

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION 942

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 24-2006)

Mr G G Bionamo to ask the Minister of Education:

Whether her department can provide timeframes regarding (a) the completion of the (i) revamping of dilapidated schools, (ii) building of schools within a 3-5km walking distance in each village or town in order to rid her department of the burden of scholar transport, (iii) training of new educators and retaining of currently employed educators in the mastery of outcomes-based education, (iv) provisioning of support staff to all schools and (v) fencing and provisioning of security to all schools and (b) the assurance that all disabled children of school-going age are attending schools; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

N1216E

REPLY:

(a) (i)(ii)

Currently, provincial education departments produce infrastructure plans that are summarized in their budget statements, which provide information on all school building and improvement projects for the 3-year MTEF period.

In recent years, through monthly provincial infrastructure reports, I have been tracking provincial infrastructure progress against their budget plans. In June 2006 provinces reported 942 “inappropriate school structures” and plans to build 168 new schools and 5,827 classrooms at existing schools.

(a)(iii)

The training of teachers on the new national curriculum is the joint responsibility of the Department of Education and the provincial departments. Provinces conduct the follow-up programmes to support teachers. Orientation of teachers for grades 11 and 12 will be completed by February 2007 in all nine provinces.

Orientation of teachers for the foundation phase and intermediate phase was completed in all the nine provinces at the end of 2005. All provinces will complete orientation of teachers in Grade 7, 8 and 9 at the end of 2006.

All higher education institutions involved in teacher education train student teachers on the curriculum. They are also involved in various short-term programmes to support teachers already in service.

(a) (iv) The Minister will determine national norms with regard to support staff in schools before the end of this year.

(a) (v) Fencing and other security measures are critical to the safety and security of our learners and of great concern to me. This matter is, therefore, addressed in some detail in our current audit of all schools (the National Education Information Management System). Initial indications are that there exists a huge need for fencing as a first step to better security. Plans in this regard will be finalised by provinces within the constraint of budget allocations. Exact timeframes for dealing with all schools are not available.

(b) In 2002 the Department of Education conducted a study of special-education provision in South Africa that found an estimated 300,000 disabled children of school-going age, mostly in poor urban and rural communities, were not at school.

On 30 May I answered an oral question (37) in the House from the Mrs C Dudley on this very issue, and I refer you to the answer I gave her.