

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR ORAL REPLY
QUESTION 368**

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Mr R S Ntuli to ask the Minister of Education:

- (1) When will her department implement the new policy framework for teacher training and development;
- (2) whether there are specific criteria to be followed when allocating bursaries to teachers; if so, what criteria;
- (3) whether the implementation of this policy will eradicate the shortages of teachers in learning areas like mathematics, science and technology; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) The National Policy Framework on Teacher Education and Development has only been published for comment, and will only be formally declared as policy when comments have been taken into account. However, R700 million has been allocated for a full-cost bursary scheme, linked to a service contract with provincial education departments, for student teachers over the current MTEF period, which includes R180 million for 2007.
- (2) Preference for bursaries will be given to students who come from rural areas and who will be more likely to teach in rural areas once qualified; and to students who want to train in subject areas where teachers are in short supply – maths, science and indigenous languages. In addition, interviews will be held to test the affinity of the candidates for teaching.
- (3) The policy will begin to address, but not eradicate in the short term, the shortages of teachers in areas like mathematics, science and technology. Concern over teacher shortage is international; very few countries produce enough teachers for themselves; and the problem of teacher shortage is particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa. We live in an era of employment mobility and teachers, like doctors and other professionals, know that their skills are in demand all over the world. We will employ foreign teachers if they are suitably qualified and able to teach our curriculum.