

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION 52

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Ms H Weber to ask the Minister of Education

(1) Whether with regard to the recent reports that some schools have too much furniture while others experience a shortage, there is any policy regarding the reallocation of furniture to schools in need; if not, why not; if so, who is responsible for such reallocation;

(2) whether there is a policy to ensure that (a) stock taking and (b) the repairing of furniture at schools are regularly done; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details in each case?

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REPLY:

(1) Policies regarding the allocation of furniture to schools are the responsibility of provincial departments of education. Each provincial department of education is, therefore, responsible for its own policy on reallocation of furniture.

(2) (a) Provincial Treasury policies and regulations exist in all provinces to ensure that stock taking is done on an annual basis.

(b) These Provincial Treasury policies also regulate the repairing and disposal of school furniture in each province.

Notwithstanding the above, school furniture forms part of the infrastructure needs of schools. The matter is further complicated by constant migration of learners. It is necessary to balance the number of learners per school with the required number of appropriately qualified teachers, classrooms, furniture as well as learner and teacher-support materials. This is an ongoing challenge for the system, exacerbated by huge backlogs. It is receiving attention within the budget and capacity constraints, but will unfortunately not be solved over the short term.