Key issues for improving the delivery of

Quality basic education and schooling

FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING TECHNICAL TASK TEAM FINAL REPORT

October 2014

ACRONYMS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
ANA	Annual National Assessments
CAPS	National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement *(succeeded the NCS)*
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
CTLI	Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute
DAS	Developmental Appraisal System
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ETDP SETA	Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
FET	Further Education and Training
FAL	First Additional Language
FLTTT	Foundational Learning Technical Task Team
GET	General Education and Training
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Council
HESA	Higher Education South Africa
HOD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resource
HRDC	Human Resource Development Council
ICT	Information and communications technology
IDSO	Institutional Development and Support Officer
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development 2011 – 2025
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
MASTEC	Maths, Science and Technology Education College
MEC	Member of the provincial Executive Council
MRTEQ	Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NDP	National Development Plan
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NGP	New Growth Path
NICPD	National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development
NPFTED	National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa
NSC	National Senior Certificate

NTEDC   National Teacher Education and Development Committee
OSD   Occupation Specific Dispensation
PAM   Personnel Administrative Measures
PED   Provincial Education Department
PIRLS   Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
QMS   Quality Management System
SACE   South African Council for Educators
SACMEQ   Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SMT   School Management Team
TIMSS   Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

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Executive summary

The Foundational Learning Technical Task Team is responsible for identifying and analysing current challenges in the schooling system that are hampering the delivery of quality basic schooling in South Africa, and for proposing recommendations on how best to position the schooling system to support improved quality of education, leading to equitable achievement of improved learning outcomes nationally.

The challenges in the schooling sector have historical roots that precede the democratic era in the country. Although substantial progress has been made since 1994 in increasing access and progression in schools, the poor quality of education delivery and learner achievements continues to be of concern and the focus of numerous initiatives and analytic papers. Consistent themes focus attention on the need for improving early childhood education provision, the quality of teaching provision, strengthening the development of teachers, and strengthening management and support capacity.

A number of policy documents provide a strong framework for the sector, and collaborative structures and strategies are being established to coordinate the participation and activities of the wide range of stakeholders implicated in this endeavour that is of concern to all levels of society.

The Task Team chose to focus on few selected areas, on the premise that progress in these would have greatest impact on weaknesses in the system.

Teacher professionalism and professionalisation

Although teacher professionalism is a complex and contested notion, particularly in the South African context of an inequitable and struggling education system, generally accepted criteria for professionalism are specialised knowledge, commitment to professional development and research, professional status and access control, and a code of ethics.

With all South African teacher qualifications to be aligned to minimum requirements by 2014, there is widespread interest in the **induction** of newly qualified teachers with mentoring to facilitate their adjustment and retention in the complex school context.

Continuous professional teacher development has gained currency globally in line with policies aimed at promoting lifelong learning. Similarly CPTD is emphasised in South Africa as the focus of the 2007 *National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa*, and located within the structures and processes established through the 2011 *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development*. The South African Council for Educators has initiated the first three-year cycle of its CPTD Management System, starting with the school management level, and other loci of CPTD are noted. However the neglect of opportunities for staff development within schools by establishing the practice of teachers learning from each other through lesson observation, team teaching and mentoring is noted, for example in the 2012 report from the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit.

Limitations in career path options for teachers are also noted, with promotion possible only via a management and leadership avenue, despite options in this regard first being raised in the *Collective*

Agreement number 1 of 2008: Framework for the establishment of an Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) for educators in public education.

Concerns for the setting of different types of standards in various locations for different purposes and levels of the teaching profession are noted. These need alignment and integration to provide a holistic framework.

A conceptual framework for addressing teacher professionalism is offered, indicating points for professionalisation in the teaching career path, and stakeholders who are critical participants in this process. Although the need for collaboration provides a basis for planning frameworks that are in place, there is a continuing need to ensure collaboration of all relevant parties, and integration of their work.

Education districts

Education districts play a critical role in mediating between schools and different layers of government, and can therefore serve as a major source of support and capacity building for the schools. Districts are well positioned to drive reform, but need to be adequately capacitated to do so, and appropriately orientated to this end.

The promulgation of the *Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (2013) is a positive development towards rectifying the historical neglect of the district tier of the education system, putting the focus on organisation, roles and responsibilities of the districts. However, in general, districts have emphasised compliance regulation over facilitating education improvement, particularly in unequal and resource-challenged contexts.

Sampled observations on the current status of districts included

- difficulties in interpreting their roles and responsibilities as defined by the policy
- room for improvement in the organisational routines that structure the work of the districts, as well in general leadership and management practices, with resource limitations often the cause of failures that occur and
- Weak culture of using data.

There is a wide variation in the configuration of districts across the nine provinces, although a comparative review of a small sample of districts revealed that size is not necessarily the most critical factor affecting district performance. Understaffing with regard to district subject advisory service provision for schools is a particular challenge, aggravated by shortages in material resources, resulting in the inability of district officials to visit all the schools for which they are responsible.

Although the conducive configuration and resourcing of district support services underpin sustainable improvement of learning outcomes, capacity development will only be embedded once it is institutionalised in districts' working practices and strategies. The challenge is to create committed, capacitated districts that support improved learning outcomes in schools.

Early Childhood Development

Increasing awareness of the importance of strong programmes and support for Early Childhood Development resulted in a review of the sector in 2012, followed by an improvement plan and

action plan. Progress is hampered however by the location of the sector straddling a number of government departments. Human resource development for the sector is one of the priorities, and although progress in this regard is underway with the production of a draft National Curriculum Framework for children from Birth to Four, much must still be done.

Recommendations

The paper concludes with a set of recommendations organised into the following categories:

- *Policy development and implementation*
  - o Promoting teacher professionalism
  - o Enabling induction with mentorship
  - o Implementing district policy
- *Induction*
  - o Developing induction framework and programmes
  - o Developing mentorship capacity
- *Professional standards for teachers*
  - o Integrating and coordinating initiatives
- *Continuous professional development*
  - o Monitoring quality and impact of existing initiatives
  - o Developing subject advisor programmes and capacity
  - o Delivering change management programmes in the districts
  - o Researching projects for developing collaborative and reflective practice in schools
- *Advocacy*
  - o Promoting the value of continuous professional development for the profession and the education system
- *Early childhood development*
  - o Establishing intersectoral processes for management, coordination, implementation and monitoring
  - o Developing human resource capacity

In outlining these recommendations, the Task Team notes the collaborative nature of the education sector, and that strength in delivery lies in integration and coordination of efforts and initiatives.

1. Establishment of the Foundational Learning Technical Task Team

The HRD Council's mandate is to advise government on matters related to the Human Resources Development of the country for an inclusive growth path, and to monitor progress made towards achievement of the commitments made in the strategy. The Council has agreed that a critical approach and common theme is the identification and removal of bottlenecks in the skills pipeline, and to develop mechanisms that provide learners and students with placements in order for them to attain educational qualifications.

The category of '*Foundational Learning*' was identified as one of five key points for attention in the 2011 HRD Council work plan based on the HRD Strategy. The other key points were (1) to strengthen and support FET colleges to expand access; (2) to produce intermediate skills (artisans in particular) and professionals; (3) to produce academics and stronger industry-university partnerships in research and development; and (4) worker education. This contextualisation of '*Foundational Learning*' as a key component of the skills pipeline refers to schooling in general, and should not be confused with a narrower focus on the Foundation Phase of schooling, or other areas in which the term is in use. Foundational Learning refers to basic education, including both early childhood development and all phases of general schooling, as a component in a lifelong acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the performance of chosen roles that contribute economically and socially to the self and others. This broader interpretation of the category was confirmed by the presentation by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) of its *Action Plan 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025* which outlines the departmental vision for improving access to and increasing the quality of basic education in order to deliver on the outcomes of Commitment Three of the HRD Strategy of SA.

Commitment Three, being one of eight commitments framing the five year targets of the action plan of the HRD Strategy, states:

> We will ensure improved universal access to quality basic education and schooling (up to Grade 12) that is purposefully focused on: (a) achieving a dramatic improvement in the education outcomes for the poor; (b) equipping learners with optimal capacity for good citizenship; and (c) the pursuit of post-school vocational education and training or employment.

In March 2011, the Human Resource Development Council established the Foundational Learning Technical Task Team (henceforth referred to as FLTTT or the Task Team) to identify blockages in the schooling system and propose measures that can be used to support the work of the DBE. Commitment Three provides a clear exposition of the breadth and critical importance of the area of Foundational Learning. Learning in this area must provide the populace with a strong foundation of skills and knowledge that is the key to success in any of the other areas of concern for the Council. Without success in the area of Foundational Learning, achievement in any subsequent education enterprise is much more difficult, requiring remedial action to address the learning outcomes that underpin progress.

The background against which Commitment Three is undertaken is one in which the current school system is still fundamentally affected by its historical legacy of apartheid. In general, schools are observed to provide inadequate education with very poor results in mathematics and language,

being among the worst performers internationally. School leavers generally are equipped poorly or not at all for the job market or any other post schooling opportunity.

The aim through Commitment Three and the foundational learning focus is to
- Improve universal access to quality basic education and schooling (up to Grade 12) and to expand age-appropriate participation in Early Childhood Development (ECD)
- Ensure equity in education inputs and learning outcomes
- Ensure that education outcomes promote values that are consistent with good citizenship and the provisions of the Constitution
- Improve learner performance and the quality of education in the schooling system
- Improve the percentage pass rate
- Ensure that all learners, especially the poor, have access to basic health-promoting interventions.

The rationale of the HRD Secretariat for establishing the Foundational Learning Task Team was explained as:
- the need to identify and address blockages across the entire foundational education system
- inequalities in education by race and location
- the poor throughput in Maths and Science, with weaknesses in Maths and Science competency notably prevalent in black schools
- the weakness of ICT training and infrastructure across the system
- weaknesses in teacher provision and a backlog in teacher development
- the lack of qualified, experienced and specialist educators.

2. Terms of Reference of the Task Team

The establishment of the Task Team was proposed as a means to 'look into foundational learning and come up with measures that the Council can use to resolve blockages'. The objectives of the Task Team would be to:
- Critically analyse and interrogate the status quo in order to understand the nature of current blockages; and draw on existing research (reports, studies, evaluations, reviews);
- Intensively engage the DBE, looking at its current strategy. Explore how blockages are interrelated and find three or four key leverage points;
- Critically analyse and understand the New Growth Path;
- Propose recommendations on how best to position schooling to support HRDC Commitment Three.
- Engage experts and consult with relevant stakeholders in the process, sharing lessons learnt, and facilitating consensus on key blockages in the South African schooling system.

3. Work undertaken by the Task Team

The Task Team held 17 meetings over the period 7th April 2011 to April 2014, during which time education reports were reviewed and presentations received from experts in the field. The activities and deliberations undertaken initially contributed to general insight into the context and systemic

characteristics, which led to the refinement of the Task Team's focus and the development of terms of reference for two pieces of research. Later engagements provided information on work being done by other stakeholders, and updates of activities in the field and the sector.

Based on the two research reports, recommendations were drafted and discussed with the various stakeholders. This consultation process resulted in amendments to the draft recommendations, and finalisation of the Task Team report.

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4. Insights gained from key education reports reviewed [1] and presentations received

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The Education Roadmap (2008-9)

The *Education Roadmap* intervention coordinated by Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) on behalf of multi-stakeholders and adopting a back to basics approach, produced a 10-point programme 'of key priorities to fix schooling in South Africa'. While noting the substantial progress that had been made since 1994 with regard to increased access to all levels of schooling and education in terms of increased percentages of age cohorts in school, greater proportions of learners progressing to higher grades and improved teacher to learner ratios, a central problem was observed to be the prevalent quality of teaching. This diagnosis was based on poor performance in the *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study* (PIRLS) and *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* (TIMSS) international benchmarking tests that focus on reading literacy, and mathematics and science achievement respectively. The '*Foundations for Learning*' campaign had been launched by the then Department of Education in March 2008 in response to poor learning outcomes achieved nationally and internationally.

The *Education Roadmap* identified social disadvantage as the primary challenge, with socio-economic status a strong predictor of educational outcome. However teachers' lack of language, literacy and mathematics knowledge (as assessed in a 2004 baseline), inadequate teaching practices, and falling teacher numbers were observed to aggravate the situation. The comparative dysfunctionality in regard to time on task of township schools measured against those in the suburbs were notably well known and resulting in parents at great cost sending their children from the township to schools in the suburbs.

Other challenges noted at the time were insufficiency of funding for education in the face of an infrastructure backlog, and an insufficient district focus on learning and teaching.

The proposed 10-point Education Roadmap programme addressed three areas, namely in-school, support to school, and societal. The in-school focus was on **improving the quality of teaching provision**, most basically in terms of class time spent teaching, with teacher performance evaluated on the basis of improvement in learner performance as indicated through annual external testing in grade 3 and 6. **Improvement in early childhood education** and primary schooling were particularly emphasised, including the implementation of the Foundations for Learning Campaign. Recruitment and **strengthened development of teachers** were identified for attention, notably the strategy of ensuring that teacher unions have a formal and funded role in teacher development.

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[1] The education reports taken into consideration by the Task Team are listed in the reference section at the end of this report.

In terms of support to schools, **strengthened management capacity** was to ensure functional districts and schools, with the suggestion of bringing in management capacity from the private sector, civil society and elsewhere in the public sector. In addition, use of ICT was to be increased, and efficiency of expenditure improved.

The societal aspect proposed the development of a social compact for quality education, and mobilisation of community awareness and participation at all levels. In addition, poverty combating measures such as the nutrition programme, basic school infrastructure and social support for children were recommended.

> **Report of the Task Team for the Review of the Implementation of the *National Curriculum Statement* (October 2009)**

The *Report of the Task Team for the Review of the Implementation of the National Curriculum Statement* was produced by a panel of experts appointed by Minister Motshekga of Basic Education to investigate the challenges and problems experienced in the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and to develop a corresponding set of recommendations for improvement. The report framed the recommendations of the authors within a five-year plan focused on improvement of learner performance.

The main recommendations made in the report in regard to curriculum were the following:

- Policies should be streamlined and clarified, particularly as regards curriculum, in order to clarify the prevailing confusion related to the shift from C2005 to the National Curriculum Statement. This was subsequently done by means of the *National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12*, published in 2011 and amended in December 2012.

- Administrative requirements of teachers were found to be excessively onerous to the point of detracting from teaching and contact time. Recommendation was made to reduce administrative planning aspects of teachers' workloads in order to allow more teaching time.

- Recommendations for simplifying and streamlining assessment requirements and introducing national systemic assessments over the period 2009 to 2011 at grade 3 and 6 were made, and these have been implemented by means of the national Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and the Annual National Assessments (ANA).

- The reduction of Learning Areas to six subjects including two languages was recommended as a means of decreasing the overload in the Intermediate Phase, and easing the transition from Foundation Phase. The importance of learning English in the curriculum was underscored by the recommendation for introducing English as First Additional Language (FAL) as a fourth subject in the Foundation Phase, to be implemented in 2011.

- The centralisation of quality assurance and catalogue development of text books and other learning and teaching support materials (LTSM) was recommended in concert with communication of the activity value and benefits of text books, and widespread provision of text books for each learner from grade 4 to 12. This was intended to reverse the situation under Curriculum 2005 in which proper and comprehensive text book use was discouraged and undermined.

In addition to the above, a number of recommendations were made in regard to teaching and learning, many echoing the considerations addressed in the *Education Roadmap*, namely:

- A five-year plan to improve teaching and learning should be developed and widely advocated, with its central theme being the provision of support to teachers and the improvement of learner performance. Subsequently the *Action Plan to 2014 – Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025* was published by DBE in October 2011

- National, provincial and district roles in respect of curriculum production and dissemination must be clarified, and provinces and districts should adopt the primary role of support for curriculum, accompanying the role of monitoring curriculum implementation. Central to this is the role of subject advisors, a lack of which was identified, as well as a lack of skills and knowledge.

- The review limited its brief to teacher training in support of effective curriculum implementation, and highlighted that the aim of training in the current period should be the reassertion of teachers' roles as subject experts, supporting them in their work in the classroom. The role of subject advisors was proposed to be radically changed to emphasise provision of support, training, development and mentorship. All stakeholders were identified as needing targeted training in any future curriculum revisions, including district officials, subject advisors, provincial officials and principals.

- Crucially, loss of teaching time was to be addressed by tackling teachers' professional orientation. In-service training should be targeted to where it is most needed, and should be subject specific.

Action Plan to 2014 – Towards the realisation of schooling 2025 (DBE, October 2011)

The *Action Plan to 2014 – Towards the realisation of schooling 2025* accompanies the Delivery Agreement for basic education, signed in 2010 by key government stakeholders, including the Minister and all provincial education MECs. The Action Plan identifies a number of critical challenges and difficulties to be overcome in schools. Twenty-seven goals are proposed, of which 13 indicate learner access and achievement targets in language, numeracy, mathematics and science, and make specific mention of access to Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Further Education and Training.

The Action Plan strongly emphasises the use of the ANA as a device for monitoring learner achievements in key grades while at the same time exposing teachers to best assessment practices, and identifying schools in need of specialised support. Indicators for achievement refer also to the *Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality* (SACMEQ) assessments, *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* (TIMSS) and *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study* (PIRLS) rankings, and improvements that can be achieved against these measures. Participation in international education quality monitoring programmes such as SACMEQ, TIMSS and PIRLS is endorsed for providing the opportunity for standardised international benchmarking of achievements of the education system, including a special focus on language and mathematics.

The remaining 14 goals of the *Action Plan* constitute strategies for achieving those mentioned above, and include among others the provision of learning and teaching support materials, time management, community participation, adequacy of funding, and networking of schools to other public services in order to promote learner access to these. Straddling these many goals, the Action Plan asserts that

> *Improving the quality of education in schools in the sense of improving learning outcomes stands out as the greatest challenge[2].*

Overall, five priorities are identified, pertaining to ECD, professionalism of the teaching force, provision of learning support materials, school management, and district monitoring and support.

The Action Plan argues strongly that teachers and the teaching process, school management and district support are the means to achieving the goals, particularly in regard to learner achievements in language, mathematics and schooling generally. This perspective is supported elsewhere specifically with regard to achievements in Mathematics. For example, the TIMSS report of 2011 identifies links between higher levels of learner performance and factors such as school management, and teacher knowledge and skill. These lead to the conclusion that improvement in these latter factors would allow for improvement in performances in Mathematics.

Priorities for addressing South Africa's Education and Training Crisis (June 2011)

Commissioned in March 2011 by the National Planning Commission this paper on the present situation and future demands with regard to schooling and the higher education landscape notes that the most urgent national question that must be addressed is *What is the way out of the current 'transition trough?'* and that the chief concern is the professional behaviour of teachers, principals and officials in large parts of the school system.

It is argued that although there are some excellent districts and schools, the system is generally '*sluggish and ill disciplined*' as a consequence of inappropriately appointing people to positions for which they are ill-equipped. A more professional way of working would place competence as the central principle in determining staff recruitment, promotion and training (2011: 55). In this regard, it is suggested that proficiency tests should be devised, based on detailed job descriptions for managers and office based staff, and on a deep, principled understanding of the relevant subject for teachers, and that these should be used as the basis for recruitment and promotion of all staff in the public service.

Observations in overview of schooling include:

- Access to education for 5 to 6-year olds has been substantially improved by expanding Grade R and lowering the age of admission to Grade 1.

- The primary school system continues to compare very poorly internationally.

- Schooling is significantly inequitable with respect to poverty, with learners in poorer schools generally receiving inferior schooling, whereas the life chances of poor children are observed to be significantly improved by well managed schools.

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[2] Action Plan p25

- Teacher subject knowledge is inadequate, resulting in poor learner achievements. Efforts to improve teachers' subject knowledge will improve their learners' achievements. Effective teachers have a deep understanding of the principles of the subject discipline, and this is what is associated with better learner achievement.

- Increases in appropriateness of teacher qualification levels from 53% to 94.4% in the period from 1990 and 2008 had produced no discernible improvement in learner performance, revealing a discrepancy between qualifications and competence.

With regard to classroom practice, the situation in regard to provision and promotion of use of text books had reportedly improved following the recommendations made in the *Review of the Implementation of the NCS*, and since 2011 when the DBE started producing and distributing language and maths workbooks for all Grade 1-6 learners in the three poorer quintiles. Similarly, the formulation and implementation of CAPS was observed to represent significant movement in the field of curriculum. However, the general inefficiency of time management in schools observed in the documents listed above was echoed, and in addition the following significant shortcomings were noted:

- Classroom practice is obviously hampered by poor knowledge resources of teachers, affecting their pacing of curriculum delivery. In addition, a strong verbal culture is prevalent, with the teachers doing most of the talking, and learners doing very little talking, reading or writing.

- Unlike those in successful schools, the majority of principals tend to understand their responsibilities in terms of administration and discipline, to the detriment of instructional leadership focused on teaching and learning as the main business of the school.

Observations were made in regard to potential bottlenecks for achievement of DBE goals elaborated in the Delivery Agreement of the Ministry of Basic Education:

- Improvement to management and supervision is hampered by the failure to make appointments to principal and district posts based on competence, and to hold appointees to account though performance agreements.
- As an instrument for helping teachers understand the standard required by the curriculum, for identifying detail of problems faced by learners, and for measuring their own teaching effectiveness, the ANA is excellent. However, for building an accountability culture in schools it is unsuitable without extensive training to standardise test administration and marking. In addition, the probability of cheating increases with increases in stakes linked to the results.
- Budgets for in-service training for teachers are reportedly not optimally used, and no decisions have been made in regard to the design of more effective training. The report advises that the model adopted by the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI) in the Western Cape, the Sci-Bono science centre in Gauteng, and by the Maths, Science and Technology Education College (MASTEC) in Limpopo offer examples of effective models for in-service training.

National Development Plan (November 2011)

The National Development Plan (NDP) states similar goals to those articulated in the DBE Action Plan to 2014, which is acknowledged as a key. Human capacity weaknesses in teaching, management, and school support from district offices are identified to be among the main factors contributing to the inadequate quality of school education outcomes. The NDP links the promotion of professional standards and recognition for professionalism to targeted adequacy of teachers' subject knowledge and language competence required to teach.

Early childhood development is proposed to be extended to include four and five year olds, with support also targeting primary caregivers.[3] Training for ECD teachers is included among the central challenges, and proposals are made for investment in the training of ECD practitioners, upgrading their qualifications and developing clear career paths. Related to the challenge of ensuring that the departments responsible for different aspects of early childhood development work together is the recommendation that the DBE should take core responsibility for the provision and monitoring of ECD.

The identified long term goals for basic education (improving literacy, numeracy/ mathematics and science outcomes; increasing numbers of learners eligible to study these subjects at Higher Education level; improving performance in international comparative studies; and increasing learner retention) are all covered in the NDP by means of targeting efforts towards improved teaching, school performance and school management, assisted by district support. Pronounced weaknesses in teaching, management and district support are noted.

An aspect specifically mentioned in the NDP (p308) for investigation is the introduction of professional certification in the teaching profession. It is proposed that newly qualified teachers would need to demonstrate certain competencies before they are employed in schools. It is suggested that preliminary or probationary certification could be offered, to be finalised on the basis of demonstrated competence, and requiring periodic renewal, based in turn on continued professional development.

Proposals for improving school management suggest primarily that competence must be the most important criterion for appointment, with concomitant identification of weaker areas needing development. In addition, the implementation of an entry qualification for principals is argued for, with reference to the piloting of the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), and its continued availability as in-service training for incumbent principals.

Proposals in the NDP for improving district support suggest initially that capacity must be created at district level to provide support to schools for delivering the curriculum. The observation is that '*districts require skills and expertise in curriculum management, project management, data analysis, monitoring, planning, reporting, accounting and problem solving in order to provide effective support*' (p310). To this end, the NDP recommends that multidisciplinary support teams should be deployed to work with districts in the short to medium term.

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[3] NDP p300

Reference further is to the existing consensus across stakeholders in the public sector, private corporations, universities, unions and NGOs on the need to support the improvement of learning outcomes, with the focus on schools and districts, addressing weaknesses in teaching, management, administrative support and accountability. The recommendation is that the national initiative should provide a framework that gives direction to individual efforts, under the auspices of the DBE, and drawing on expertise in institutions that are already working on school improvement.

National Education Evaluation and Development Unit: National Report 2012: Summary report (April 2013)

The National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) that was established in 2009 to provide an account of schools and the status of teaching and learning to the Minister delivered its first report in 2012. The focus of the 2012 report was the Foundation Phase, in view of the fact that the new curriculum (CAPS) was to be instituted that year. NEEDU based conclusions on an analysis of direct outcomes of learning such as learners' work books and individual learner reading assessments; and on an examination of instructional leadership in the school system as evidenced by the set of practices designed to direct and focus curriculum delivery. The evaluation was conducted in a sample of primary schools and their respective district and provincial offices.

The focus of the recommendations made in the report as a consequence of the evaluation was the following:

- Achieving institutional functionality through
  - the Circuit Managers' ensuring that principals fulfil their responsibilities in terms of maintaining efficient time management practices in the schools; and
  - equipping Circuit Managers and principals with training in basic HR procedures, including leave management policy to deal with abuses in this regard.
- Instructional leadership
  - Defining roles and responsibilities of Circuit Managers, Principals and School Management Teams in regard to building the school management team, and focusing efforts on **curriculum delivery**
  - Strategies for addressing the **language** issue in terms of provision of reading materials, additional language-trained subject advisors, improving the proficiency of both teachers and learners in the Language of Learning and Teaching and First Additional Language
  - Defining DBE, province, district and SMT roles in the setting, building of capacity for, implementing and monitoring of national norms for **reading and writing in language and mathematics**
  - Continuing and strengthening the DBE workbook programme and increasing the quantities of available **books** and the extent to which these are utilised and controlled as a classroom resource
  - Defining DBE, provincial, district and school responsibilities in regard to the ANA tests to improve the standards of **assessment** in the schools and increase confidence in this regard
  - Investigating models for effective teacher capacitation; defining provincial and district roles in the development of school leader capacity for maintaining a system

of in-school professional development; and for SMTs to structure and lead systemic learning opportunities for teachers focused on difficult topic areas and the exploration of different pedagogical techniques.

- Professionalising the civil service
  - The DBE and tertiary sector experts devising tests to assess the competencies, subject knowledge and teaching expertise required for exercising the functions of school HODs, Subject Advisors, Circuit Managers and Principals, to be used progressively in appointments.

5. Task Team focus

On the basis of these and other inputs, the Task Team identified four work streams to frame their enquiries, namely:

- Teacher performance improvement and standardisation, with special emphasis on entry level teachers
- School management and leadership
- District management and leadership
- Early Childhood Development.

Straddling these four work streams, three key leverage points were initially identified for their potential to support progress in the successful implementation of the DBE vision for 2025. The Task Team used the leverage points as a frame for commissioning two research tasks.

LEVERAGE POINT 1: The question of the subject expertise required for entry into the teaching profession

The Task Team observed that while in one or more of the provinces research was being conducted into the quality of initial teacher education (ITE), in order to better understand the extent to which teachers are being adequately prepared to teach in South African classroom, and measures are being taken for their potential to improve the quality of ITE and for raising standards for entry into teacher training, what was not being considered was the question of the subject knowledge expertise required to enter the profession as a beginning teacher. However, insufficiency of subject knowledge was linked to poor learner achievements in the international benchmarking assessments of PIRLS and TIMSS. In this regard the Task Team noted that the gap between qualifications and competence was also at issue in other countries, and had been addressed in Brazil, for example, by instituting a central exam covering both content and pedagogy, to be taken by all new teacher candidates.

LEVERAGE POINT 2: Building a professional civil service, commencing with proposing structures and standards for and processes towards filling key promotion posts

The Task Team observed that the current systems for appointing teachers to promotion posts in the school system are based on criteria of seniority or nepotism. Although formally the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is the tool for assessing expertise, it is widely recognised that this is an ineffective method for two reasons. First, it is based on highly subjective criteria, and second, the large majority of teachers and school- and district-level managers lack the subject and

pedagogical knowledge required to exercise the professional judgment demanded for its effective operation.

Ideally, a set of criteria should be developed, which contain a degree of objectivity in assessing the subject matter and pedagogical expertise of teachers and managers. Here too, the example of Brazil is instructive, where in 2009 São Paulo adopted the *Prova de Promoção* to create a new, high-paid career track for top teachers. Benchmark standards must be developed for subject knowledge, other expertise (knowledge of the curriculum, principles of assessment and pedagogy) and experience for the various categories of posts comprising the career paths of educators. Standards are required to be tailored separately for primary schools and for high schools.

The work of the task team was directed towards finding mechanisms to orient the civil service towards expertise and initiative, and away from nepotism, length of service and assessment as criteria for advancement. Two key intervention nexuses would be to focus on improving the subject expertise of beginning teachers and the capacity leaders at the school and district levels.

LEVERAGE POINT 3: How to improve the delivery capacity at the district level of the education system

The Task Team observed that reform proposals made at the various tiers of government including the Planning Commission, the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation and the DBE; and the corporate sector and civil society in general have limited chance of success without effective implementation capacity at district level. This observation is reinforced by the recent findings of the Auditor General which points to serious weaknesses at the local government level in providing municipal services effectively. In the education sector concerns about lack of clarity of the role of the district, or the delivery support and monitoring point level, were highlighted by the ruling party at its 52nd policy conference. The conference recommended that '*Norms and standards [should] be developed to determine the roles, functions and responsibilities of district offices*' (December 2007). In line with this recommendation, the DBE developed *Guidelines for the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of the Education Districts* (February, 2011), which became policy in 2013. This document provides acknowledgement that districts are the key to day to day delivery of education services (both administrative and professional) outlined in the national and provincial policies and programmes. It further recognises that despite the importance of this level, there is no common understanding of the role of the districts, their scope in terms of authority, resourcing, geographic coverage and the number of schools and circuits that should fall under their jurisdiction.

6. Research commissioned

On the basis of the three key leverage points, two pieces of research were commissioned to cover the task team focus.

Brief outline of scope of research: Professional standards

The initial brief for the research was centred on an investigation of subject expertise of teachers and expertise requirements for key promotion posts, in the context of building a professional teaching civil service. Over the period of the project's development, it became clear that the scope of the project overlapped with the key mandates of existing structures within government and the teaching

profession and it was agreed that the report should be structured to address more broadly the issues of teacher professionalisation and provide a broad set of recommendations based on research into the current context of teacher professionalism in South Africa.

The conceptual approach chosen for the research therefore was an exploration of initial preparation of teachers and their on-going professional development, the registration of teachers, and teacher evaluation. Professional standards development formed a part of the research and is addressed in the context of a broader, multi-dimensional set of challenges and responses to building teacher professionalism. The multiple points at which teacher professionalism can be addressed are identified.

The methodology employed synthesised literature on issues of teacher professionalism in South Africa and internationally. International practice was reviewed in the key areas of teacher professionalisation, namely initial teacher education (ITE), continuing professional development (CPD), teacher registration and licensing, and teacher assessment was undertaken to frame the South African discussion within international practice. The primary approach was of desktop research, with the addition of a small number of interviews with key role players in the teacher education and development area. The interviews served to inform understanding of perspectives on teacher professionalism in the South African context, and to ensure that the latest developments in the teacher education and development field were captured.

Brief outline of scope of research: Districts

The purpose of the district research was to establish the extent to which districts are reorganising to meet the new district prototype enunciated in the DBE *Policy for the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of the Education Districts.* Confirming this status was intended to inform the Task Team's recommendations for strategies and interventions for improving district capacity to improve support foundational learning in the schools.

Due to the resource constraints in terms of time and finances, a sample of three districts was sanctioned by the Task Team for the review, selected on the basis of criteria of affluence and performance. Data on the provision of infrastructure, water supply and sanitation was used to construct an affluence index; and 2012 Senior Certificate and ANA results were used to construct a performance index. It was also agreed that the districts in the sample would be selected from different provinces. The districts were selected as reasonably successful given their prevailing socio-economic context and conditions, and the sample reflects a cross section of urban, peri-urban and rural settlements, with poverty indices ranging from 0.82 to 0.36.

A literature review was conducted, providing an overview of policy and research on the role of districts, and their required capacity. The literature review further informed the development of an assessment framework to be used to determine the capacity of the districts, particularly the extent to which districts are able to perform the broad roles and functions identified in the policy in their differing socio-economic and schools contexts.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used, tapping into district and DBE data, and conducting visits with interviews, reviewing project and programme plans, processes and procedures. The result captured snapshots of district capacity, including human, organisational, structural and material resources available. Perspectives were obtained on implementation

dynamics at district level and the experience of the district staff in providing school monitoring and support to schools, as well as responding to provincial directives including planning and reporting requirements.

7. Key findings in regard to teacher professionalism and professionalisation

The research[4] indicates that the notion of teacher professionalism is a complex and contested one, inextricably bound by ideologies, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, values, goals, practices and historical period. Context is a key determining factor, and for South African purposes, what it means to be a professional teacher should be located within the South African context of an inequitable and struggling education system, in which numerous educational reforms have been imposed since 1994, aimed at improving educational outcomes.

Professionalism is regarded as respecting and adhering to the conduct, demeanour and standards ascribed to a profession, which in teaching includes possessing the knowledge, skills, conduct and behaviour expected of a teacher. Specific determinants that are generally accepted as critical for professionalism are:

- **Specialised knowledge** – gained through years of study and practical experience as a teacher. Not everyone has this knowledge, hence it is specialised. In teaching, there is generic knowledge that all teachers should have, including discipline, classroom control, effective teaching methods; as well as specialised subject knowledge for teaching at specific levels of the education system. The determination of whether a professional meets the required expectation in specialised knowledge is made through use of standards for assessment. These specialised knowledge types are subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curriculum content knowledge.
- **Professional development and research** are about the commitment to learning and engaging in professional development activities to enhance practice and the knowledge base.
- **Professional authority and autonomy** is the power to command respect based on what one knows and the stature carried as a teacher. This stature and knowledge that teachers are expected to possess is what allows parents to entrust their children to be educated in schools.
- **A code of ethics** that a group of professionals agree to adhere to by being members of a professional association that sets the code. Teachers who register with the South African Council for Educators are expected to practice according to its code of ethics.
- **Control of access** is the admission and certification of members to the profession. In teaching, this inclusion and exclusion starts during the selection process for study towards an initial teaching qualification.

A complication to the notion of professionalism is that it is understood differently at different levels, with teachers' perceptions varying from those of policy makers and legislators, and is thus value laden. Public and media opinion often describe teacher professionalism in deficit terms, mainly

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[4] References to 'the research' and 'the report' in this section refer to the research commissioned by the Task Team. In respect to teacher professionalism and professionalisation the document is *JET Education Services (2014): Building teacher professionalism for quality basic education*

out of frustration at the failure of the education system, which is blamed entirely on teachers. It is therefore necessary to be explicit about what professionalism is in order to plan for its development.

Professionalisation is the process of improving the status and standing of teaching, and includes four key professionalising processes of (i) initial teacher training (ITE), (ii) induction, (iii) continuing professional development (CPD), (iv) registration of teachers, and evaluation of teacher performance. Professionalisation processes however do not automatically lead to professionalism, but are dependent on a cohesive and conducive education value chain.

7.1 Initial teacher education

The research identifies a key concern for initial teacher education (ITE) being the integration between theory and practice in schools. The school-based teacher education model is discussed in the report as a strategy for addressing integration of theory and practice for student teachers, and requiring a partnership between the school and the university concerned. Three-way relationships are entailed by this model, including those between the university lecturer, the student teacher and the mentor. Reference is also made to specially selected best practice schools instituted in the US, for example, referred to as Professional Development Schools. These are the types of schools and strategies that are targeted for development in the long-term in South Africa by the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development 2011 – 2025* (ISPFTED), in which they are referred to as *Teaching Schools* and *Professional Practice Schools* (ISPFTED p18).

The research notes that school based teacher education, school-university partnerships, and mentoring all provide opportunities for the production of better quality teachers. Teacher professionalism is thus based on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge in the university, and practical knowledge from schools through mentoring and observation of what happens in a natural school setting. Cautions are reported however against the uncritical and unsupported utilisation of both school-based teacher education and mentoring.

Recommendations are cited (p33) for obtaining guidance for the design and implementation of initial teacher education (as well as for teacher certification, teacher evaluation and on-going professional development and career advancement) from profiles of teacher knowledge and pedagogy in specific subjects.

South African context

South Africa's educational inequalities are observed to result in highly variable and sometimes poor quality teaching practice exposure for student teachers, aggravated by the frequent shortage of expert teacher practitioners in the schools, and classroom overcrowding. Further, some teachers are not well prepared to work with student teachers in a developmental manner. While in some schools mentors are able to help student teachers access what it is to be a good teacher, in others they are not. Successful mentors understand that mentoring involves explicating and modelling good practice.

In terms of ITE, the DHET *Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ; DHET July 2011) aligns qualifications for teacher education with the Higher Education Qualifications Framework, and replaces the Norms and Standards for Educators in Schooling 2000. All teacher education qualifications for which enrolments are registered are required to comply with

the MRTEQ prescripts from mid-2014. Requirements identified in MRTEQ include improved screening of applicants prior to admission; part-proficiency (ability to converse) on the part of all new teacher graduates in at least one South African language other than English or Afrikaans in addition to the ability to teach in at least one other official language; increased incorporation of South African situational and contextual elements into the programmes in order to help teachers deal better with diversity and transformation. Requirements are also stipulated for the length of time that students should spend in schools, and that this should be characterised by proper supervision and suitable school placement.

The purpose of the MRTEQ policy is to provide a basis for the construction of core curricula for both ITE and CPTD programmes. In addition MRTEQ defines the minimum set of competences required of newly qualified teachers, covering the categories of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement.

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) has quality assurance responsibilities in regard to the '*standards of programmes of pre-service and in-service educator education*' (SACE Act 2000: 5 (b) (ii) (bb)).

7.2 Teacher induction with mentoring

The widespread use internationally of an extended induction period for newly qualified teachers appointed into positions in schools is noted in the report as contributing significantly to retention of new entrants to the profession as well as to improved quality of teaching. It is useful to think of induction into the teaching profession in terms of the notion of legitimate participation in a community of practice. This notion embeds into professional development a reflective practice that opens teachers' classrooms up as sites for learning, and encourages teachers to research their own practice so as to improve.

The induction period in the examples provided range between one and two years, and a common factor is the provision of a mentoring system entailing a reduced teaching load for both mentor and novice, which constitutes the major cost factor. Other resistance to the introduction of an induction period is based on attitudes to teachers' work as inherently that of only teaching, with any distraction from this responsibility, such as mentoring student teachers, considered a threat rather than an opportunity for reflective practice that could improve their teaching (p15).

Other aspects reported to promote the success of a system of induction include the following:
- Appropriate selection and training of mentors, with due consideration for their willingness, competence, and openness in themselves to learning from others;
- A strong learning culture within the school, as well as in the broader system, including
    - Collaborative leadership of learning, and promotion of a conducive learning environment within the school;
    - A view of beginning teachers as an asset to the school;
    - Opening of access for the novice teacher to external learning opportunities, such as seminars, attending courses being offered outside the school, accessing materials and resources from elsewhere; as well as access to learning opportunities within the school itself, particularly those gained by working with other teachers in addition to the mentor.

- o A peer system that brings beginning teachers from one or more schools together and creates network and learning opportunities across schools. Peer groups offer social and professional support based on newness in practice, or other common interests, and lead to the creation of communities of practice that can support a range of activities.
- Clarity of stakeholder roles, and cooperation between the various stakeholders and parts of the system. The primary stakeholders in teacher induction include mentors, the new teachers, principals, other teachers in the school, the districts, provincial and national departments of education, unions, professional bodies, and standards setting and quality assurance bodies.
- Roles and responsibilities include setting induction policy and guidelines, outlining content, providing funding and training, clearly defining quality assurance and assessment.

- Quality management based on monitoring and evaluation of the induction processes including policies to ensure that they articulate well with developments in the country and within schools, and that any emerging challenges can be addressed for continued improvement.

Induction should be located within the continuum of continuing professional development, and as such, some of the courses that new teachers may engage in during induction could possibly contribute be credits towards further qualifications.

South African context

The ISPFTED has identified mentor teachers and lead professional teachers (including teaching and learning specialists, senior teaching and learning specialists) as a priority category for development opportunities. This process of development of relevant programmes has been delayed pending the communication from Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) of indications of the likely extent of uptake.

7.3 Continuing professional development

The report argues that continuing professional teacher development has gained currency globally in line with policies aimed at promoting lifelong learning. However the traditional approach to professional development which included workshops, seminars and conferences, and was based on the assumption that teachers' knowledge and skills could be improved by external consultants has gradually been replaced by more effective longer term professional development initiatives. A shift is noted internationally whereby professional development is commonly found to be located within schools and based on an action research paradigm that acknowledges that schools are important as places in which *teachers* learn.

This model provides the various teachers with opportunities for grade or departmental internal investigations, recruiting from their different understandings and pedagogies to work collaboratively through discussions of concepts and skills, observations of colleagues, sharing of practice and integrating what has been learnt. Critical interpretations of classroom activity that identify and solve problems in the practice of teaching, and lead to thoughtful or reflective instructional and classroom management decisions conducive to learning are observed to be characteristics of expert educators.

Various arguments are reported for the creation of a culture of reflective lifelong learning among teachers, including the development in England of 'Teaching Schools' for this purpose. These teaching schools are outstanding schools that provide high-quality training and development to both new and experienced teachers from other schools, promoting the notion of a school-led system of CPTD. The six core areas of the teaching school role are:

- *School-led initial training* – schools are expected to participate in ITE, recruit and select trainee teachers, and have a teacher development plan including appointment of mentors and quality assurance mechanisms among other considerations.
- *CPTD* – facilitate school-based professional development, including offering coaching and mentoring and opportunities for school-based research.
- *Supporting other schools* – providing leadership for intra-school support programmes that lead to improvement. This includes identifying priorities in the local area and supporting under performing schools.
- *Identifying and developing leadership potential* – developing succession planning to identify and develop people who will fill leadership positions in the future.
- *Specialist leaders of education* – supporting senior and middle leadership recruitment and management.
- *Research and development* – facilitating evidence-based interventions within the network of schools and promoting research activities among staff.

The report indicates the frequent use of CPTD to address specific teaching and learning challenges, for example, improvements to science education, or to standards of literacy in the primary school. Although criticisms are reported of such CPTD endeavours as technicist in aiming to change the teaching of a particular learning area in the curriculum rather than promoting teacher learning generally in the sense of reflecting on their own practice, it is conceded that it may be appropriate for this approach to be used in conjunction with one that is more reflective.

The report concludes that good examples of continuing professional development of teachers focused on building teacher professionalism should take advantage of every stage of the teacher development process so that subsequent stages build on what has been developed earlier. In-service training using structured workshops, seminars, short courses and peer collaboration in communities of practice where exchange of ideas takes place and support is offered provide the opportunity for development of teaching quality. Added to this, enduring formal and informal pedagogical and technical support for teachers as they engage with teaching and learning can create opportunities to connect teachers to colleagues, mentors, curriculum experts, and the global teacher community, breaking the traditional confinement of teachers within the four walls of their classroom.

South African CPTD policy and regulatory context

The two pronged approach to teacher development adopted in the ISPFTED involves qualifications-related CPTD led by the DHET, and non-qualifications linked activities led by DBE and PEDs.

In terms of the ISPFTED, the DBE has responsibility for identifying and addressing individual and systemic teacher development needs. Relevant activities include the establishment of a *National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development* (NICPD) focused in part on developing a system for teachers to identify and address their developmental needs. In the long term this system

will be supported by an ICT platform and will be aligned and coordinated with the SACE CPTD management system. Its constituents will include content frameworks necessary for effective teaching of the school curriculum; diagnostic self-assessments for teachers; and accredited CPD courses endorsed by SACE. To date, however, diagnostic self-assessments have been developed or made available for mathematics in all four phases and for English First Additional Language, and are ready for piloting.

Of particular interest to the work of the FLTTT, is the ISPFTED activity to *develop teacher knowledge and practice standards* as part of the DHET led output targeting the establishment of an expanded and accessible formal teacher education system. This activity builds on those described at a generic level in MRTEQ, targeting knowledge and practice standards for each subject area or area of teacher expertise, in order to guide programme design at this level. The development is to be conducted by teacher education stakeholders themselves, but in 2014 is still at the research and pilot stage in the prioritised Foundation Phase Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills areas.

In the gazetting of the *National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa* (NPFTED; 2007) and the subsequent *Basic Education Laws Amendment Act of 2011*, the role of the **SACE** was considerably strengthened from one of 'promoting in-service training of all educators' to 'manag[ing] a system for the promotion of the continuing professional development of all educators'.

In 2014, SACE started the roll-out of a new CPTD system for professional teachers, which addresses the cohort of school leadership and management in the first year of roll-out. Evaluations of pilots of this system showed that CPTD in South Africa is based on successful collaboration between multiple stakeholders including SACE, teacher unions, and provincial departments. The devolution of responsibilities during implementation of the pilots led to the successful models of implementation mentioned in the NEEDU Report of 2012, namely the Western Cape's *Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute* (CTLI) which is associated with improvement in learning outcomes in both reading and maths in the annual provincial tests; Gauteng's *SciBono Centre*, and the *Maths and Science Teacher Education College* (MASTEC) in Limpopo, mentioned earlier.

While earlier CPTD utilised the cascade model, communities of practice have become an important aspect of CPTD among South African teachers, driven through clusters linked to circuits within the districts. The success of this model has not yet been thoroughly researched.

Various other loci of CPTD are reported as follows:
- Other CPTD initiatives have been driven by non-governmental organisations, for example the *South African Institute for Distance Education*, and teacher education providers. Most of these undertakings have been in response to education reform policy and have been aimed at improving teacher professionalism through a focus on content knowledge and pedagogy.
- The three largest teacher unions have established professional development institutes, also addressing CPTD. Much of the funding for union-based professional development initiatives has come from government, based on a 2012 agreement between the Teacher Unions and the national and provincial education departments.

None of these developments takes explicit cognisance of the shift in international CPD practice from external to internal collaborative professional development initiatives that may be put in place in parallel to the more technicist programmes addressing specific teaching and learning challenges. In most schools, the fact that teachers' work is bounded and limited to their own classrooms impedes collaborative activities for teachers to work together for inquiry that will improve their teaching, and also that of student teachers when they are in the school. The scarcity in South African schools of the practice of school management teams leading internal staff development based on opportunities for teachers to learn from each other through lesson observation, team teaching and mentoring is noted in the NEEDU report of 2012 (p18), with its observation of the potential that this practice has for improving the average level of the school capacity by sharing the knowledge held by their best teachers. The professional standards research report argues that helping teachers and school leaders work together collaboratively to develop and improve instructional practices, and studying what works well in terms of learners' achievements have the potential for embedding routines of instructional excellence, and are cornerstones of a trusted and respected profession (p54).

Career path considerations

The research report notes that a critical challenge to CPTD in South Africa currently is that of limited career path options for teachers, since promotion is possible only via a management and leadership avenue. Because of this, many teachers pursue CPTD aimed at advancing their careers towards management and leadership positions instead of improving their teaching skills for retention in the classroom, which may be the preference for some. Efforts were made by the then Department of Education and the unions together with the assistance of the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) to include an address of this omission in the development of *Collective Agreement number 1 of 2008: Framework for the establishment of an Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) for educators in public education*. The OSD contains a component that is intended to put in place a proper dual career pathing model, by seeing to the elaboration of a career progression pathway for classroom teachers as an alternative to management and leadership. The OSD document maps the teaching and learning pathway with the following job titles: teacher intern (pre-graduation) – new entrant teacher – teacher – senior teacher – master teacher – teaching and learning specialist – senior teaching and learning specialist. With these steps in career progression, the OSD also incidentally supports the accommodation of an induction period.

Revisions implied to the *Personnel Administrative Measures* (PAM) by this and subsequent Collective Agreements have been drafted by the ELRC and forwarded to the DBE for gazetting, but this has not yet taken place. Gazetting of the PAM is important in that it provides job descriptions, conditions of service, career path opportunities, salary and qualifications related matters as guidelines for implementation by provinces, districts and schools, and specifications against which performance contracts can be signed.

The obstacle to implementation of the OSD was apparently that of having unexpectedly large financial implications, resulting in failure between the parties to negotiate any form of implementation of the Agreement in whole or part. As a consequence the Agreement has not been taken forward. However, a recent discussion document tabled before the National Teacher Education Development Committee revives this work by elaborating an alignment between the

responsibilities inherent in the 'job titles' and qualification pathways elaborated in the policy on *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (2011; MRTEQ).

This career pathing, supported as it is by the corresponding qualifications policy, could provide extremely important support for the professionalisation of teachers, and development of professional teaching standards would link strongly with the implementation of this system.

7.4 Teacher registration, licensing and evaluation

The report notes that in a number of countries including England, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, France, Germany and Japan, teachers who are newly qualified are required to complete a period of induction or work experience in school followed by favourable achievement in additional assessment before being certified or licensed as professional teachers. Registration and evaluation of teachers are strategies intended to assure the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in schools in order to improve learning outcomes.

South African regulatory context for registration

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) is at the centre of these responsibilities as well as their role in CPTD. In terms of the SACE Act of 2000, South African teachers must be registered by SACE, for which the successful completion of a teacher education qualification is the requirement. Discussions currently underway in regard to the introduction of the previously mentioned formal induction programme for novice teachers would require a revision to the SACE requirements for registration, but this has not yet been raised for address.

Measures to address South African teacher quality reside in the Quality Management System (QMS), a performance management system for school-based educators, incorporating clear definitions of roles and responsibilities for educators; setting out the basis for decisions on rewards, benefits and incentives; addressing how decisions will be made about performance; and setting out the context for assessments to take place. The QMS is a successor to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) which merged three separate evaluative programmes, the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), the Performance Measurement System and the Whole School Evaluation. IQMS was intended to enable teachers to assess their peers so as to identify areas of weakness to be addressed by CPTD. While this objective links well with a vision of building quality teachers to improve learning outcomes, IQMS suffered widespread implementation problems, not least of which was the potential for corruption inherent in the use of a system of appraisal simultaneously for purposes of CPTD as well as remuneration and salary progression.

Although it has been discussed in the ELRC and has resulted in a draft collective agreement, this has not been signed off, and so the QMS is not yet being implemented.

International perspectives on professional standards for teaching

Internationally, a focus on teacher quality as a critical factor affecting learners' achievement of learning outcomes has led to the development of teaching standards relating to a range of teacher development considerations. Although distinction must be made between the different types of standards and their purposes, it is useful for alignment across these areas to provide a holistic framework. Teaching standards are used

- to support the improvement of teacher performance by providing a basis
    - from which to assess new entrants to the profession for registration or professional licensing
    - for evaluating applicants for suitability for promotion
- for defining
    - subject discipline knowledge at different levels
    - aspects of pedagogic practice
    - values and ethics of practice in the profession
- as a basis from which to evaluate and accredit teacher training institutions
- as a basis upon which to set out the minimum requirements to be met by qualifications.

The process of developing standards can reportedly be either forward mapping from policy to practice, or backward mapping from practice to policy. Although standards are used and upheld by accreditation bodies, validity and recognition considerations require that they are based on empirical research into teaching practices that impact on learning and that teachers are involved in the development process. A review of institutions responsible for the development of teaching standards in OECD countries indicates that in addition to state education ministries and departments, teacher education specialists feature strongly, together with various relevant professional bodies.

South African perspectives on professional standards for teaching

Work on teacher professional standards development has been broached in South Africa. A series of workshops (with the final inter-regional workshop being held in South Africa) have brought together representatives of Commonwealth member states with the main purpose of reviewing current practices and experiences relating to professional school leaders' and teachers' standards and developing a methodological framework for application in the broader Commonwealth context. Through this process a standards framework for teachers has been proposed, together with a set of methodological guidelines for the development and implementation of professional standards.

Independently of this Commonwealth process, a draft set of professional standards for school principals in South Africa has been consulted upon, and is likely to be gazetted for public comment soon, once it has been presented to the Heads and MECs of education departments. This document will fully articulate the roles, competencies and professional standards required of all school principals. The intention is that these standards will also link with the new QMS, mentioned above. It is worth noting that work in regard to the development of professional standards for principals was also undertaken separately in Gauteng Department of Education's Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance.

In terms of legislation, SACE is central in this regard as well, with the objects of the SACE Act (2000) being '*to set, maintain and protect ethical and professional standards for teachers*', in addition to '*provide for the registration of educators*' and '*promote the professional development of educators*'.

7.5 Teacher professionalisation in the South African context

The report observes a disjuncture between ITE and CPTD that recent South African policy frameworks have sought to address. As a tool for coordinating and integrating professionalisation

inititers across the teaching career, a conceptual framework is proposed that maps the professionalisation pathway as a continuum in terms of differentiated levels of progression within a teacher's career journey, indicating key points of intervention for becoming a teacher, developing as a teacher, practising as a teacher, and progressing as a teacher. Figure 1 provides an overview of the conceptual framework.
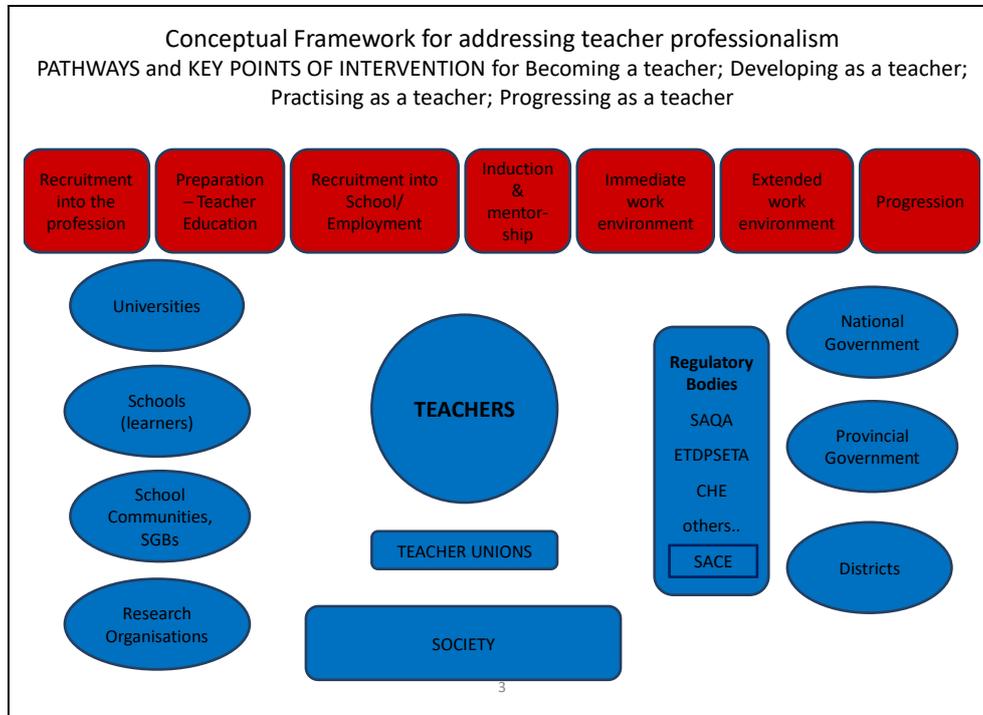

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for addressing teacher professionalism

The argument is (p44) that the teacher professionalisation process is complex, requiring a shift in focus from *individual* to *process*, and increased systemic engagement among all actors and levels. This is supported by the South African policy landscape which focuses on both ITE and CPTD, particularly by means of the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development* (ISPFTED; 2011), initiated and developed through a collaborative process. The ISPFTED highlights the multi-stakeholder, collaborative nature of teacher development and professionalisation, and provides a diagrammatic representation of how the various aspects of the plan will eventually create a single coordinated system bringing together operations at different levels of the national system. The ISPFTED is a long-term plan with a 15-year horizon, with 2014 the end of the first of five three-year phases.

The implementation of this plan is premised on collaboration of national departments, including DHET and the DBE, and national coordinating structures – the National Teacher Education and Development Committee (NTEDC); provincial education departments; teachers and teacher unions; teacher education faculties at universities through the Education Deans Forum of Higher Education South Africa (HESA); regulatory bodies including SACE, the Education and Labour Relations Council (ELRC), the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC), and the ETDP SETA; districts; schools, school communities and society. The NTEDC is an important structure that monitors ISPFTED implementation. It is broadly representative of all stakeholders and is jointly chaired by the Directors-General of the two national education departments. It is the key discussion forum for issues of teacher education and professional development.
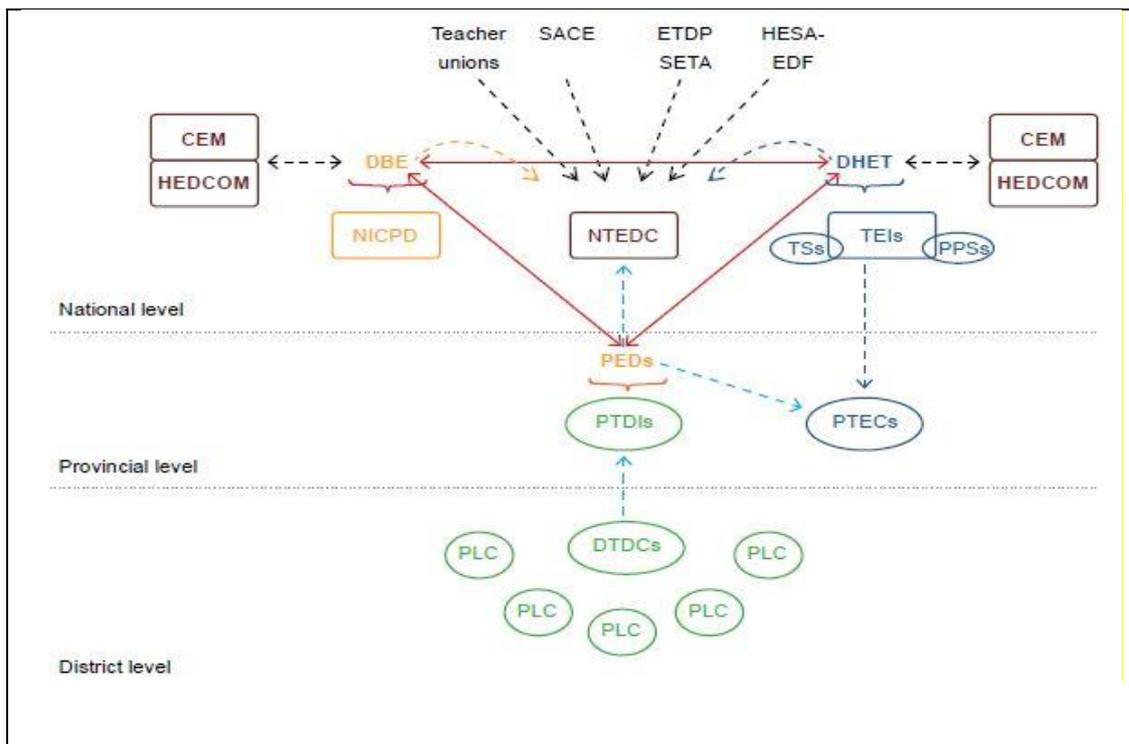
Figure 2: National system for teacher education and development, mapped out in ISPFTED (2011)

To support teacher education and development, the ISPFTED intention is to strengthen the existing Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), and to establish a network of viable, accessible Teaching Schools (TSs) and Professional Practice Schools (PPSs). Initial emphasis has been on strengthening and expanding the capacity of existing TEIs, and good progress has been reported in this respect. The development of Teaching Schools and Professional Practice Schools has not progressed beyond early research stages however, in accordance with the ISPFTED implementation plan.

8. Key findings in regard to education districts

Education districts are central to the maintenance of the education system and to increasing learner performance. They play a critical role in mediating between schools and different layers of government and therefore serve as vital institutional actors in education reforms and a major source of capacity building for the schools. It follows from these observations that:

- the resources at district level need to be aligned with the unique mix of learning needs that exist in a particular context or locale;
- higher level capacity is needed in contexts where schools are weaker;
- districts will not be effective if they do not have the required capacity.

If districts are seen as the driver of reform, the capacity and level of influence of the district should be indirectly proportional to the number of effective schools. In other words, in geographic subsystems where the institutional capacity of schools is weak, the capacity and level of influence of the district office should be strong. In geographic subsystems where the institutional capacity of schools has met the required performance targets, the capacity of the district may be decreased to a basic level that enables the district and the schools to maintain performance. Therefore the configuration of the districts should not remain static.

The state of districts in South Africa

The report[5] shows a historical neglect for 17 years of the district tier of the education system, from 1994 until 2011 when the DBE first started discussions on the organisation, roles and responsibilities of the districts. The promulgation of the *Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (2013) is a positive development. Perhaps the glaring omission from the policy is guidelines on the funding of the districts, which would make certain that the district mandate is fully and equitably funded across the provinces.

The status of districts in South Africa raises a policy question regarding the location of the driver of education reform. Before 2011, the policy assumption appeared to be that education reform would be driven from schools. This notion is corroborated by a clear delegation of authority to school management and governance through the South African Schools Act of 1996. Although the framework for the organisation, governance and funding of schools, as provided in the Schools Act is crucial and important going forward, it is clear, after 17 years, that schools are unable to drive the reform agenda without an external capable structure.

Districts on the other hand were observed to have difficulties in regard to the envisaged role that combines compliance regulation with facilitating education improvement, particularly in unequal and resource-challenged contexts. The largely prevalent district orientation to compliance instead of transformation has arguably been shaped by frustrations inherent in their role traditionally embedded in a highly politicised environment, beset by the clamour for rapid change, answerable to multiple constituencies with often conflicting voices and interests, coupled with long standing organisational attitudes, behaviours and relationships. However, literature on the newly emerging district and the prominent role it can play in transforming education reportedly requires districts to change the environments within which they work, play a strong supporting role, act as gatekeepers and capacity builders and encourage schools to make their own decisions. Reported recommendations for achieving this argue for more inward development first, including capacity building of the district system such as district-level education, management development, upgrading of district-level management and administrative services, circuit-level education management development.

Observations on the current status of districts were noted in the report:

- District Offices reportedly have difficulties in interpreting their roles and responsibilities as defined by the policy, and this is complicated by poor lines of communication from PEDs. As a result there is confusion in the support and monitoring inputs made at school level, not only with uncoordinated visits by different district staff, but also with repetition of programmes. Conflicting directives tend to paralyse schools, negating the value of school support and monitoring, and eroding school confidence in the districts. Communications within districts, and between districts and schools are reported to be equally ineffective.

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[5] References to 'the research' and 'the report' in this section refer to the research commissioned by the Task Team. In respect to districts the document is *JET Education Services (2013): Assessing the capacity of the District Office to implement national policies and programmes*

- All the sampled districts and interviewed stakeholders indicated that there is room for improvement in the organisational routines that structure the work of the districts, as well in general leadership and management practices. Where some aspects of support and organisational roles are effective, resource limitations are the reasons for failures that occur. Key district services include advice and coordination relating to curriculum, monitoring and evaluation, planning and institutional management and governance.

- The culture of using data in districts appears weak. Mostly, the three districts were unable to complete the District Data Survey instrument requiring collection of data relating to school demographics and district human resources and organisational structure. None of the three districts had a clear system for categorising schools based on their performance and needs – a system that would make their management of schools more responsive and efficient. Data informing district classifications of schools were restricted to the ANA and NSC results.

- All the districts have strategic and operational plans in place in compliance with broader public administration processes, and report accordingly. However, the strategic and operational plans are simply a matter of bureaucratic compliance, and are unrealistic given the scarcity of resources.

The report paints a picture of effort being made generically to the extent of compliance with requirements, but often not to the point at which impact is meaningful. Reasons offered for the shortfall include limitations to resources, inadequate feedback, poor timing of processes. The examples offered include strategic and operational plans that are unrealistic given the scarcity of resources; numbers of school monitoring visits that are insufficient due to limited resources; schools being required to provide data to EMIS regularly but not being supplied with the analyses in return; ANA providing useful indicators of learner performance, but not coinciding with school curriculum processes and therefore considered inaccurate by educators.

8.2 District Structures

There is a wide variation in the configuration of districts across the nine provinces.

- While all the provinces have districts, the districts are of different sizes. The numbers of districts in each of the three provinces are very different and there are significant variations in terms of how the districts are configured and resourced and correspondingly how they perform. Nationally, only 62.8% of the districts are within the size parameters set in the district policy. Thirty-one districts have more than 300 schools (the upper limit). These 31 districts are responsible for a total of 15 409 schools.

- If the new district policy is implemented, four provinces will not need to change their district numbers. These are Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape, which are small provinces in terms of school numbers, and the Western Cape and Gauteng, which are both urban provinces. The North West and Free State, medium size and middle performers, will need to add only two districts in order to meet the norm. The challenge to meet the norm is greatest in the largest, rural provinces: KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo. These patterns clearly reflect the unevenness of the institutional capacity among the provinces and perhaps point to incompleteness of the equity project initiated post-1994, particularly in the rural districts, two of which have experienced serious administration constraints.

If the new policy is implemented the ratio of schools to districts will drop from 306 to 200. The effects of the new policy will be felt more in the larger provinces where the ratio of schools per district will decrease by almost 50%, from 417 schools per district to 224.

- There are differences in terms of how provinces configure districts. Some have one tier between the district and school while others have two. While the three provinces locate their school support staff at district level, in Limpopo school governance officials are located at the circuit level. In this province, the circuit managers are paid at a higher notch (Chief Education Specialist) compared to the other provinces. In addition, an unsuccessful attempt was made in 2007 to locate the subject advisors at circuit level. The question remains on which is the most suitable and cost-effective configuration that will bring about sustainable improvements in learning outcomes.

It is however evident from the comparative review of the three sample districts that there are more factors that determine the performance of a district than just its size. The largest of the three districts performed much better in the NSC than the other two did.

8.3 Human and material resources

The research established that the districts are severely understaffed. A striking feature of the district offices visited is that they are staffed with officials with relatively long service in the system, most of the district staff having 15 to 20 years' experience. However, on the whole, human resource capacity is a challenge in the districts, with vacancies across the board and under-qualified educators and Subject Advisors. While the ISPFTED includes Subject Advisors with school leaders in a category prioritised for capacity development, many of the district positions are not filled.

While the review was not able to report on the quality of the subject advisors in the sample districts, severe understaffing of the district subject advisory sections in particular was noted, with the following features:

- One of the three sample districts has no Subject Advisors in Foundation Phase Literacy and another has none in Foundation Phase Numeracy.
- One of the three districts has less than a third of the number of subject advisors employed in one of the other three, despite having 56% more schools.
- Ratios of subject advisors to schools are most favourable in the FET phase in all three sample districts.
- The district with the most favourable Subject Advisor-to-school ratios in GET and Foundation Phases has recorded significantly better performance than the other two districts even though it constitutes a bigger number of schools spread over a much larger geographic area. These ratios in the other two districts present an untenable situation, with GET English and Maths Subject Advisors responsible for between 175 and 247 schools each, as compared to 60 and 80 respectively in the better performing district.

A quick overview of **material resources** in the form of transport and communications facilities available to subject advisors in the sample districts indicated that lack of communication facilities is a significant obstacle affecting telephone, fax and email access as well as printing and photocopying provision. Conclusions about transport provision were more difficult to draw. Although the vehicle-

to-school ratio in one of the districts was four times less than what appeared to be quite adequate in the other two districts, a more detailed analysis is necessary to understand the level of need.

8.4 District curriculum and programmes

All the districts reported having a number of school and educator support strategies designed to improve the quality of learning and teaching, ranging from school improvement to literacy, maths and science development programmes. What is unclear is whether these strategies had been developed in consultation with the schools. A second concern is the extent to which schools and educators had access to, and engaged with the various programmes.

Most school support officials struggle to reach the schools regularly and tend to prioritise the weaker schools in their areas. Subject advisor interviewees said that it was impossible to visit all the schools during the year and that possibly 30% or more of the schools were not visited at all. This implies that most teachers can only access district support if they attend cluster meetings and workshops. Researchers brought reports that these meetings and workshops are vulnerable to occasional circumstantial disruption, for example the teachers' strike had prevented most such meetings over the past year.

School and educator perspectives reported on the provision of district curriculum support emphasised the lack of consistency, with programmes initiated but then discarded. Educator views of district programmes, communities of practice and workshops were variable, with some finding these helpful and others regarding them as a distraction from much needed preparation or school work.

8.5 The School Context

Principals and educators reported mixed views of the value of district support in improving the quality of teaching and learning, apparently related to district capacity and the abilities of subject advisors and IDSOs. Most schools, secondary and primary, identified the core challenges as relating to educators, facilities and resources.

All school interviewees reportedly noted the need for counselling and social support services from the district to assist with social challenges in schools. Reported contextual issues that present problems for the schools include

- Poverty and school communities characterised by high levels of illiteracy and unemployment and sometimes gangsterism and other social ills. Limitations in the school feeding scheme lead to the inability of quintile 2 schools to feed children from impoverished households, resulting in these schools taking up the additional burden of providing support to families as well as ensuring that learning takes place.
- Many educators are inadequately qualified, for various reasons including poor initial teaching training, and being required to teaching subjects for which one is not qualified.
- Many educators lack motivation and tend to see teaching as 'just a job'.
- Educator absenteeism, with educators exhausting their entire leave allocation, from normal leave days to sick and compassionate leave.

8.6 Conclusions on the extent to which districts are reorganising to comply with the district prototype articulated in the 2013 Districts Policy

The current review established that the district directors in all three districts are aware of the new policy. Observations in two of these districts evidenced a commitment from the respective provinces to start implementing the new policy. However, all three districts are still very far from meeting the requirements of the national prototype. Thirty-two districts will need to be re-demarcated into about 60 districts. This will result in an increase from the current number of 86 to approximately 117 districts nationally.

While adjusting district sizes bodes well for improved quality of learning and teaching, the good performance of the largest district in the review suggests that there are more factors that determine the performance of districts than just its size.

- The implementation of the district policy should focus on the internal dynamics of the districts such as programming, as well as funding and resources such as cars and staffing (both numbers and capacity) rather than just the size of the district.

- While it is understood that undoing the ills of the past 17 years will take time, the material resourcing of the district with cars, communication and networking facilities should not be difficult and should therefore be addressed with immediate effect.

- There is an urgent need to determine the quantity of resources (human capital, finances and time) needed for the country to meet the requirements of the new district prototype so as to inform targets and the pace of the transition. Perhaps the transition model should be properly trialled before a universal rollout.

8.7 Conclusions regarding district capacity to attain their goals and satisfy stakeholder expectations by successfully applying skills and resources

The districts are certainly doing their best to carry out their mandates, however, circumstances make it impossible for effectively ensuring improvement in learner performance in different contexts. The state of the districts is characterised by:

- A complement of qualified and experienced district officials, although the extent of competence and commitment is not certain

- District programmes and cultures that are province-driven, rather than responsive to schools' needs

- Weak support and monitoring of the schools, mainly due to under-resourcing

- Serious understaffing

- A lack of basic resources such as transport and communication facilities

- Absence of a culture of data utilisation for decision-making and improvement.

Without well-configured and well-resourced districts, sustainable improvement of learning outcomes as envisaged by the National Development Plan and the Action Plan to 2014 will remain an illusion. Reform must be driven by dedicated and sufficient capacity. Furthermore, capacity development will only be embedded once it is institutionalised in districts' working practices and strategies. The challenge is to define not only the training or technical programmes required, but the structures, systems, practices, codes and processes that will sustain these initiatives in resource constrained contexts. Participation and equal engagement amongst the stakeholders enables the institutionalisation of new practices. Structures and practices do not become institutionalised until they are able to regulate behaviour to achieve outcomes. The challenge is to create committed, capacitated districts that support improved learning outcomes in schools.

9. Key findings in relation to Early Childhood Development

The *Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development Sector* (April 2012) was commissioned by various relevant government departments, and led to a range of recommendations and an Improvement Plan (September 2012) created by DBE and the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation together, and a National Integrated Programme of Action Plan for ECD (June 2013), developed by the Department of Social Development. Recommendations included the need to build multi-sectoral support for an integrated approach, led by an authoritative body, more funding for ECD, better outreach to the poorest families, and multi-media campaigns. The Integrated ECD Programme of Action addresses legislation and policy requirements, and the difficulties of coordination and integration across the departments responsible for ECD. Human resource considerations require a review of the qualifications for ECD and development of a career path followed by revision of learning programmes offered at learning institutions such as TVET colleges and others. Processes for curriculum review, development and delivery of the new programmes are lengthy, but significant progress is underway in this regard with the drafting of the National Curriculum Framework for children from Birth to Four (September 2012).

10. Recommendations

The recommendations that emerged from the two research reports commissioned by the Task Team were taken into consultations with various stakeholders, and amended and focused accordingly. This section of this report presents the recommendations of the Task Team, based on the commissioned research and other readings, amended in accordance with stakeholder consultations.

10.1   Policy development and implementation

Although in general the regulatory frameworks and policy are in place in regard to both teacher professionalism and districts, implementation is not proceeding apace.

Teacher professionalism

10.1.1 Key aspects pertaining to teacher professionalism are dependent upon responsibilities vested in the South African Council for Educators, by the *SACE Act* (2000). Much of this relates to work done collaboratively by various stakeholders, the responsibility for which SACE must ultimately carry.

The SACE Act was promulgated in 2000. The Act was amended in accordance with the focus on Continuous Professional Teacher Development adopted in the *National Policy Framework on Teacher Education and Development* in 2007. Since then there have been significant developments in regard to teacher professionalism, particularly in the form of the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development* (2011). In some cases this work is meeting targets for roll-out plans, but elsewhere progress is lagging, and taking place in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner.

It is recommended that

The Minister should review the SACE Act, including SACE, its roles, responsibilities, composition and capacity, to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Induction with mentorship

10.1.2 There is widespread support and strong arguments for the introduction of a period of induction with mentorship for entrant teachers. This introduction will need to be supported by implementation guidelines and regulations. Much of this has already been developed in the *Collective Agreement number 1 of 2008: Framework for the establishment of an occupation specific dispensation (OSD) for educators in public education* and in the drafted revisions to the *Personnel Administrative Measures* (PAM).

It is recommended that

- The Department of Basic Education and the unions should resume and finalise negotiations in the Education Labour Relations Council, leading to implementation in whatever form of *Collective Agreement number 1 of 2008: Framework for the establishment of an occupation specific dispensation (OSD) for educators in public education*.

- The Department of Basic Education should address any obstacles to the gazetting of the revised *Personnel Administrative Measures* (PAM) that incorporates all amendments implied by Collective Agreements since the previous gazetted version, and proceed towards gazetting this document.

Districts

10.1.3 The promulgation of the *Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (2013) is a positive step towards strengthening the ties between policy and practice as it unfolds in the schools. Lack of congruence between the scale of the task of implementation and the availability of requisite resources demands a progressive approach to implementation.

It is recommended that

- DBE should use the finalised District staffing norms to develop a costing of implementation of the *Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (2013). A transitional plan for gradual access to full implementation of the norms should be devised,

implemented and rigorously monitored, in alignment with the DBE Action Plan to 2025.

- The Department of Basic Education should develop and implement a **strategy for funding and equipping districts** with requisite **material resources**, prioritising transport and communications. The strategy should include long term and progressive time frames that specify alignment with the appointment of human resource capacity, so that as suitable staff are appointed, the material resources are made available for them to fulfil their responsibilities
The transition model should be properly trialled before a universal rollout.

- Funds allocated to PEDs for these purposes should be ringfenced accordingly.

- The Provincial Education Departments should proceed immediately to implement those aspects of the Districts Policy that have no budgetary implications

- The extent of capacity development in regard to staffing of Subject Advisory services in key subjects and phases should be carefully estimated and prioritised for implementation.

- The Provincial Education Departments should establish a central subject advisory and school support team pool that can be used flexibly in different districts as needed as an interim measure.

- Business partners should leverage funding from business for the establishment of the PED pools of Subject Advisory and school support expertise

10.2 Induction

The formal induction of teachers is a crucial missing link in the pathway from completing formal training to becoming a professional teacher. This is in the early stages of being addressed, but processes must include the participation of all relevant stakeholders. The content of the induction programme must be defined and developed, as well as the process of its implementation, and the roles and responsibilities of mentors.

It is recommended that

- The DBE, DHET and SACE should develop a framework for teacher induction programmes, with guidelines for content and implementation including timeframes, drawing all relevant stakeholders into the process as necessary.

- The DBE, DHET and SACE should develop and implement a strategy for the development of mentors to support the induction for teachers. The strategy should include considerations of timeframes and funding for this priority.

- Teacher Education Institutions should develop programmes for the development of mentors as components to be included in the relevant qualifications identified in the MRTEQ.

10.3   Professional standards for teachers

The development of the various sets of professional standards for subject discipline knowledge at various levels, for aspects of pedagogic practice, and for values and ethics of practice in the professions necessarily must involve the coordination of efforts of all relevant stakeholders.

It is recommended that

- The process of **developing professional standards** (such as those that have been developed for principals) that will be adopted by all education stakeholders for the various stages and aspects of the teaching career should integrate the efforts of all stakeholders, noting the need for including expert-based groupings in the collaborative effort. Processes and structures established through the ISPFTED are implicated in this enterprise, and should be used for coordination purposes.

10.4   Continuous professional development

CPD initiatives are required in support of both professionalisation and district considerations as discussed in this report. Development of the district layer of support services is dependent upon transforming district culture from compliance to support, as well as an increase in the pool of subject advisor capacity, while successful introduction of induction requires the development of mentorship capacity. With the SACE CPTD Management System in initial stages of implementation and potentially capable of addressing these needs, quality and impact of programme delivery must be carefully monitored.

The largely overlooked but much recommended area of collaborative practice within the schools must be researched to identify projects, programmes, strategies to facilitate the introduction and development of this practice within schools.

It is recommended that

Quality assurance
- DBE, DHET and SACE should investigate the quality of programmes rolled out through the SACE CPTD Management System and monitor their impact on school and learner achievements.

Subject advisors
- DBE, DHET and SACE should develop and implement a strategy for prioritising the **development of Subject Advisor capacity**, including timeframes and funding considerations.
- Teacher Education Institutions should develop and deliver programmes for the development of Subject Advisors, as components to be included in the relevant qualifications identified in the MRTEQ.

District culture change
- DBE should require PEDs to prioritise delivery of **change management** programmes in the districts in terms of a shift from compliance to support in district culture.

> *School culture change*
> - Research institutes should investigate and pilot projects aimed at **developing and supporting collaborative reflective practice among teachers within schools**, including identifying features of contexts into which these projects may profitably be introduced.

10.5   Advocacy

The entrenchment of the perspective of *teaching as a learning career* based on continual engagement with focused, quality professional development both through formal and informal engagements for specific, targeted purposes, as well as through reflective, collaborative and investigative daily practice, has greater power to promote the status of the profession than any re-branding exercise. This perspective needs to be adopted both from within the profession by teachers, office based officials, teacher educators and all stakeholders, as well by external role players in the social and business community. The promotion of this perspective can take advantage of any other related advocacy campaigns, such as that undertaken by the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) involving a range of stakeholders and high profile participants, and targeting World Teachers Day.

> It is recommended that
>
> - A national campaign should be undertaken to advocate that **teaching is a learning career** with potential to add value to society and to individual lives when teaching professionals engage continuously and reflectively in opportunities for professional development both through specific projects and activities as well as in their daily practice. The advocacy campaign should have both an internal focus towards members of the teaching profession, as well as an external focus towards all other constituents of society.

10.6   Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood Development suffers from is position straddling across various government departments. For this reason progress with implementation of the ECD Improvement Plan has been uneven.

> It is recommended that
>
> - The establishment of intersectoral management, coordination and monitoring of ECD should be supported and strengthened.
> - The DBE in collaboration with the Department of Social Development should support the finalisation and implementation of the national ECD policy and programme and assist in its implementation.
> - The DBE should incorporate Grade R staff onto school staff establishments with appropriate conditions of service in accordance with their qualifications and experience.
> - The DBE should prioritise the development of underqualified Grade R teachers.
> - Districts should coordinate and manage the ECD initiatives that are implemented within their jurisdiction.

11. Conclusion

Education is a collective responsibility aiming towards the greater good of society. The policies and frameworks that have been established for action set out a structure for collaboration. Efforts of all stakeholders need to be harnessed and coordinated towards the ultimate goal of improved learner achievements. All sectors of society have vested interests in the best possible functioning of the education system in South Africa, and carry some degree of responsibility for seeing to its delivery.

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Appendix A   Terms of Reference for the Foundational Learning Technical Task Team

1.   AIM

1.1   The aim of this task team is to identify blockages in the schooling system and propose measures that can be used to support the Department of Basic Education.

2.   BACKGROUND

2.1   At its meeting of the 5th November 2010, the HRD Council approved the following 5 Point Plan for 2011 that was proposed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training;

    2.1.1.   To strengthen and support FET colleges to expand access.

    2.1.2   Production of intermediate skills (artisans in particular) and professionals.

    2.1.3.   Production of academics and stronger industry-university partnerships in research and development.

    2.1.4.   Foundational learning.

    2.1.5.   Worker education.

2.2   As the same meeting the Department of Basic Education presented its Schooling 2025 and Action Plan 2014 which outlined the department's vision for how they intend to improve access to and increase the quality of basic education in the country and in so doing deliver on the outcomes of Commitment three of the HRDSA.

2.3   A number of very pertinent issues related to basic education were raised by Council members but it was felt that the discussion was not focused and sometimes the issues raised were not necessarily relevant or linked to the HRD Council mandate.

2.4   The Council, furthermore requested the Department of Basic Education to interrogate the implementation of their Schooling 2025 and Action Plan 2014 and to identify any blockages that the Council may assist them to unblock.

2.5   The TWG at its meeting of 5 December approved a proposal that was tabled by the Secretariat as the way forward regarding the work area of Foundational learning. The proposal recommended that;

    2.5.1.   The TWG establish a Foundational Learning Technical Task team which will look into issues of foundational learning and come up with measures that the Council can use to resolve identified blockages.

    2.5.2.   That the Department of Basic Education be invited to the next TWG meeting to present their identified blockages as had been requested by Council. The DBE's input will be discussed in conjunction with the defined problem statement by the Task Team, regarding foundational/basic

education to come up with measures for resolving identified blockages for the consideration of Council.

3.   TASK TEAM OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objectives of the Task Team will be to:

3.1.1   understand the nature of current blockages and draw on existing research(reports, studies, evaluations, reviews) and look at the current strategy of the DBE. Explore how blockages are interrelated and find 3 or 4 key leverage points

3.1.2   propose recommendations on how best to position schooling to support HRDSA Commitment 3.

3.1.3   Engage experts and consult with relevant stakeholders in the process.

4.   DELIVERABLES

1.1 The Foundation Learning Task Team will produce the following:

1.1.1   A synopsis of the research (etc) on the schooling system that informed our understanding of the problems.

1.1.2   A technical report on the nature of the blockages in the schooling system. A report detailing four priority areas with recommendations for intervention for Council

5.   COMPOSITION OF HRDC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TECHNICAL TASK TEAM

5.1   Task team membership will be drawn from Education (Basic & Higher), economic development, science and technology, industry, organised labour, research organisations and government but expertise and not representation will be the important factor in determining selection. Individual members will be recognized as leaders or experts in their fields and will have a good knowledge and understanding of and an interest in Basic Education.

5.2   The proposed Task Team members include:

- Mr Moeketsi Letseka
- Mr Godwin Khosa
- Ms Nomveliso Khaile
- Ms Gail Campbell
- Ms Judith O`Connell
- Ms Hema Hariram
- Ms Liz Burroughs
- Mr Haroon Mohamed
- Ms Marie-Louise Samuels

- Mr Renny Somnath
- Mr Mabu Rapotle
- Ms Ella Mokgalane

6.   SUPPORT, MONITORING AND PROGRESS

6.1   The HRDC Secretariat will provide the necessary strategic, admin, logistical and technical support to the task team

6.2   Progress on the work of the Task Team will be communicated to the TWG via the Secretariat.

6.3   TWG will engage on the draft recommendations and make final recommendations to the Council for final approval.

6.4   The Task Team must provide the Secretariat clear timeframes within which they will be able to deliver on the above objectives and deliverables.

Appendix B   Documents and presentations taken into account by the FLTTT

The education reports that have been reviewed are the following:

Documents reviewed or tabled/ mentioned in meeting minutes	
7 April 2011	• The ANA report and guidelines document • The diagnostic report from the Planning Commission in the Presidency • The Education roadmap document • The Dr Nick Taylor synthesis report on schooling and
19 May 2011	• Background & context to HRDSA 2010/30 & the FL TTT TORs • DBE: Improving Basic Education: Action Plan to 2014
14 September 2011	First report of the review of teachers standards UK
13 Feb 2012	• National Development Plan (NPC) and Reports
20 April 2012	• A Presentation of Dr Nick Taylor's book on the Latest Development Schooling and Education In south Africa
14 Sept 2012	• Public union sector politics & the crisis of education in SA
13 Feb 2013	• QLTC doc 2010
4 Apr 2013	• Review of ECD
13 May 2013	• DBE ECD Improvement Plan • NEEDU report
6 June 2013	• TIMSS report

Presentations made at Task Team meetings by experts in the field

13 May 2013	• DBE ECD Improvement Plan • NWU school leadership programme through distance education • GM SA Foundation's approach to the education crisis
6 June 2013	• Vodacom Mobile education
7 August 2013	• SAQA on the Commonwealth Standards for professionalisation of teachers
4 September 2013	• New Leaders Foundation presentation – district support project

Members of the Foundational Learning Technical Task Team

Name	Organisation
Mr Moeketsi Letseka	UNISA
Mr Godwin Khosa	JET Education Services
Ms Nomveliso Khaile	PME
Ms Margaret Mudau	PME
Ms Gail Campbell	Zenex Foundation
Ms Linda Vilakazi-Tselane	Bridge
Mr Hemant Waghmarae	SCI-Bono
Ms Judith O`Connell	
Mr JJ Mbana	East Cape Midland College
Ms Hema Hariram	NAPTOSA
Ms Liz Burroughs	UMALUSI
Mr Robert Mokhari	MQA
Ms Stella Carthy	Chamber of Mines
Ms. Lala Maje	DBE
Mr Zwelitsha Ntantsi	NUM
Mr Haroon Mohamed	DBE
Ms Marie-Louise Samuels	DBE
Mr Renny Somnath	SADTU
Mr Thabani Gula	ETDPSETA
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