



WHEN THE SUN RISES
WE WORK HARD TO DELIVER

**TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL DROPOUT MANAGEMENT AND PREVENTION PLAN :
*MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS SCHOOL DROPOUT ESPECIALLY IN THE
MIDST OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC***

MINISTERIAL HYBRID BRIEFING SESSION

16 NOVEMBER 2021

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Purpose
2. Learner throughput rate since 2003
3. Analysis of the throughput rate and possible drop-out since 2003
3. Commissioned provincial study on learner dropout rate
4. Learner drop-out in 2021 compared to 2020
5. Provincial Management Plan to address learner Dropout
9. Recommendations



PURPOSE OF THE PRESENTATION

The purpose of the presentation is to

- provide the department's overview on the possible reasons for learners dropping out of the schooling system, and
- interventions the Department is implementing to address school dropouts, especially in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic .

LEARNER THROUGHPUT RATE SINCE 2003

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12	TOTAL	% POSSIBLE RETENTION/DROP OUT	% THROUGHPUT
2003	89 562	81 399	75 335	74 470	75 368	81 978	72 168	75 496	71 022	88 037	61 259	40 738	886 832		
2004	100 107	79 015	77 904	74 010	70 871	71 904	77 211	78 154	70 023	84 834	66 840	40 466	891 339		
2005	90 912	87 041	77 280	79 478	71 226	68 553	71 410	81 066	69 770	81 230	70 554	40 741	889 261		
2006	87 582	83 650	86 227	80 992	76 776	69 739	66 329	75 623	69 715	82 849	71 776	40 808	892 066		
2007	96 984	87 991	91 070	94 797	85 960	81 701	71 598	84 816	78 216	96 543	86 661	55 320	1 011 657		
2008	90 583	87 472	86 756	90 584	91 856	82 832	79 216	82 106	80 614	90 283	82 166	58 569	1 003 037		
2009	89 124	82 272	85 599	86 903	87 489	87 382	80 031	85 756	77 284	90 053	77 959	56 850	986 702		
2010	88 015	78 684	78 815	83 364	82 248	82 595	83 419	84 326	82 069	88 698	75 063	53 491	960 787		
2011	96 331	80 164	76 998	81 230	80 971	79 751	80 151	90 064	82 953	92 927	74 180	48 443	964 163		
2012	98 547	87 315	77 727	78 982	78 740	78 800	77 767	87 990	87 007	91 364	75 781	47 424	967 444		
2013	99 441	91 112	86 532	77 898	76 673	76 216	77 558	86 639	83 515	96 462	73 361	49 737	975 144		
2014	100 246	93 330	86 923	83 761	75 360	74 112	74 809	85 226	82 908	94 903	79 860	47 979	979 417	46,42%	53,58%
2015	101 664	94 530	89 690	87 972	79 469	72 240	74 842	84 037	79 850	93 002	80 089	53 901	991 286	46,20%	53,80%
2016	96 698	95 347	89 518	90 604	82 788	77 028	73 971	81 225	77 381	89 847	79 780	58 965	993 152	35,14%	64,86%
2017	93 415	91 540	91 563	91 323	85 433	80 667	76 086	78 690	75 776	89 518	77 165	57 822	988 998	33,97%	66,03%
2018	95 148	89 726	90 025	92 727	87 814	84 044	80 228	83 381	77 049	91 857	81 164	57 817	1 010 980	40,38%	59,62%
2019	92 853	90 118	89 850	89 332	87 665	85 768	83 001	87 496	79 611	91 150	79 329	55 126	1 011 299	39,14%	60,86%
2020	93 049	90 534	89 910	90 381	88 393	86 356	86 068	91 329	83 624	94 854	77 555	55 361	1 027 414	37,88%	62,12%
2021	91 104	91 138	90 620	91 795	88 526	88 261	86 976	91 965	88 846	94 065	86 332	68 308	1 059 957	22,39%	77,61%

ANALYSIS OF THE THROUGHPUT RATE AND POSSIBLE DROP-OUT SINCE 2003

- The previous slide indicates a throughput rate of between 53 and 78% with a possible dropout rate of between 46 and 23% between 2003 and 2021 in Mpumalanga
- However, the fact that a child did not reach Grade 12 in Mpumalanga with the same cohort of learners they started with in Grade 1 in Mpumalanga does not necessarily mean they dropped out of the schooling system
- The following are possible explanations for the low throughput rate
 - Some learners may have not gone through to Grade 12 with the Grade 1 cohort they started with due to grade repetitions
 - Some may have moved to other provinces, TVET Colleges, or different examination authorities like the Independent Examination Board (IEB), the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) as implemented by the Cambridge Academy and Uplands in Mpumalanga, and therefore have fallen out of our system and we count them as dropouts
 - Some may have migrated to other countries but still in the schooling system

COMMISSIONED PROVINCIAL STUDY ON LEARNER DROPOUT RATE

- Worried about the extent of learner dropouts in the Province, the Department commissioned a study that was conducted by the University of the Witwatersrand in 2015.
- The study indicated the following as the main reasons for learner dropout in the province
 - **Socio-economic background:** learners from communities facing multiple deprivation, record a significantly high tendency to drop out from school
 - **Grade repetition:** the more learners fail and repeat grades, the likelihood of dropping out of school increases exponentially
 - **Absenteeism:** learners who are more frequently absent from school, for whatever reason (child headed family, lack of sanitary pads, transport, school uniform, etc) are more likely to drop out of school
 - **Gang membership and drug abusers:** learners who belong to established gangs and abuse drugs, are more likely to drop out of school
 - **Poor academic performance, especially failure to read and write:** poor childhood development resulting to a child not performing at the same level as other children in the same age group result in the child dropping out of school

Grade 12 trends on learner drop-out rate

Year	Total entered	Total that did not write all subjects	%	Total Wrote	Total Achieved	%
2014	44524	761	1,7	43763	34667	79
2015	55795	815	1,5	54 980	43 229	78,6
2016	60711	6460	10,6	54 251	41 801	77,1
2017	59276	10793	18,2	48 483	36 273	74,8
2018	57660	13048	22,6	44 612	35 225	79,0
2019	56672	13113	23,1	43 559	34 995	80,3
2020	56672	3281	5,8	53391	39367	73,7

LEARNER DROP-OUT IN 2021 COMPARED TO 2020

GRADE	2020	TOTAL NUMBER OF LEARNERS IN THE GRADE IN 2021	2020 TO 2021
1	93 049	91 104	+2,09
2	90 534	91 138	+0,66
3	89 910	90 620	+0,78
4	90 381	91 795	+1,54
5	88 393	88 526	+0,15
6	86 356	88 261	+2,15
7	86 068	86 976	+1,04
8	91 329	91 965	+0,69
9	83 624	88 846	+5,87
10	94 854	94 065	-0,83
11	77 555	86 333	+10,16
12	55 361	68 308	+18,9
TOTALS	1 027 414	1 057 937	3,6

LEARNER DROP-OUT IN 2021 COMPARED TO 2020

- Our records in the previous slide indicate that more learners dropped out of the system this year over the period; January to August 2021, in Grades 1 to 6 compared to last year, 2020 over the same period.
- Fewer learners dropped out in Grades 7 to 12 in 2021 compared to 2020
- The actual reasons for this phenomenon are not yet formally researched but could be as a result of the following:
 - Poor economic factors as alluded to in slide number 6 above, as exacerbated by the pandemic, impacted more on the younger children compared to the older ones
 - Depending on statistics in other provinces, the return to full attendance in primary schools could have led to other parents holding back their children for safety reasons

- The Province has developed and implemented a number of programmes intended to reduce learner dropout:
 - **Boarding School strategy:** the Province demolished farm schools and built six boarding schools to provide decent education and address learner dropout in farm communities.
 - **School Safety strategy:** the Province has developed and implemented the integrated school safety strategy to address issues of bullying, drugs and safety in school to curb learner dropout in the schooling communities
 - **Provision of Sanitary towels for Girls:** the Province in partnership with the Department of Social Development has developed a provincial strategy and plan to provide sanitary towels to girl children in schools
 - **Provision of School Nutrition:** the provision of the programme for National School Nutrition to learners has played a significant role in curbing learner dropout from the schooling system
 - **Provision of Scholar Transport:** the provision of scholar transport has improved the throughput rate since 2003 as evident in slide number 4 above.
 - **TV and Radio Lessons, Social Media Platforms, Dial-a Tutor programme and Zero rated e-learning platforms:** these were extensively utilized to improve academic performance to prevent perception of failure and subsequent dropout
 - **Life skills programme:** the programme is implemented to educate all learners on sexuality matters and behaviour that will prevent teenage pregnancy and resultant dropout

It is recommended that the meeting :

- notes the possible reasons for learner dropouts and the Provincial Management plan to address learner dropouts in Mpumalanga
- discuss the implementation of a national tracking system to determine the actual learner dropout from the education system and not just from the provincial database.