

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 2257

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Mr A M Mpontshane (IFP) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

What steps is her department taking to (a) reduce the ability of unions to interfere in her department's ability to implement policies to improve the education system, (b) ensure that unions do not hold her department and pupils hostage over salaries and (c) work with unions to improve the education system while holding teachers accountable for not performing?
NW2686E

REPLY

- (a) Surely, there are steps my Department is taking to reduce the ability of unions to interfere in my Department's ability to implement policies to improve the education system. Unions are always engaged in consultations on all policy matters with a view of finding solutions to challenges and to prevent the occurrence of disputes;
- (b) Regarding the holding of my Department and pupils hostage over salaries, it should be noted that salaries for all public service employees, including educators, are negotiated in the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC). The State is represented by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) in collective bargaining in the PSCBC. However, in the event that all avenues are exhausted in the PSCBC and a strike action occurs, my Departmental Strike Management Plan together with the principle of "No work, No pay" will be implemented.
- Any matter emanating from the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) would be managed to ensure that the industrial action is avoided at all; and
- (c) The parties to the Education Labour Relations Council are engaged in reviewing the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). Currently, the performance of educators is assessed in terms of the IQMS, which was introduced in 2003 as an ELRC Collective Agreement. At the Teacher Development Summit held in June-July 2009, a decision was taken to streamline and simplify the IQMS and that measures be put in

place to delink Developmental Appraisal (DA) and Performance Measurement (PM) in the IQMS processes.

Subsequently, a simplified and streamlined accountability instrument that is intended to rebrand the IQMS has been developed by the parties to the ELRC is still under negotiation. This instrument now known as the Quality Management System (QMS) is vital for reasons of accountability and sound leadership and management of our schools.