around the school as there are models that are working well in Gauteng, and
- securing schools after school, during weekends, at night and during holidays.

The Dlala Ntombazana Programme activities include after-school programs, club development, capacity building, and supporting schools on key issues that impact young people on awareness campaigns on anti-substance abuse, gender-based violence, know your status, wellness, life skills and mentorship and leadership.

#### ❖ **Social Cohesion programmes**

Social Cohesion camps were hosted in 2023 with support from DSACR with identified learners from all societal groups that included learners from the high-risk schools. Both camps focused on social ills, human rights, life skills for integration in a multi-cultural society. About 250 learners attended the camps from across Gauteng secondary schools.

A youth dialogue session was held in 2024 with 42 schools from various sectors including areas of risk. Topics covered during the camp were: Preamble to the Constitution and National Anthem; Social Cohesion: The bigger picture; Definition of Social Cohesions; Care and Support for Teaching and Learning; Presentation by Youth for Human Rights: Human Rights and The Way to Happiness; Presentation by CRL Rights Commission and Threats to Social Cohesion.

The districts involved all high-risk schools in the values programmes to ensure that national identity was promoted with the National Anthem, the National Flag as well as ensuring that the Constitution was understood and implemented in schools. The Department of Sport Recreation Arts and Culture supported by providing flags to schools.

#### ❖ **Cultural programmes**



Townships, Informal Settlement and Hostel (TISH) schools Integrated programme Special Interventions Programme (SIP) included high risk schools in the War Cry programme to empower learners to be able to stand against anti-bullying, anti-racism messages and slogans. In 2024 the Department of Social Development (DSD) in collaboration with the Department of Sport Recreation Arts and Culture (DSRAC), introduced the Drum Majorettes programme which was intended to assist girl learners in vulnerable areas to have a safe space to be taught discipline, teamwork, healthy lifestyles and safety.

The school debate programme included in the SIP enabled learners to think critically about issues on local, national and international levels. Districts were assisted to structure debate leagues to include the high-risk schools.

Furthermore, choral was considered as an avenue to promote social cohesion and with the support from DSRAC, conductors' workshops were hosted in 2023. A need was identified to upskill educators in no-fee schools to establish choirs to help with discipline and team building.

#### ❖ **Gauteng Department of Community Safety Presentation**

The Department reported that it had several school safety interventions which were conducted in the five corridors across the province. These included:

- Adopt-A-Cop programme by SAPS which was intended to improve access to the police service,
- Safety awareness to create awareness on issues of Safety,
- Correctional Services visits which provided an appreciation by learners of realities of being in prison,
- Use of technology to complement limited police resources in partnership with Business Against Crime (BAC), CPF and Blue Hawks security, and
- Research to better understand challenges and devise means of addressing the identified gaps.

The department also reported that there was no uniformity when incidents of violence are reported, and these incidents were handled differently depending on the nature of violence. One of the greatest challenges which exacerbated the situation was absent parenting, as some parents did not play their parental role.

At the time of considering this report, there were 7 361 Gauteng Traffic Wardens (GTWs) supporting 5 615 school patrollers across the corridors. Additional patrollers were deployed in the 75 problematic schools as identified by GDE. The patrollers assisted in instilling order and discipline and enhanced visibility and vigilance within the school environment. The Department also deployed GTWs in schools to support patrollers with school searches and ensuring rapid response to crime incidences in schools.

It was also reported that Business Against Crime donated a total of 100 CCTV cameras. About 40 of the CCTV Cameras were installed in schools in the 2022/2023 financial year. The Department intended to roll out more CCTV cameras in identified problematic schools during the 2023/2024 financial year. The data from the 40 cameras feeds directly to Business Against Crime command centres (as donors) linked to the SAPS POCC. This ensured rapid response to criminal activities was guaranteed from law enforcement agencies. The use of the e-Panic APP by teachers and patrollers would also enable speedy response to schools by LEAs.



The Department outlined the below as critical areas for improvement by Law Enforcement and Community Safety Structures Perspective:

- Proactive approach-Active parental involvement: It was the responsibility of parents to instill discipline and good behaviour/ morals in their children. Parents must take back their role as disciplinarian in their home and not relegate that responsibility to educators.
- Community mobilization: Community members must play a critical role in ensuring that school facilities were protected and safe.
- Reactive approach – detection and tracking: This was necessary to ensure that suspects were arrested or channeled through the correct channels within the CJS. This could deter criminal elements from targeting schools.
- Proactive approach – high visibility: This remains a challenge and therefore a need to align it to the integrated ward- based policing.
- Improve visibility and response time.

The Department outline the following recommendations to improving safety in schools:

- Adoption of an integrated approach amongst all role-players,
- Need for regular and random school visits,
- Need for training and development,
- Formulation or review of school safety guidelines, and
- Engagement with Save the Children South Africa.

### **Updated plans and progress**

The department reported that a total of 6000 school patrollers were screened and deployed in schools and were patrolling daily to criminal activity and threats. The patrollers were linked to Law Enforcement Agencies and Private Security companies within their respective wards or policing precincts.

Furthermore, a total of 995 Push to Talk gadgets with e-panic buttons were distributed to school patrollers, increased back up for patrollers at schools and rapid response from Law Enforcement Agencies and increased visibility of LEAs in schools and surrounding areas.

### **❖ Critical areas**

In addition to the areas of improvement previously reported, the following were included:

- Smart Safer City Approach: To ensure that limited police resources were augmented. The use of the Push to talk gadgets were a critical element in this regard.
- Establishment of School Safety Committees across all schools: The Gauteng Department of Education made a commitment that necessary measures were to be put in place for these to be established.
- Development and implementation of School Safety Plans: This is linked to the establishment of School Safety Committees.

### ❖ **Gauteng Department of Social Development Presentation**

The meeting was informed that Gauteng Department of Social Development renders an array of services to pupils affected by violence, bullying and gangsterism at schools.

The Department ran programmes such as the School Social Work Programme, Crime Prevention Programme, HIV/AIDS – Social Behaviour Change Programme and Ke Moja Programme.

The School Social Work Programme was aligned to the Children's Act which upheld the protection of children by ensuring that the rights of children were protected in line with legislation and policy. Also, ensuring that the processes were in the best interest of the child; access to and provision of psychosocial support to learners at risk; involving parents and children and ensuring decisions made promoted children's best interests, amongst others.

The Gauteng Department of Social Development in collaboration with the Gauteng Department of Education, implemented the School Social Work Programme. In 2018, a Memorandum of Understanding relating to the implementation of the School Social Work Programme, was developed in which 119 school social workers and 13 Social Auxiliary Workers were deployed to over 2800 schools throughout the Gauteng Province.

In 2021, GDSD undertook an Evaluative Study on School Social Work Programme to obtain a scientific analysis on the impact of the Programme and determine whether GDSD was well equipped to effectively respond to challenges. Various internal GDSD sessions and a technical workshop were held with officials from both departments and finalisation and sign off, of the new MOU between GDE and GDSD was in progress.

The Memorandum of Understanding between GDE and GDSD approved in 2023, was being reviewed to incorporate the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Health and Department of Sports as critical role-players. This was to ensure integrated interventions and improved coordination of the School Intervention Programme through multi-stakeholder partnerships that address the holistic needs of learners at risk within the school environment.

The Committee was informed that the number of bullying incidents in and out of school premises by learners had escalated nationwide and several factors were identified as influencing the bullying of learners at schools. These included poverty and hunger, neglect, abuse, child headed family, violent home environments, violent neighbourhoods, lack of role models, school dropouts, insufficient school uniform and parents' reluctance to reprimand their children, in instances where their child was identified as the perpetrators of bullying.

GDSD renders services to learners faced with all social problems. Bullying, violence and gangsterism were identified as symptoms of deeper emotional issues. The main social work intervention methods utilised by DSD through social workers working in schools were casework, group work, crises intervention, community work, supervision and administration,

The Social crime Prevention programme provided services in schools in line with the relevant legislation and policies. These policies and legislations provided for Probation Officers to render crime prevention service to

persons in conflict with the law and at risk. Additionally, to address the incidents of bullying, gangsterism and violence in schools, National Department of Social Development developed an Anti-Gangsterism strategy.

The following Social and Behaviour Change Programmes targets children:

- Chommy – targeting boys and girls- 10- to 14-year-olds
- YOLO – targeting boys and girls -14 to 17 years old (applicable even to those beyond age 17 – as suggested by the evaluation study conducted)
- Boys Championing Change - targeting adolescent boys and youth
- Men Championing Change – targeting men – addressing gender roles and norms and the effect thereof on human behaviour.
- Families Matter – capacitating families to be change agents in behavioural matters and support children and youth
- Output and Impact
- Behaviour modification
- Reduce new infections
- Reduce teenage pregnancy
- Implement 95-95-95 strategy for HIV
- Reach all key and vulnerable populations with customised and targeted interventions
- Reduce HIV/AIDS stigma and discrimination
- Reduce GBV

The Social and Behaviour Change programmes impacts youth at different levels. At the individual level, interventions were targeted towards increased knowledge, shifting attitudes, sustaining motivation, self-esteem, self-confidence, and resilience. On an interpersonal level, interventions targeting mothers, fathers, parents, caregivers, grandparents, siblings, peers, partners to improve and strengthen interpersonal relation.

At a community level, interventions were targeted towards gatekeepers, community leaders, faith-based and traditional leaders, teachers, health care workers, and social service professionals. The Department also targets national leadership, role models, health and social policy & infrastructure, mass media, including religious, cultural, values and norms in the societal sphere.

The Ke Moja 'I'm fine without drugs' programme was intended to create a "substance abuse free environment" where young children enjoy their freedom, develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually, economically, physically and live their lives responsibly. It was implemented through a mass base approach and modular approach. The mass base approach reaches beneficiaries through once off activations in various settings e.g., school assembly, community outreach activities and loud hailing awareness. The Modular approach involved lessons in a classroom format and were presented to participants, 9 – 18 years of age (Ke Moja Manuals 1 & 2), 18 - 35 years participants (Ke Moja Manual 3). This approach focused on intense behaviour modification for at risk participants.

❖ **Updated report on plans and progress made:  
Integrated Plan of Action**

The School Intervention Programme in conjunction with service delivery partners as part of the revised Interdepartmental Memorandum of Understanding, will prioritise ongoing interventions and programmes to high risk/chronic schools to manage social ills such as child abuse and exploitation, substance abuse, mental health challenges, bullying and learner violence by intervening in the following ways:

- Develop School Based Support Plans based on joint MDT assessments to be tracked and monitored through a joint Monitoring Team (GDSD, GDE and DOH).
- Provide Core Package of Social Services as outlined in the current MOU through Corridor Implementation Plans.
- Establish a Joint MOU Task Team to monitor Corridor Implementation plans.
- Develop and implement specialised programmes responding to crises issues impacting on learner wellbeing such as Child Exploitation (Child Trafficking and On-Line Safety for Children), Child Violence, Learner Bullying and Learner Suicide.
- Ensure that learners have increased accessibility to user-friendly social services in schools.
- Promote and strengthen stakeholder collaboration amongst partnering government departments providing services to learners in schools through the Integrated School Health Programme.
- Development of a joint referral matrix with GDE to refer/link at-risk learners to the Masupatsela and Drummies Programmes with the aim of keeping learners off the streets after school and during school holidays. Track learners' involvement in these programmes to measure the impact on their mental, physical and social wellbeing.
- Educate and empower potential drummie recruits from schools with relevant life and social skills that will assist and equip them to deal with current social issues through engagement in programmes such as decision making, problem solving, conflict resolution, teamwork, leadership that will enable learners to make informed and better choices.
- One of the critical focus areas that the School Social Work Intervention Programme will be embarking on is the institutionalization of the Community of Practice for Grades R to 3.
- This school-based support programme is aimed at providing early intervention services to improve child well-being outcomes through collaborative partnerships between key sectors such as health, social development, and education.
- Implementation of intentional joint programmes such as Holiday Programmes aimed at increasing the safety and protection of children in primary schools. This is to minimise the risk of learners in early grades and those in their formative years from being tempted to experiment with substances, alcohol, engaging in risky behaviour and becoming involved in criminal acts during holiday period as many children will be left to their own devices with the necessary the adult supervision.
- Support Corridors in the implementation of “No Families and Children on Street Corners” campaign to minimise the risk of children becoming potential victims of sexual exploitation (child labour, child trafficking) and organised crime.
- The Department also reported that the following school intervention plans were implemented, amongst others:
  - Support collaborative efforts with key stakeholders to prevent/prohibit the ‘Pens Down Parties’ which leads to underage drinking, sexual exploitation, physical altercations and gang related violence.
  - Continue with parenting skills programmes to encourage open communication between learners and their parents.



- Educate and empower educators, parents and communities to identify warning signs of child trafficking and exploitation and report to law enforcement and social workers.

#### ❖ **Challenges**

- The need for social workers working in schools to be better supported and provided with appropriate resources to undertake the responsibilities attached to their roles.
- The absence of a ring-fenced budget allocation (financial and non-financial resources) to fund the programme. GDSD carries all the costs for social workers working in schools in terms of salaries, vehicles and ICT devices.
- No suitable accommodation and facilities within the school environment to render confidential, professional services.
- Limited or no time for psychosocial interventions within the school day.
- Social Worker burnout due to demand, conditions, nature of cases and limited opportunities for ongoing debriefing.
- Inadequate coordination of school social work and psychosocial services.
- Limited or no understanding by parents and educators about their legal and ethical obligation towards children and learners in terms of mandatory reporting.
- Ethical concerns about referrals and feedback to districts and schools – maintain learner confidentiality.

#### ❖ **Summary of Gauteng Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation**

The Gauteng Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation indicated that funding for school sports resides in Programme 4: Sport and Recreation, subprogramme: school sport. The funding was sourced through a conditional grant that was intended to increase citizens access to sport and recreation activities and facilitate sport and active recreation participation and empowerment in partnership with relevant stakeholders. The envisaged impact of the grant was linked to the priority: social cohesion and safe communities.

The purpose of the School Sport Unit was to promote mass participation amongst the learners, promote healthy lifestyles and physical wellbeing. School Sport remained the bedrock of development and talent identification. While it was within the scope of the federations as well as both the Provincial Departments of Education and Sports to ensure that schools participate in leagues on a regular basis, the South African National Schools Championship was the highest platform for both selected teams and school teams to participate in a variety of sporting codes. Schools and individual learners were encouraged to participate regularly in mass as well as competitively in sport and learners were given a chance to explore their sporting talents.

School Sport was a combination of sport mass participation and Competitive school sport for both the able-bodied learners as well as Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) also known as disability sport. Mass participation happens in school and intra school games and it begins to be competitive at league and cluster level.

The Wednesday League Programme was launched successfully on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 with the aim of supporting the sustained regular participation of the no fee-paying schools on sporting activities mainly the football and netball leagues.

All the schools that participated in the Wednesday League Season 1 received equipment and attire. About 381 schools were able to participate in their respective clusters. Those that qualified for the champions league were assisted with transport to the playing venues. A total of 64 new schools received equipment and attire during the finals of the Wednesday Champions League. Additionally, 480 schools received equipment and attire specifically for Wednesday League and 120 Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres also received playing equipment.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATION ON LAW MAKING**

### **9.1 Committee Concerns/Observations**

1. The prevalence of violence at schools, carrying of various dangerous weapons and sharp objects by learners in school premises.
2. While the deployment of Gauteng Traffic Wardens and patrollers was welcomed, deployment of security guards and installation of CCTV cameras at schools will enhance safety of learners, educators, as well as ensuring that school premises are completely safeguarded.
3. The scourge of illicit substance and drug abuse, gangsterism, bullying, and tribalism by learners.
4. Lack of Parental Involvement plays a significant role in the emerges of difficult behaviour such as joining gangs and the use of illicit substance.
5. The study revealed that there was a need for programmes to capacitate school staff to learn to identify and support learners at risk
6. The learners who skip classes to partake in gambling and smoking dagga during learning time.
7. There was a need to provide psychosocial support to school staff as they were experiencing varying stressful environments in schools.
8. Representatives from RCL's were not included when schools develop the safety plan as well as other school policies.
9. The shortage of school furniture such as tables and chairs which results to fights amongst learners.
10. The Committee noted the Department of Education planned to convene school safety summit.
11. Limited access to social work or psychosocial services for learners within school premises.
12. Lack and or limited sporting and recreational facilities for learners.

### **9.2 Committee Recommendations**

The relevant departments must submit an integrated report on all the above-stated recommendations to the Legislature by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025


1. The Department of Community Safety in collaboration with Law enforcement Agencies must enhance the random school search interventions to curb violent behavior including carrying of dangerous weapons and use of illicit substance by learners at schools.
2. The Department of Education jointly with the Department of Community Safety must strengthen deployment of security personnel such as Gauteng Traffic Wardens, security guards or patrollers to enhance visible policing and maintain law and order at schools. Also, enhance efforts of installing CCTV cameras to ensure that learners, educators, and school physical environs are completely safeguarded.

3. The Departments of Community Safety, Education, and Social Development jointly develop and implement a multidisciplinary strategy to curb the scourge of illegal substance and drug abuse within school premises.
4. The Department of Education must develop a comprehensive parental involvement strategy in collaboration with the Gauteng Department of Social Development.
5. The Department of Education must develop stricter measures to promote discipline and minimize acts of gambling and smoking within and around schools' premises.
6. The Department of Education must intensify programmes aimed at capacitating school staff to be able to identify and support learners at risk.
7. The Department of Education must strengthen the provision of Employee Assistance Programme to ensure employee wellness.
8. The Department of Education must involve members of RCLs when schools develop safety plans and other school policies.
9. The Department of Education must conduct an analysis relating to shortage of school furniture and device a strategy to alleviate the shortages.
10. The Department of Education must provide a report on the outcomes of the envisaged school safety summit.
11. The Department of Social Development must increase the provision of social work or psycho-social services for distressed learners. Also, to consider deployment of permanent social work desks in schools.
12. The Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation must enhance implementation of sporting activities and recreational facilities through the construction of combi courts, particularly at previously disadvantaged communities.

## 10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chairpersons of both the Community Safety and Education Committees express gratitude as follows,

- The Department of Community Safety led by Hon. Panyaza Lesufi; and the Department of Education, led by and Hon. Matome Chiloane, Department of Social Development under the leadership of Hon. Faith Mazibuko for the cooperation during the consideration of the FIS.
- To Honourable Portfolio Committee Members: N Mhlakaza-Manamela, T Kunene, L Makhubela, M Sesidinyane, J Moodey, L Evans, M Maloka, S Nyathi, L Mkhwanazi, A Allie, C Bosh, S Dos Santos, M Waters, F Ngobeni, M Sun and B Engelbrecht for their dedication and support during the study.
- To the staff members of both Committees; Group Committee Co-ordinator, Ms. Zuziwe Pantshwa-Mbalo, Senior Researcher, Ms Sekinah Nenweli, Senior Committee Co-ordinator, Ms. Sharlene Gaya, Committee Co-ordinators, Ms Thabile Malumane and Mr Pheello Mashiloane, Committee Administrator, Mr. Thabo Kekana and Ms Nthabiseng Mofokeng Committee Researchers, Ms Paballo Malise-Banda and Mr. Joseph Makhura, Hansard Recorders, Ms. Raksha Singh and Mr Sylvester Baloyi, Service Officers, Ms. Mavis Nhlapo and Ms Fezeka Royo, Media Officers Mr Thebe Khumalo and Mr. Takalani Ndou, Information Officer Mr. Jacky Letsoalo and Ms Azwinndini Netshivhuyu, Public



Participation and Manager PPP Unit Ms. Lindy Tjia, for the commitment they have shown during the FIS process.

## 11. ADOPTION

In accordance with Rule 165, the Chairperson hereby recommends that the report on the Joint Community Safety and Education Committee Focused Intervention Study Report, be adopted by the House, considering committee concerns and proposed recommendations made in this report.