

From: Paddy Attwell [mailto:pattwell@pgwc.gov.za]
Sent: 14 April 2010 09:40 AM
To: S'khumbuzo Maphumulo
Subject: RE: Request: Western Cape disaggregated literacy and numeracy results

Dear S'khumbuzo

Your email refers. We'd be happy to help. If you have specific questions, I suggest that you email them to me so that we can answer them. Hopefully this would be a fairly simple process. If this doesn't help, we could look at organising a briefing session.

The following may help if they are asking for an explanation of the difference between pass rates and average marks: for example, the Grade 3 figures for 2008 show that 42.3% of learners from former Department of Education and Training (DET) schools obtained more than 50% for literacy in the Western Cape, and that the average mark for these learners was 41.6%.

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) set the "pass rate" for the purposes of the study at 50%. This does not necessarily reflect the official requirement for promotion to the next Grade. The WCED believes that learners should achieve at least 50%, to build a foundation for further progress.

You will note from the results that the WCED has conducted the tests every year since 2002, alternating between Grades 3 and 6. The tests form an important part of the department's literacy and numeracy strategy. The results show improvement in literacy, but not for numeracy, and we have adjusted our approach accordingly.

While we are seeing improvement, we still have a long way to go before we will be satisfied with the results. The improvements in our poorest schools are from a very low base. However, improvement in recent years has shown that special interventions do work and that our teachers in these schools are rising to the challenge.

We have set targets for the next 10 years as part of our strategic plan for 2010 to 2019. You will find the target in our statement of strategic objectives for education in the Western Cape at <http://wced.wcape.gov.za/documents/Education-Priorities-2010-19.pdf>

Kind regards

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