

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY  
QUESTION 1471

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**Mr W D Spies to ask the Minister of Education:**

Whether her department is monitoring the performance of specific schools in respect of the use of (a) mother tongue only as medium of instruction, (b) English only as medium of instruction and (c) the early distribution model, with reference to language and instruction; if so, (i) which schools are being monitored in this way and (ii) what is the result in respect of the academic performance of the respective schools and the language and instruction models?

**N1926E**

**REPLY:**

- (a) and (b) My Department does not monitor the performance of specific schools in relation to the use of mother tongue only or English only as a medium of instruction.
- (c) I am not sure what is meant by the “early distribution model” and hence cannot respond to this. (i) and (ii) are therefore not applicable.

However, I can say that our systemic evaluation results for both grade 3 (in 2001) and grade 6 (in 2005) confirm international trends that indicate learners who learn through their mother tongue score higher than those who learn through another language.

The Department is looking at various ways of supporting mother-tongue learning especially in the foundation phase. This includes training teachers in the teaching of second languages. The Department will also pilot the use of mother-tongue instruction up to grade 6 in selected schools, and monitor academic achievement.