

NATIONAL NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 210.

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210. Mr T Apleni (Eastern Cape: EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

Lack of spending of allocated budgets

Given that the Eastern Cape Department of Education forfeited approximately R250 million that it could not spend, what are the reasons for the lack of spending of allocated budgets in her department?

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Response

With specific reference to the proportion of the Education Infrastructure Grant that was redirected from the Eastern Cape to Kwa Zulu Natal province, the challenges which hampered progress and thus expenditure in the province relate largely to the following:

- Delays with restarting projects due to the majority of contractors having suspended activities on site in 2020/21 as a result of delayed or non-payment caused by the massive CoVID-19 related budget cuts early in the 2021 financial year.
- Active projects which were terminated by contractors in 2020/21 for the foregoing reason, and which had to be re-measured and re-advertised.
- Distrust in the Department's commitment to meet its payment obligations timeously, as evidenced in 2020/21.
- Internal procurement and payment delays.

In order to address this challenge, the DBE held engagements with the province, implementing agents and to provide support, and monitor implementation of the recovery actions, and these included the following:

- Accelerating the process of awarding replacement contracts where contractors terminated their contracts last year.
- Bring projects forward that were due to start in the 4th quarter
- Proceed to procurement with projects where designs have already been completed.
- Allocate additional funding to planning and project preparation.
- Re-allocate part of DoE portfolio to other PIAs who can proceed