

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 2142.

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2142. Dr S S Thembekwayo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

Given that the current educator to student ratio in the Republic has been officially benchmarked at 33.5 in primary schools and 32.2 in secondary schools, although in reality classes on average carry between 40 and 50 learners in each class, (a) what are the reasons that her department allows the situation to spiral out of control and (b) by what date does she envisage the situation will be remedied to comply with the standards of the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996?

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Response

(a) There are currently no legislated norms and standards for learner to educator ratio in public schools. The post provisioning norms apply what is referred to "ideal maximum class size" for each subject which ranges from six (6) learners per class in the case of Music, to 37 for subjects that accommodate large class sizes. As referred, these are ideal measures that the sector strives to achieve through continuous improvement in providing resources. It must also be noted that actual class sizes experienced by learners at schools are an outcome of various factors in the provisioning of educators. These include, among other factors, availability of classroom space; distribution of learners within and across grades; an increase of learners in certain geographic areas; time-tabling; and school size.

(b) Improving the class size towards a subject-specific ideal class size is an ongoing process.