

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY
QUESTION 2611**

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 17/09/2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 29-2010)

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

Whether her department will achieve the 2015 Millennium Development Goal of providing basic primary education to every child; if not, why not; if so, what (a) are the current statistics with regard to the implementation of this goal and (b) policies are in place to ensure that this goal is met by 2015? NW3138E

REPLY:

The Department of Basic Education will be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of providing basic primary education to every child by 2015. Primary education in South Africa is characterized by very high rates of enrolment and retention through to grade 7.

(a) THE CURRENT STATISTICS

Table 1: Number of 7-13 years old children attending education institutions: 2002-2009

Provinces	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Eastern Cape	96.4	96.0	97.4	97.8	97.7	98.0	98.4	98.4
Free State	97.7	97.4	96.7	98.7	99.1	99.1	98.3	99.2
Gauteng	98.0	98.7	99.4	98.8	98.7	97.8	98.3	98.5
KwaZulu-Natal	95.0	96.8	97.4	98.0	97.2	98.1	97.9	98.5
Limpopo	97.7	98.2	99.1	99.1	99.0	98.7	98.2	98.9
Mpumalanga	97.6	98.3	98.8	97.7	98.1	98.3	98.0	98.4
North West	95.7	97.2	98.0	96.1	96.9	98.1	97.5	98.4
Northern Cape	94.3	96.2	97.6	98.5	98.8	99.0	98.1	98.9
Western Cape	98.3	97.6	99.0	98.7	99.4	99.4	97.8	98.9
RSA	96.7	97.4	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.3	98.1	98.6

Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2002-2009

(b) POLICIES AND INITIATIVES TO ENSURE THAT THIS GOAL IS ACHIEVED

In 2007, the government adopted a **policy of “no fee” schools**. The aim of this policy is progressively to give effect to the constitutional imperative of the right to a basic education. It is a policy and budgetary response to the need to make education truly accessible by removing fees as a barrier. The South African Schools Act has been amended accordingly and schools in the lowest three quintiles have been declared “no fee” schools. In 2010, 68% of learners (over 8 million in more than 19 000 public schools were classified as no-fee schools.

The **Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC)** was rolled out in 2009. It is aimed at mobilizing communities to monitor and support schools, teachers and learners, in improving the quality of education for all children, especially the poor. Each partner in the campaign is called upon to make a commitment to a “Code for Quality Education” that describes the responsibilities and discipline required of them.

To adequately address the poor quality of literacy and numeracy in the nation’s schools, the teaching and learning of these crucial competencies in the Foundation Phase must improve. The **Foundations for Learning Campaign**, introduced in April 2008, focuses specifically on Grades R to 3. It includes the provision of support material to educators and schools for use in the classroom as well as actual training and support for educators in Literacy and Numeracy development. A key focus of the campaign is a “back to basics” approach. Resources for the campaign are developed and delivered to the schools by the national DBE. Provincial departments ensure that the necessary support and development for schools and educators is provided so that the resources can be effectively used.

Many young children living in poverty are food-deprived and are therefore not able to participate fully in their own development. The **national school nutrition programme** is aimed at promoting better quality education for the poorest learners by providing a meal to learners in the programme. The rationale of the NSNP is to actively enhance children’s learning capacity. This is done by providing an incentive for children to regularly and punctually attend school. Further, the programme addresses particular micro-nutrient deficiencies.

A national basic education plan has been developed called, **Action Plan to 2014: Towards the realization of schooling 2025**. This initiative will ensure the effective monitoring of educational progress against a set of measurable indicators covering all aspects of basic education including, amongst others, learners, teachers, infrastructure, school funding, learner well being and school safety, mass literacy and educational quality.