UNIVERSITEIT STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

APPENDIX D

SCHOOL FUNCTIONALITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE BUDGETING

Paula Armstrong

(University of Stellenbosch)

A REPORT FOR THE GRADE 3 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH, SUPPORTED BY THE WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL TREASURY

August 2010

Version: 10 August 2010

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING POST-APARTHEID 1
SCHOOL FUNCTIONALITY: CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS 2
Processes of effective schooling 8
ACCOUTABILITY IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING 10
A brief word on community participation in the education system 11
Essentials of accountability 11
Accountability in the context of South African schools 12
PERFORMANCE BUDGETING: A BROAD OVERVIEW 15
Performance budgeting in South Africa 16
Performance budgeting in education 17
References 21

This paper investigates the question of school effectiveness in the South African education system. Characteristics of effective schools internationally are discussed and a comparison of these factors with South Africa is presented. A brief discussion of accountability and its role in improving school effectiveness in the education system follows, considering the case of school governing bodies (SGBs) and a "bottom up" form of accountability, and performance budgeting as a "top down" form of accountability.

INTRODUCTION: SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING POST-APARTHEID

Almost 20 years after South Africa's transition from apartheid, a racially delineated picture of education in the country remains. Brahm Fleisch (2006) explains that the South African education system effectively consists of two education systems. One of them is predominantly white and Indian, well resourced and includes a small but growing independent sector. This first system also produces the majority of university entrants as well as the majority of learners who take higher-grade mathematics and science. It ensures that the learners passing through this system are equipped with numeracy and literacy skills comparable to those acquired by middle-class children anywhere in the world (Fleisch, 2007). Importantly, this first system enrols the children of what may be considered the elite white and black middle-classes. The second school system, on the other hand, enrols children from the working-class and poor children and therefore almost all children enrolled in this system are African or coloured. In comparison to their counterparts in the first system, children in this system acquire a somewhat restricted set of skills and knowledge and perform at a level considerably lower than children of the same age and in the same grade internationally (Fleisch, 2007).

International studies in which South Africa has taken part indicate that South Africa's performance is substantially below international standards and below that of most other African countries (more often than not considerably poorer than South Africa). Van der Berg and Louw (2007) explain that South Africa was ranked third in per capita income terms out of the 14 countries[1] participating in the second wave of the Southern African Consortium for the Measurement of Educational Quality (SAMEQII) study in 2001, and that expenditure on education constitutes the largest item on the government budget. It may therefore be expected that the educational outcomes of South African learners should be amongst the strongest in the region (Van der Berg and Louw, 2007).

However, as mentioned before, this is not the case. South Africa's performance is markedly weaker than for example that of the French (who spend the same proportion of GDP on

[1] Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zanzibar.

education as South Africa) as well as countries such as Singapore, South Korea and Hong Kong – all of which spend a considerably smaller portion of GDP on education (Van der Berg and Louw, 2007). Within the SACMEQII study, South Africa learners performed particularly poorly, with 44% of the grade 6 learners tested performing at the level of a child who had been in school for 3 years, roughly 24% of grade 6 learners performing at the level of a grade 4, nearly 9% performing at the level of a grade 5 and just 6% performing at the level of competency deemed equivalent to that of a grade 6 learner (Moloi, 2005). It may therefore be said that the South African education system faces a crisis.

As mentioned before, there are considerable differences in the educational outcomes of learners enrolled in the historically white school system and those enrolled in the historically black schooling system that drives South Africa's unsatisfactory performance. Those latter schools constitute 80% of enrolment of the country's school-going population and so the fact that the quality of education provided at these schools has not improved is concerning (Van der Berg, 2006).

SCHOOL FUNCTIONALITY: CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Characteristics of functional schools appear in schools in areas of both high and low socio-economic status. Furthermore, studies from schooling systems in developed economies present largely consistent evidence regarding these characteristics.

Two studies conducted in the USA provide characteristics of effective schools. The first of these, conducted by Brookover et al. in 1978 and 1979 (discussed in Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993), was a study of elementary (primary) schools in Michigan. The researchers in this study summarised their findings regarding the effectiveness and functionality of schools under eight broad headings:

Time spent teaching was higher in schools that performed more effectively.

1. ***"Writing off" of students*** occurred regularly in ineffective or low-performing schools, in which large numbers of students were expected to fail.
2. ***Teacher expectations*** of students were higher in effective school, with close to 75% of students being expected to master the material with which they were working in comparison to those of teachers in less effective schools.
3. ***Reinforcement practices*** in the form of praise for work well done were used extensively and consistently in effective schools, while in ineffective schools they were often used inconsistently and in a confusing way, with positive reinforcement being given for tasks in which students clearly underperformed.
4. ***Grouping procedures*** were used efficiently in high-performing schools in which students were grouped according to their performance on pre-test reading and maths scores. In low-performing schools, grouping of students was used mainly as a management tool and was seen to be disruptive to learning. Furthermore, whereas there was a considerable amount of mobility between groups in high-performing

schools, very little mobility was observed between groups in low-performing schools.

5. ***Teaching games*** were more prevalent in high-performing schools than they were in low-performing schools.
6. ***The role of the principal*** in high-performing schools was very academic and involved him/her spending a large amount of time in classrooms. In low-performing schools, however, principals took on a more administrative and disciplinarian role, very seldom spending time in classrooms.
7. ***Commitment of teaching and administrative staff*** was higher in high-performing schools as reflected by a positive attitude towards the work that they were doing and warmth towards students. In low-performing schools, the general feeling amongst teachers was that there was little that they could do in order to influence the achievement of students (Brookover et al., 1979 in Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993).

The second study from the USA to be discussed is the Louisiana School Effectiveness Studies conducted by Teddlie and Stringfield (1993) along with colleagues between the years of 1984 and 1996. Sections of the study divided schools along two lines: school effectiveness status (effective, typical or ineffective) and student body SES (middle SES or low SES). Schools were therefore categorised according to four broad groups:

1. ***Middle SES, Effective Schools:*** In these schools, frequent contact between teachers and parents was observed, and parents appeared to be concerned with the quality of education received by their children. Teachers felt responsible for student achievement and took active measures to ensure that students fulfilled the high expectations set for them by teachers. Students also reported that teachers cared about them and about their academic progress. Furthermore, students internalised the high expectations set for them by teachers. These schools are described by the researchers as having "concern for excellence" (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993).

2. ***Middle SES, Ineffective Schools:*** Teachers in these schools had unrealistically high perceptions of their students which appeared to be based on students' intrinsic characteristics such as their SES. However, expectations of students' future performance were somewhat lower than it was for students of a similar SES background in more effective schools. In fact, expectations of the school principal were somewhat lower than those of teachers. Principals stated that several aspects of student development (namely personal growth, social skills, occupational aspirations) were equally as important as academic skills and so it may have been the case that too much of the schools' resources were spent on such endeavours. Finally, actions on the part of the principal very seldom translated into changes within the school (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993).

3. ***Low SES, Effective Schools:*** Despite modest long-term expectations for students by teachers and principals, firm academic expectations were held for students while they were at school and students perceived teachers as exerting pressure on them

academically. Principals spent a lot of time visiting classrooms, and a large number of teachers had teacher aides in the classroom. Teachers were also the youngest and least experienced in these schools. These schools were characterised by principals who motivated teachers, who in turn motivated the students they taught. Indeed, instilling the belief that they could learn in students was fundamental to the success of these schools (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993).

4. ***Low SES, Ineffective Schools:*** The overall negative climate of these schools contributed to their low performance. Expectations for students, both in the future and for while they were in school, were the lowest in these schools, and principals, teachers and students perceived the lack of achievement and students experienced their teachers as less caring, less helpful, less praising and more critical (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993).

Three studies were published in the United Kingdom, by Reynolds et al., Rutter et al. and Mortimer et al. in 1976, 1979 and 1988 respectively. The results of the studies overlap considerably and so they are presented in Table 1.

Three studies were published in the United Kingdom, by Reynolds et al., Rutter et al. and Mortimer et al. in 1976, 1979 and 1988 respectively. The results of the studies overlap considerably and so they are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: **CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS**

1.	High pupil involvement in positions of authority.
2.	Little control of pupils by school management.
3.	High level of expectations for students.
4.	High degree of teacher involvement in running the school.
5.	Negotiation with regards to manners, dress and morals.
6.	High student involvement in societies and clubs.
7.	A consistent system of rewards and punishment.
8.	Academic goal setting by teacher through the assignment of homework.
9.	Power sharing by principals in the form of consulting teachers on issues that involve them (particularly with regards to what is being taught in their classrooms).
10.	Consistency and low turnover in the teaching body.
11.	Structured learning sessions for students with limited freedom and in which no more than two tasks are presented.
12.	High level of parent involvement in the school.
13.	Maximum level of communication between teachers and students (Reynolds et al., 1976; Rutter et al., 1979; Mortimer et al., 1988).

Although international evidence from industrialised countries provides useful guidelines for the South Africa scenario, it must be remembered that the context in which schooling takes place in the industrialised countries and the challenges faced by education systems in developing countries are vastly different. It is therefore important to consider the case of effective schooling within a developing country context, and specifically, against a South African backdrop.

A study conducted by the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) in 2009 entitled "International best practice in schooling reform: What can South Africa learn from other countries?" discusses "lessons" from a range of countries of various economic standing that are applicable to the South African context. Lessons from the world's best performing education systems (which are unsurprisingly found in the most developed countries) pertain largely to the calibre and behaviour of teachers within those education systems. These are summarised in the four points below.

1. **The quality of the education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers**: The quality of teachers in the education system is the most important aspect of educational quality and top-performing systems ensure that the best individuals are employed and trained intensively. Strict criteria are enforced with regards to joining the teaching force and those who do not meet the criteria are either not allowed to join the teaching force or are asked to leave if they are already in the teaching force. Teaching is regarded as a prestigious profession in these high-performing countries and selection into teacher studies is very stringent. Teacher salaries are also very competitive and reward excellence. They are affordable by ensuring that the remuneration curve is "shallower" (less steep) than in other professions (CDE, 2009).

2. **The only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction**: Improving instruction needs to entail improving teaching and improving classroom conditions. The best performing systems bring professionalism, mentoring and apprenticeship back into the profession. Comprehensive feedback systems also enable teachers to learn from their mistakes and to improve problem areas (CDE, 2009).

3. **High performance requires that every child succeeds:** Schools must consciously track the performance and improvement of all students within the school through inspections and examinations. Countries need to set standards and measures of success in relation to their individual needs and mechanisms to help schools achieve those standards (CDE, 2009).

4. **Every school needs a great leader:** High-performing school systems recruit and train excellent principals with intrinsic leadership skills, supporting them to become effective leaders in addition to effective educators (CDE, 2009).

High-performing education systems therefore emphasise the role of the teacher and the principal. However, Patel and Crouch (in Simkins and Paterson, 2006) point out the "cavalier" attitude towards monitoring and enforcing the quality of teaching, explaining that it results from the decentralized nature of the schooling system and the from the fact that decentralized information is not used at the micro level in order to hold teachers accountable and to provide them with feedback and support. No effective replacement for inspection has been put in place in order to remedy the lack of accountability. Indeed, progressive education philosophy emphasizes the self-chosen development of learners within classrooms rather than any conformity to external norms as a measure by which

teachers and education are judged (Simkins and Paterson, 2006). Further evidence of the importance of teachers in achieving educational quality is the strong correlation between teachers' opinion of quality schooling and learner performance, with schools in which teachers judge educational quality to be reflected in student outcomes performing better than schools in which qualities such as community involvement and discipline are said to define educational quality (Phurutse, 2005).

Another aspect of the school effectiveness that is highlighted and that is particularly relevant to South Africa is that of the equality of learning. Indeed, the CDE (2009) reports that a positive relationship exists between overall learner achievement and the equality of learning outcome: countries that perform poorly in terms of student achievement have a larger variation in student performance, or a "steeper performance curve", while better-performing countries have a flatter curve, suggesting that countries improve their overall performance by concentrating on poor performers. In South Africa, no "cognitive middle class" exists, while the "cognitive elite" is decidedly smaller than is should be and the number of learners who have learnt nothing remains unacceptably large. This is discussed as a lesson to be taken from middle-income developing countries. These lessons are summarized below.

1. **Assessing what pupils are learning** is important in order to ascertain whether pupils understand the material that is being presented to them and in order to ensure that they are actually learning (CDE, 2009).

2. **Basic classroom inputs make a difference to what happens inside the classroom:** Basic inputs include learning materials, buildings, teaching knowledge, curriculum, teaching processes and learning time. Significant challenges are multiple languages and mother-tongue learning. Research highlights the importance of bilingual teachers and instructional programs in the earliest grades (CDE, 2009).

3. **Time, particularly teacher-student contact hours, makes a big difference:** This applies to both teachers and students and requires that both groups are punctual, present and motivated. The possibility of incentives is in place to ensure this (CDE, 2009).

4. **Equity matters:** It is important that basic learning inputs are able to reach all schools. Interventions targeted at student most likely to drop out of school have proven very successful in middle-income developing countries. Incentives are often given to teachers who teach in disadvantaged schools (CDE, 2009).

The importance of equity is reiterated by Simkins and Paterson (2006). The importance of financial resources cannot be over-emphasized. This plays itself out in the form of school fees which are higher for schools that serve more affluent sections of the population. An adequate amount of school fees means that top educators may be employed and that higher remuneration attracts top candidates in the profession to schools that are able to pay them better salaries. In the absence of such resources, the school infrastructure also seems

to break down and students are taught by disgruntled teachers who leave the impression that the inferior circumstances and teaching quality that they receive is all that the students are worth, therefore diminishing enthusiasm and motivation amongst students (Simkins and Paterson, 2006). The nature of the inequality within the South African schooling system is tightly tied to South Africa's past of racial discrimination and inequality and so this is an area that requires urgent and significant attention.

In terms of assessing whether or not learners are actually learning anything in the classroom, South Africa faces a challenge that is not unique to this country, but that may be considered somewhat more severe than it is in other countries. In a schooling system in which there are 11 official languages, the home language of learners is to be used to teach subject matters in early grades. However, this becomes problematic when schools serve multilingual communities. Furthermore, many non-English-speaking parents want their children to learn English as early in their schooling as possible. Substantial gaps exist between what state policy stipulates should happen in the classroom and what actually happens in the classroom as teachers face an immense challenge trying to make themselves understood. The result is that children (particularly in primary schools) are faced with understanding both a new language and the new concept that is being taught to them (Simkins and Paterson, 2006).

It is always useful to consider the education production function literature when considering the question of school effectiveness. Gustafsson and Mabogoane (2010) explain that education production functions attempt to identify education inputs (namely teacher qualifications, availability of teaching materials, teaching time etc.) which have an impact on pupils' test scores. It must be mentioned that it is possible for relatively high levels of public spending on education, as well as well qualified teachers, to exist with very poor educational outcomes. Although it makes sense intuitively that increased inputs should improve education outcomes, this is not always the case in reality (Van der Berg in Gustafsson and Mabogoane, 2010).

Education production functions indicate that socio-economic status (SES) of pupils' parents plays a considerable role in student performance. In the majority of countries, SES has a greater impact on differences in performance than all school resource factors combined (Gustafsson and Mabogoane, 2010). This impact is particularly acute in South Africa where SES is largely delineated along racial lines. For example, in the Western Cape Primary School Pupil Survey of 2003, Xhosa speakers appeared to perform considerably worse than their English and Afrikaans counterparts. However, it is difficult to untangle the impact of Xhosa from that of SES since poverty levels are substantially higher amongst Xhosa-speakers than amongst any other population group in the Western Cape (Van der Berg, Burger and Yu, 2005).

The production function literature also indicates the value of teacher and school discipline as illustrated by the positive impact of using teacher registers. Monitoring of teaching plans also has a positive impact on student performance, as do curriculum coverage and lesson plans (Van der Berg, Burger and Yu, 2005).

Processes of effective schooling

The processes of effective schooling may be thought of as the processes that need to be in place in order for a school to function effectively (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000). The processes of effective schooling discussed here have been observed in schools that are considered effective and form the core requirements associated with effective and functional schooling.

According to Reynolds and Teddlie (2000), the first process of effective schooling is ***effective leadership***. In fact, effective leadership by a head teacher or a principal is considered the most important factor in effective schooling (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000). A "firm and purposeful leader" is the first requirement and should be in place before any of the remaining processes are able to fall into place (Rutter et al., 1979). School leaders need to ensure that other members of staff are involved in the running of the school, therefore taking a participative approach to leading. Effective leadership also involves instructional leadership, which includes: i) developing and communicating a manageable number of well-defined goals; ii) managing education resources by allocating and protecting instructional time, supervising instruction, coordinating curriculum and monitoring progress made by students; iii) the promotion of a positive academic learning environment through the creation of positive expectations for students, and incentives and professional development opportunities for teachers; and iv) the creation of a supportive working atmosphere in which opportunities for meaningful student involvement are created (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000). Principals should also play an active role in monitoring staff performance and should proactively select and replace staff members. A high level of classroom presence and informal conversations with teachers as a type of "sense making" operation also contributes to the effectiveness with which principals and head teachers provide leadership within a school (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

The **second** process of school effectiveness considered important by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) is ***teacher and teaching effectiveness***. Teacher and teaching effectiveness refers to the level of efficiency with which work is conducted in the classroom. It involves the creation of an effective learning environment through: i) ensuring that sufficient time is dedicated to classroom instruction; ii) classroom organisation and lesson planning; iii) making use of effective teaching practices; iv) adjusting teaching practices to the particular needs and characteristics of learners (i.e. teaching practices need to be driven by student needs) (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

Focusing on learning is a third process of effective schooling mentioned by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000). This basically refers to the need for an academic focus within a school. It involves the maximisation of available learning time and an emphasis on academic goals and academic processes (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

A fourth process of effective schooling is ***generating a positive school culture***. A positive school culture requires a sense of "community" amongst staff, in which good communication and widely agreed upon goals exist. This sense of community would result in

consistency in practices and in the application of rules and disciplinary sanctions. There should be a sense of ownership of the school by staff. This will result in a positive environment in which pupils will be able to learn more effectively and in which a "learning community" may be generated amongst staff (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

The fifth process of effective schooling examined is the creation of ***high expectations of achievement and behaviour***. Indeed, these high expectations must be communicated to students verbally and by means of behaviour. Creating and communicating expectations is a demonstration of teachers' sense of activism and of the belief that schooling can outweigh the effects of an adverse social and family background. Furthermore, high expectations of teachers for students are very likely a reflection of high expectations of principals for teachers (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

Emphasizing student responsibilities and rights is Reynolds and Teddlie's sixth process of effective schooling. A high level of student involvement in extra-curricular activities plays a strong role in ensuring that students have a stake in the school. This in turn increases the likelihood of establishing school goals and of enhancing the commitment to these goals (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

They mention ***monitoring progress at all levels*** as the seventh process of effective schools***.*** The monitoring of student progress enhances school effectiveness through multiple channels: i) demonstration of the progress of students indicates to them that teachers have an interest in their performance, therefore increasing their sense of self-worth and motivation; ii) it aids in focussing on the core goals of education; iii) it identifies where there is a need for remedial help; and iv) it allows for the analysis of students' learning progress. However, if progress is monitored too frequently, this may prove counterproductive (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

The eighth process of effective schools is ***staff development***. The emphasis for staff development should be on practical, on-site development. By enhancing the quality of teaching within a school, a culture of mutual learning, monitoring and coordination is generated amongst staff members, therefore enhancing the overall quality of education provided by the school (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

Finally, the ninth process of effective schooling is ***parental involvement***. An "open door" policy by which parents are welcome at the school is strongly associated with more effective schooling. The potential utility of increased parental involvement works through many channels: i) the synchronization of home and school demands; ii) decreasing class sizes by making use of parents as unpaid teaching assistants; iii) raising resources for the school; iv) providing assistance with homework; v) informing the school of student progress and problems; and vi) communication with individual students' teachers. Parental involvement plays a significant role in enhancing the momentum with which improvement and change happen within a school (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2000).

It is therefore clear that effective schooling is largely dependent on ensuring that teachers are teaching and that they are teaching well. Unfortunately, in the case of South Africa, this

is too often not the case. This happens because there are very seldom serious consequences for bad performance in the teaching profession. Accountability within the education system is therefore crucial to ensure that schools actually function. Indeed a school system which is accountable to all stakeholders in the education process is far more likely to be effective and functional than one in which schools operate in relative obscurity. Accountability in the context of the South African education system is therefore discussed below.

ACCOUTABILITY IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING

It is clear that the quality of service received by people with lower socio-economic status (SES) is considerably worse than that received by people with higher SES. Indeed, despite a substantial resource shift that took place in the South African education system from historically white schools to historically African schools, the performance of learners in these schools (and therefore the quality of education received by these learners) has remained disappointing. A further redistribution of resources is unlikely to have a substantial impact on outcomes unless the effectiveness of these schools is enhanced (WDR, 2004). The disparity in outcomes between the historically African and historically white sections of the education system may well persist as a result of weak accountability and poor school governance in the poor performing and historically disadvantaged portion of the system. The poorer sections of the population experience problems with service delivery (and therefore with "delivery" in terms of education) and a possible reason for this is the "long route of accountability". There is no direct channel of influence between citizens and service providers (in the case of education, principals and teachers). Citizens can only influence service providers via policy makers, whose responsibility it is to influence service providers. Any breakdown in these relationships will result in a service delivery failure (WDR, 2004). In fact, even if citizens are able to influence policymakers effectively enough to ensure that their objectives are taken into account it is not necessarily the case that policymakers are in turn able to penalize service providers for poor delivery (WDR, 2004). A possible solution to this problem is to "shorten the long route of accountability" by increasing the answerability of service providers to citizens, thereby increasing citizen participation in service delivery. As will be discussed later, this has been attempted in the South African education system through the introduction of School Governing Bodies (SGBs).

Accountability is therefore an essential part of school functionality as it ensures that the people providing education services are answerable to the community they serve, namely parents and to some extent children. Accountability expresses "the continuing concern for checks, oversight, surveillance and institutional constraints on the exercise of power" (Schedler in Schedler, Diamond and Platter, 1999). Beckmann (2000) makes the point that accountability is essential in the exercise of power, implementation of policy and in the use of resources. Accountability therefore requires a moral responsibility or conscience about what one is doing, and implies answerability to all stakeholders, ensuring that events can be both explained and justified by the agent responsible for executing them (Maile, 2002).

Accountability is viewed as an integral component of school governance. Accountability can be defined as the decisions on rules and policy by which a school is organised and managed (Maile, 2002). Accountability can therefore help to ensure that policies and rules are implemented effectively, according to the law and within the budget of the school (Maile, 2002).

The question of accountability refers to service providers (schools) being accountable to clients (parents of the children in schools). The focus of the question of accountability therefore needs to be whether schools are accountable to parents in terms of the governance structures they have in place. Are parents aware of their role as stakeholders in education? Importantly, have the introduction of school governing bodies (SGBs) and the allowance made for increased parental participation actually translated into a higher level of accountability in the school process, or are the channels through which this increased participation is intended to improve accountability not operating as effectively as intended?

A brief word on community participation in the education system

Parent and community support and recognized is one of the key factors in determining school effectiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa. Five categories are identified as being of importance in the region: i) children arrive at school prepared to learn; ii) financial and material support for the school are provided by the community; iii) there is frequent communication between the school, parents and community; iv) the community plays a meaningful role in school governance; and v) parents and community members assist with instruction (Uemura, 1999:).

The involvement of parents in education (particularly in the realm of accountability) is understood to increase accountability of the school to the community which funds them. Indeed, the family-school partnership is seen as a business partnership in which mutual and complementary benefits are shared by both parties, enabling both parties to operate more effectively. Evidence from Kenya suggests that staff members only feel they should be more accountable when the community in which they teach holds some form of power over them (for example, they come from the same village, their salaries or employment depend on community satisfaction, when community committees exist to manage schools) (Uemura, 1999). In instances where parents contribute time, labour, materials, land and funds, participation and involvement from parents are likely to be greater. They are also more likely to demand a higher level of accountability from school management and staff, who in turn are more likely to provide the services requested by parents (Uemura, 1999).

Essentials of accountability

Schedler (1999) names the fundamentals of accountability as enforcement, monitoring and answerability.

The first of these, enforcement, broadly refers to rewarding good performance and punishing of bad performance (Maile, 2002). The sufficiency of checks and balances in exercising power is largely dependent on the suitability of enforcement and so an important aspect of enforcement of accountability is transparency: stakeholders are entitled to know how decisions were taken, what the consequences of those decisions may be, what information was taken into account in taking the decisions and what processes were used (Luthans in Maile, 2002). Transparency can therefore help to curtail power insofar as those in a position to take decisions need to ensure that all aspects of the decision are accessible to all people affected by the decision.

The second of Schedler's "fundamentals" is monitoring and this involves the question "who should be accountable to whom and about what?" (Maile, 2002). In general, monitoring should be up-and-down (i.e. between junior and senior positions) and sideways (i.e. between people on the same level of seniority). In other words, all role-players must be able to justify their actions to all other role-players in the process (Lello, 1993). Monitoring therefore provides for the equal participation of all people in the education process (Maile, 2002). The need for monitoring is likely to be more pressing in organisations in which there is a reasonable degree of interdependence. Schools appear to fit this description given that the achievement of the goals of education depends on multiple actors (Maile, 2002 and Pfeffer, 1992). All stakeholder need to be aware of each other's interest. Furthermore, all stakeholders need to be involved in the decision-making process in order to monitor each other's performance. For example, principals are also generally responsible for implementing decisions taken by stakeholders in the education process and are therefore answerable to parents. However, they are most likely best placed to judge the viability of decisions. Accountability in the schooling system arises therefore through a process of bargaining and negotiation (Bush, 1995).

Answerability in accountability refers to stakeholders being obliged to explain their actions and decisions, and having the opportunity to ask questions of other stakeholders (Maile, 2002). It refers therefore to being answerable to other stakeholders in the education process (Dorn in Maile, 2002). Answerability is also, however, the main stumbling block of accountability since it is often inhibited by the "arrogance of power" (Schedler, 1999) and within the context of schooling, this refers to instances like withholding negative reports or providing damaging reports (Maile, 2002). Indeed, answerability is substantially compromised in instances where parents are poorly educated or even illiterate. In such cases, parents are unable to access information on a practical level and answerability is diminished (Maile, 2002). Practically, answerability takes the form of process evaluation (in which attention is focused on the delivery of programmes and on making the necessary adjustment to the delivery) and outcome evaluation (in which a decision is made regarding the continuation of the programme) (Maile, 2002).

Accountability in the context of South African schools

The transition to a fully democratic political system in 1994 was associated with a shift to school-based management and should have been associated with devolution of power in the schooling system (Moloi, 2007). Indeed the principle of democratic governing bodies in which various constituencies in the school community are represented arose following protest against the education system that happened in the form of the Soweto Uprising of 1976 and the People's Education discourse of the 1980s (Karlsson, 2002). The ANC-led government post-1994 was faced with the challenge of establishing a public schooling system that would simultaneously allow for the redistribution of state funding to the poorest schools and retain the support of the middle-class.

The objective behind the democratisation of schooling is that school governance should reflect the core values of democracy: representation, participation, tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making (Karlsson, 2002).

The core values of representation and participation are essential to accountability, and while tolerance, collective decision-making and rational discussion are largely attitudinal, representation and participation are addressed explicitly in the South African Schools Act of 1996.

In terms of representation, the South African Schools Act of 1996 provides for the establishment of school governing bodies (SGBs) and the election of members to represent the school community. The constituencies include parents, educators, non-educator staff and in secondary schools, students. Parents must constitute a fifty percent plus majority of the SGB, and the chairperson of the SGB must be a parent. There are at least two reasons for the prominent role of parents in the SGB: firstly, parents of learners within the school have the largest stake in the development of the school and in the quality of teaching and learning that takes place within the school. Secondly, they are the constituency paying school fees (Karlsson, 2002).

Participation in ensuring that the school functions effectively and to ensure that the best interests of the school are promoted is understood to be the overarching function of the SGB (DoE, 1996). In this way, all constituencies participate in school governance through their representatives on the SGB. Furthermore, although parents are allowed to set school fees, the SGB is tasked with ensuring that fees are paid and with establishing when exemption is warranted. The SGB is also tasked with administering the funds collected. It must be noted, however, that schools attended by learners with relatively wealthy parents are able to collect more funds and so the interface between funding and governance perpetuates the historical inequalities in South African schools (Karlsson, 2002).

In terms of the extent to which the model of leadership ensures accountability in South African schools, it is clear that civil society in the form of parents and, in secondary schools, learners are included in the school governance. Indeed, the state (in the form of principals, teachers and non-teaching staff) and civil society are brought into negotiation with each other and so the performance of schools is directly observable and to a certain extent "manipulable" by representatives of all stakeholders in the school community. However, given the historical nature of the South African school system and the deep socio-economic

impression this has left on society, the extent to which SGBs impact positively on the overall school environment and the extent to which they are able to hold the school to account varies according to the historical background of schools. Therefore, although it is beyond question that the democratic nature and the accountability of school governance have been enhanced theoretically, the capacity deficit dating back to the apartheid era, as well as the contextual poverty in which some schools find themselves tend to interfere with the accountability of schools and with the ability of parents to enforce and demand answerability from schools (Karlsson, 2002).

Evidence of the aforementioned differences is provided by an empirical case study: the *Education 2000 Plus* longitudinal study conducted nationally in 27 schools in 1997 and 2000 provides evidence that there has been a slight deepening of representation in terms of the racial composition of SGBs, since the racial heterogeneity of SGBs has increased between 1997 and 2000 (McPherson, 2001). However, it is clear that class remains a central determinant in membership of non-teaching staff. Importantly, in 1997 it was noted that principals played a dominant role in the decision-making processes of the SGB, for a number of reasons: i) the level of power of the principal within the school renders their dominance "natural" and often unquestioned; ii) principals remain highly educated relative to other members of the SGB; iii) principals are able to access information provided by education authorities first; iv) principals are in a position to execute decisions taken by SGBs (McPherson, 2001). The dominant role of principals in the governance of school, therefore, is not completely suitable in a schooling system in which accountability is key to school governance. Indeed, the "problem" of principal dominance is worse in schools in which parents have lower levels of education (in some cases they are illiterate). There was also evidence that in many schools (again, particularly schools with lower socio-economic status) parents were reliant on teachers and the principal for guidance in the decision-making process. It is suggested that this was a result of a weak understanding of parents' role on the SGB. As mentioned earlier, strong evidence of differences in capacity and skill requirements existed, largely along racial and socio-economic lines. These problems were exacerbated by difficulties in communication and transport in schools in areas with lower socio-economic status (McPherson, 2001).

By 2000, although the majority of the social restrictions had remained in place, parental participation in SGBs had improved noticeably. This may well be explained in part by explicit efforts on the part of education departments to attend to capacity deficits amongst SGB members from different socio-economic backgrounds as well as to an improved understanding and therefore trust in the governance process (McPherson, 2001).

In terms of the racial and socio-economic differences mentioned above, Soudien (2002) points out that the narratives people construct are conditioned by their historical backgrounds, and that in the case of South Africa, racial realities have been accepted as if they were constructed naturally as opposed to deliberately. The cultural perspectives of different racial groups therefore prove problematic when principals and teachers work across racial boundaries. For example, in situations where "cross-boundary" black teachers are perceived as performing ineffectively by their white counterparts as a result of the lower

socio-economic background of most black teachers relative to white teachers, these perceptions of inferiority become "inextricably linked to realising one's individual purpose" (Soudien, 2002). This is likely to play a significant role in the degree of participation and influence that SGB members of different race groups and socio-economic status have in school governance.

Parental participation in school governance also differs according to the types of decisions that are to be made. Parents are very much involved in decisions pertaining to building maintenance, school finances and helping with learner discipline (Naidoo, 2005). However, the level of involvement in school governance differs by school, and in schools where parents have a lower level of education, the general sentiment with regard to their involvement is negative as it is assumed that parents know very little about school governance. Furthermore, there are reports that non-parents members of SGBs consider parents "easy to push over" as they are not aware of the extent to which they are entitled to become involved in school governance and are therefore hesitant to become too involved (Naidoo, 2005).

The discussion on accountability so far has only focused on a kind of "bottom-up" accountability whereby principals and staff are accountable to the communities which they serve. Very little has been said about the accountability of schools to the Department of Education. Indeed, this would be a type of "top-down" accountability. This type of accountability requires that schools display sound management, particularly with regard to funds received from the Department. A discussion on performance budgeting follows in order to analyse the accountability implied by this "top-down" monitoring.

PERFORMANCE BUDGETING: A BROAD OVERVIEW

Shah (2007: 24) describes performance budgeting as "a system of budgeting that presents the purpose and objectives for which funds are required, the costs of programs and associate activities proposed for achieving those objectives, and the outputs to be produced or services to be rendered under each program". Performance budgeting therefore shifts the emphasis from inputs to the outcomes and outputs associated with government spending, taking account of this when deciding on future resources allocations (Nkoana, 2007). Lee, Johnson and Joyce (2004) explain that government performance must be evaluated according to the services it promises to deliver to citizens with the resources assigned by the legislature. Indeed, accountability requires that government produces financial AND non-financial information in order to explain both how funds were employed and what services were produced using those funds (Nkoana, 2007). Performance budgeting may be understood to shift the focus from "how much money will we get?" to "what can we achieve with this money?" (OECD, 2008).

Performance budgeting therefore requires that government becomes more accountable and transparent to the citizens which they serve in terms of how resources are utilized to fulfil policy objectives. It may therefore be said that the primary goal of performance budgeting is

the promotion of effectiveness and efficient use of public resources (Robinson and Brumby, 2005).

Performance budgeting has the advantage of allowing for a certain amount of flexibility for departments to reallocate funds according to their needs, therefore removing unnecessary resource management constraints for managers and departments and allowing them greater autonomy in operational decisions (Nkoana, 2007). Furthermore, performance budgeting creates a higher level of certainty regarding the availability of funds in the operation environment of spending departments. Finally, the reorientation of those responsible for budgeting from input-control based compliance issues to performance-orientated matters regarding improving program outcomes results in outputs that are relevant for the achievement of program objectives (Diamond in Nkoana, 2007). There are, however, factors that are recognized as contributing to the failure of the implementation of performance budgeting in many countries. These include: i) strong resistance to reform; ii) shortage of specialised expertise; iii) lack of information systems to capture information on performance; iv) administrative difficulties; v) underinvestment in accounting, managerial and information systems; vi) lack of institutional incentives to encourage improved economic efficiency; vii) corruption; and viii) unrealistic expectations associated with hastily conceived reform (McNab and Melese, 2003).

Performance budgeting therefore allows for a greater degree of accountability because of the sharper focus that it creates on performance within government departments. It also provides a clearer picture for governments of what is working and what is not working. Importantly, performance criteria need to be built into the budgeting process as opposed to performance reports simply being included in budget reports (OECD, 2008).

The traditional governmental view of budget management was based on input control and resource allocation on unquantified and badly articulated policy objectives. Furthermore, it was highly centralised. Little or no follow-up on the actual performance (in achieving planned policy objectives) of government departments occurred because the primary modus operandi in managing budgets was control and compliance. Performance budgeting there introduced an alternative model whereby the link between resource allocation and the achievement of objectives was more direct (Diamond in Nkoana, 2007).

Performance budgeting in South Africa

The adoption of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) of 1999 was a significant step towards the adoption of performance budgeting in South Africa. The objective of accepting the act was the shift of attention from how much was spent by the South African government to how efficiently and effectively the money was spent on the attainment of government objectives (Nkoana, 2007). The PFMA brought about numerous changes in the way that budgets are planned in South Africa, ensuring a higher level of accountability.

Departmental strategic plans were introduced by the PFMA and form the basis for budget planning (Bryson, 2004). Strategic plans include vision and mission statements as well as the

strategic goals for the departments. Strategic goals, however, are fairly broad and are often not quantifiable, so more specific strategic objectives are developed. It is on these strategic objectives that budgets are linked with performance indicators. The linkages between strategic objectives and budgets form the basis for allocation of limited public resources only to the programmes in which departmental strategic objectives and government wide priorities will be implemented (Nkoana, 2007).

Annual performance plans and costing require that departments translate their strategic plans into annual performance targets. Measurable objectives, performance measures in achieving these targets, activities that will be performed to deliver outputs and output targets all form the annual performance plan (Nkoana, 2007).

Monthly, quarterly and annual reports are required from departments to report on how the allocated funds are being spent and to indicate whether or not the department in question is working within the framework stipulated by the annual performance plan. While departments report monthly to the treasury, quarterly reports are submitted to the legislature (Nkoana, 2007). The annual report should be submitted within five months of the end of the financial year and requires information on both financial and non-financial indicators. Annual reports should include what was achieved in the past year, what was not achieved and what challenges were faced in achieving the planned annual performance targets (Nkoana, 2007).

Finally, independent evaluation of government performance takes place. The Auditor-General, who is accountable to the legislature, verifies the financial statements that form part of the departmental annual reports. The Auditor-General focuses only on financial information, however, and not on information regarding non-financial performance (Nkoana, 2007).

Performance budgeting in education

The Strategic Plan for the Western Cape Department of Education includes three overarching goals. The first of these is improved performance in literacy and numeracy. This goal seeks to ensure that 75% of grade 3 learners, 65% of grade 6 learners and 65% of grade 9 learners perform to literature age norms by 2014, and that 60% of grade 3 learners, 50% of grade 6 learners and 55% of grade 9 learners perform to numeracy age norms by 2014. The second goal is an improvement in national senior certificate results. The targets for 2014 are an 84% pass rate for the National Senior Certificate, with 43 000 learners passing and 37% being granted admission to Bachelor's degrees. The third goal is a reduction in the number of under-performing high schools. This goal aims to ensure than no schools have a pass rate of less than 60% on the National Senior Certificate (Western Cape Education Department (WCED), 2010a).

As mentioned before, these are broad and largely non-quantifiable goals and so 10 strategic statements and associated programmes are explained in the Strategic Plan. The 10 statements are:

1. "To ensure literacy and numeracy outcomes by directing maximum resources to the first three years of schooling. This will be coupled with universal and compulsory testing of learners from Grades 1 to 6 in 2010. Benchmarks and targets will be set at each school.
2. To ensure excellent management of schools with officials, principals and teachers held to account for their role in improving individual school performance.
3. To improve the responsiveness and efficiency of the WCED through a focus on improving the department's business processes and systems.
4. To reduce the administrative workload of teachers to provide more times for teaching. Teachers will be provided with texts on time and with opportunities for ongoing professional development and training. Officials will provide administrative and academic support to teachers and schools on demand.
5. To ensure that every classroom is text-rich with reading books for each Grade 1-6 classroom and textbooks for all grades 4-12 for each subject and makes greater use of technology to deliver a quality curriculum into the classroom.
6. To provide food and other poverty-alleviation and safety measures to address the needs of poor learners.
7. To develop a list of priorities for infrastructure maintenance and adopt the most cost effect and efficient means of maintaining schools.
8. To direct human and financial resources to those districts and schools that have historically experienced under-investment.
9. To plan in-migration to the Western Cape and use research trends to ensure that schools and teachers are available to provide quality education to the children who enter the province.
10. To provide targeted management training and in-school support to all members of school management and SGBs." (WCED, 2010a).

A number of programmes are then defined in the Strategic Plan through which the aforementioned statements are to be achieved (WCED, 2010a). These are listed below.

Programme 1: Administration
Programme 2: Public Ordinary School Education
Programme 3: Independent School Subsidies
Programme 4: Public Special School Education
Programme 5: Further Education and Training
Programme 6: Adult Basic Education and Training
Programme 7: Early Childhood Development
Programme 8: Auxiliary and Associated Services

As explained earlier, the performance measures by which these programmes are evaluated are stipulated in the Annual Performance Plan, 2010/11 – 2012/13. These performance measures and the education goal for which they are intended to provide information are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2: **PERFORMANCE MEASURE AND EDUCATION GOAL IN THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2010/11 – 2012/13**

NUMBER	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	EDUCATION GOAL
1	Number of public schools that use SA SAMS to provide data to the national learner tracking system	Efficiency
2	Number of public schools that can be contacted electronically	Efficiency
3	Percetnage of education current expenditure going towards non-personnel items	Efficiency
4	Number of learners enrolled in public ordinary schools	Access
5	Number of education employed in public ordinary schools	Quality
6	Number of non-educator staff employed in public ordinary schools	Quality/Efficiency
7	Number of public ordinary primary schools with an average of more than 40 learners per class unit	Quality
8	Number of pubic ordinary secondary schools with an average of more than 35 learners per class unit	Quality
9	Number of learners in public ordinary schools benefitting from the National School Nutrition Programme	Access and Quality
10	Number of learners in public ordinary schools benefiting from learner transport	Access and Quality
11	Number of learners in public ordinary schools benefitting from "No Fee School" policy	Access
12	Number of public ordinary schools without water supply	Quality
13	Number of public ordinary schools without electricity	Quality
14	Number of public ordinary schools without sanitation facilities	Quality
15	Number of classrooms in public ordinary schools	Quality
16	Number of specialist rooms to be built in public ordinary schools (all rooms except classrooms – include laboratories, stock rooms, sick bay, kitchens, etc)	Quality
17	Number of learners with special education needs that are enrolled in public ordinary schools	Access
18	Number of full service schools	Access
19	Number of schools visited at least once a quarter by a circuit manager	Quality
20	Number of subsidised learners in independent schools	Access
21	Number of learners enrolled in public special schools	Access
22	Number of educators employed in public special schools	Quality
23	Number of Professional non-teaching staff employed in public special schools	Quality
24	Number of students enrolled in NC(V) courses in FET colleges	Access
25	Number of FET College NC(V) students who completed full courses successfully	Quality
26	Number of FECT College students who have successfully completed learnership programmes	Quality
27	Number of learners enrolled in public ABET Centres	Quality
28	Number of educators employed in public ABET Centres	Quality
29	Number of learners who graduated in the basic ABET/NQF level 1 programme	Quality
30	Number of 5 year old children attending education institutions	Access
31	Number of learners enrolled in Grade R in public schools	Access
32	Number of public schools that offer Grade R	Access
33	Number of candidates for the Grade 12 senior certificate examination (Matric exam)	Access
34	Number of candidates for the ABET NQF Level 4 examinations	Access

Source: WCED Annual Performance Plan 2010/11 – 2012/13

The success with which performance budgeting is implemented in the Education Department depends largely on the availability of information on the measureable outcomes discussed about. Furthermore, whether or not improvement in any of the indicators is in fact an indication of improvement "on the ground" and whether improvement "on the ground" translates into improvement in the indicators will also determine the extent to which performance budgeting is an accurate and accountability-enhancing method of improving the efficiency and functionality with which schools operate.

REFERENCES

Beckman, JL. 2000. "Democratic management: An exploration of some key concepts and their implications for the management of a university academic department." Inaugural address. , 23 March 2000.

Bryson, J. 2004. Strategic Planning for Public and Non-Profit Organisations: a Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organisational Achievement. 3rd edition. New York: Jossey-Bass.

Bush, T. 2007. "Education leadership and management: theory, policy and practice." *South African Journal of Education.* 27(3). 391-406.

Centre for Development and Enterprise. 2007. *Doubling for growth: addressing the maths and science challenge in South Africa's schools.* Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise.

Centre for Development and Enterprise. 2009. *International best practice in schooling reform what can South Africa learn from other countries?* Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise.

Fleisch, B. 2007. Primary Education in Crisis: Why South African schoolchildren underachieve in reading and mathematics. Cape Town: Juta.

Gustafsson, M and Mabogoane, T. 2010. "South Africa's economics of education: a stocktaking and an agenda for the way forward." *University of Stellenbosch Working Paper 06/2010.*

Karlsson, J. 2002. "The Role of Democratic Governing Bodies in South African Schools". *Comparative Education.* 38(3). 327-336.

Lee, R, Johnson, R and Joyce, P. 2004. *Performance Budgeting Systems: 7th Edition.* New York: Jones and Bartlett.

Lello, J. 1993. *Accountability in practice.* London: Cassell.

Maile, S. 2002. "Accountability: an essential aspect of school governance". *South African Journal of Education*. 22(4). 326-331.

McNab, R and Melesse, F. 2003. "Implementing the GPRA: Examining the Prospects for Performance Budgeting in the Federal Government". *Public Budgeting and Finance. Summer. 145-172.*

McPherson, G. 2001. "The status of governing bodies in the Education 200 plus schools 1998-2000" (Unpublished).

Moloi, K. 2007. "An overview of education management in South Africa". *South African Journal of Education.* 27(3). 463-476.

Naidoo, JP. 2005. Education decentralization and school governance in South Africa: from policy to practice. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Nkoana, JI. 2007. "Implementing Performance Budgeting in South Africa". *Working paper for the Applied Fiscal Research Centre.*

Pfeffer, J. 1992 Managing with Power. Politics and Influence in Organisations. Boston: Harvard Business School.

Phurutse, MC. 2005. Factors Affecting Teaching and Learning in South African Public Schools. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Robinson, M and Brumby, J. 2004. "Does performance budgeting work? An analytical review of the empirical literature". *International Monetary Fund working paper P/05/210.*

Schedler, A, Diamond, L and Platter, MA. 1999. The self-restraining state. Power and accountability in new democracies. London: Lynne Renier.

Shah, A. 2007. "Budgeting and Budgetary Institutions". *Public Sector Governance and Accountability Series.* Washington DC: The World Bank.

Simkins, C and Paterson, A. 2006. *Learner Performance in South Africa.* Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Teddlie, C and Reynolds, D. 1993. The international handbook of school effectiveness research. London: Falmer Press.

Uemura, M. 1999. "Community Participation in Education: What do we know?" Paper prepared for Effective Schools and Teachers and the Knowledge Management System. Washington DC: The World Bank.

Van der Berg, S, Burger, R and Yu. 2005. "Determinants of Education Quality: a Report on the Western Cape Primary School Pupil Survey 2003". Report commissioned by the Joint Education Trust. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

Van der Berg, S. 2008. "How effective are poor schools? Poverty and educational outcomes in South Africa". Discussion paper for the Centre for European, Governance and Economic Development Research. Paper number 69 – January 2008.

Van der Berg, S. and Louw, M. 2007. "Lessons learnt from SACMEQII: South African student performances in regional context". *Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers 16/07.*

Western Cape Department of Education. 2010. *Annual Performance Plan 2010/11 – 2012/13*. Cape Town: Government Press.