

KZN Education Department faces criticism over delayed resource allocation



KwaZulu-Natal Education MEC Sipho Hlomuka met with top management in the department to discuss several issues, among them the delivery of Learning and Teaching Support Materials. Picture: KZN DOE / Facebook

Published 13h ago

KwaZulu-Natal unions in the education sector have raised concern over delayed funding.

This comes after the KZN Department of Education said it is on track delivering the 2025 Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) to schools.

Play Video

Earlier this week, KZN Education MEC Sipho Hlomuka met with the department's top management. Discussions included LTSM delivery, the National School Nutrition

Programme, human resources-related issues, and the state of readiness for the release of matric results.

Hlomuka reaffirmed the department's commitment to ensure no pupil is left behind.

"We are focused on delivering the necessary resources to enable teaching and learning to take place on the first day of school. Our priority remains the success and well-being of every learner in the province of KwaZulu-Natal," Hlomuka said.

The department said that as of Tuesday, it has delivered almost 99% of the textbooks to schools across KZN, 76% of the stationery for pupils in 4 174 schools and the delivery process remains on track to be completed by January 10.

However, due to serious security challenges at certain schools, delivery to these affected areas will be done between January 12 and 17.

The department said it is working closely with law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of personnel and resources during this time.

Additionally, the department said it is addressing issues related to the norms and standards allocation for schools to ensure that all learning environments are equipped to provide quality education.

National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (Naptosa) KZN CEO, Thirona Moodley, said the organisation cannot confirm the assertion that 99% of books have been delivered.

"Our greatest concern is that schools have not received their norms and standard allocation for 2024 as yet. This would have carried them over to 2025. Schools are in arrears with municipal bills and are unable to keep the operations of the school afloat. School principals can no longer take on the financial burden of the department," Moodley said.

"We are given no indication when this money will be paid and until then the schools will be kept in the dark."

Meanwhile, the Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) has condemned the Education Department for failing to deliver LTSM on time, ahead of the academic year.

"While acknowledging some progress, the PSA highlights that the incomplete and delayed allocation of LTSM poses a serious threat to the operational readiness of schools," said KZN manager Mlungisi Ndlovu.

The PSA called for immediate corrective measures to ensure schools are fully resourced and prepared for the new academic year.

“The PSA warns that continued inaction will have long-lasting repercussions on the province’s education system, exacerbating existing challenges faced by educators and learners alike,” Ndlovu said.

The PSA also criticised the department’s failure to finalise Section 21 allocations, leaving schools underfunded and ill-prepared to meet pupils’ needs.

The association also expressed outrage over the half allocation of norms and standards to schools, stressing that such a measure undermines the provision of essential resources, including stationery, and risks deepening the inequalities in education.

“The PSA demands that the MEC of Education provide a transparent report on the full budget allocation and the reasons for the delays,” Ndlovu added.

thobeka.ngema@inl.co.za