

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2929**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 23/05/2025**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 22/2025**

**2929. Mr S M Gana (Rise Msanzi) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) What progress has been made to implement the National School Safety Framework (NSSF) in each province; Friday, 23 May 2025 1075 INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY NO 22 - 2025

(2) what timelines has her department adopted for the continued implementation of the NSSF;

(3) (a) what challenges has her department encountered in implementing the NSSF and (b) how does her department intend to address each specified challenge?

# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

## WRITTEN REPLY

### QUESTION 2929

#### Response

The National School Safety Framework (NSSF) is the Department of Basic Education's guiding framework for addressing all forms of violence in schools. The NSSF empowers schools to:

- identify and manage safety threats;
- establish School Safety Committees comprising teachers, SAPS officers, School Governing Body (SGB) members and Learner Representative Council (LRC) members; and
- develop incident reporting mechanisms.

The framework also supports schools in forming collaborations with key external stakeholders including SAPS, the Department of Social Development and civil society organisations. It guides schools to develop safety plans and policies to address challenges such as drug abuse.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE), Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), and education districts have continued to implement the NSSF through school-level training. The DBE has advised that the number of public schools trained on the NSSF per province in the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years are detailed in the table below, together details of the challenges identified and plans being pursued at a provincial level in the 2025/2026 financial year.

Province	Total of number of schools trained:	Provincial challenges	Provincial Plans for 2025-2026 Fy
1. Eastern Cape	1190	Lack of sufficient staff in the province and districts to implement school safety programmes.  Low budget allocation.	Train some of the schools on the NSSF.
2. Free State	309	Lack of sufficient staff in some districts to implement school safety programmes.	Monitor trained schools on the NSSF monthly.

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2929**

3. Gauteng	424	The movement of individuals that are trained on the NSSF getting new posts elsewhere.	Strengthen monitoring of schools on the implementation of the NSSF. Train outstanding schools on the NSSF
4. Kwa-Zulu Natal	5833	Shortage of staff at Head Office and District Offices.  Lack of finances in the Provincial Department  Limited kilometers that have to be travelled by officials in the performance of their duties.	Continue to ensure the implementation of the NSSF in schools.
5. Limpopo	50	Shortage of staff in districts within Governance and Safety Directorates.  Officials are not replaced after retirement.  Cost-containing measures.  Low budget allocation.	NSSF Training workshops with all circuit managers in the province.  Q2 and Q4 targeting to train at least 1000-2000 schools to ensure they record and report incidents on SA-SAMS.
6. Mpumalanga	1600	Low budget allocation.	Monitor School Safety Committees on the implementation of the NSSF.
7. Northern Cape	17	No training was implemented in 2024 due to reprioritisation and institution of Cost Containment measures.	Support and monitor districts.
8. North-West	317	Lack of sufficient staff in districts within Safety Directorates in the province and districts.	Train School Safety Committees from outstanding schools on the NSSF.

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2929**

<p>9. Western Cape</p>	<p>1469</p>	<p>High crime rates in some communities surrounding schools spill over into the school environment. This requires increased resources and funding.</p> <p>Lack of parental support, often due to socio-economic pressures or fractured family structures, also presents a challenge in terms of behaviour and discipline.</p> <p>Some schools lack the necessary safety infrastructure such as secure perimeters due to constant fence theft and vandalism.</p> <p>Additional budget to contribute to these programmes is necessary as Norms and Standards funding does not sufficiently cover the requirements of the school.</p>	<p>The WCED seeks to create an enabling environment for safe, inclusive and quality education by overcoming systemic, social and institutional barriers. Strategies include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• building relationships between the parents, learners and the broader school community and involving the local community in the school, which includes holiday and after school programmes;</li> <li>• training teachers, parents and learners to identify and address aggressive learners and learners at risk;</li> <li>• giving schools access to school social workers and educational psychologists to provide psycho-social support;</li> <li>• having accountable school management;</li> <li>• giving learners a voice within the appropriate structures in the school, as learners need to be part of the solution;</li> <li>• building transparency and trust among learners, staff the community and the school.</li> <li>• building a human rights culture in schools to make everyone feel safe and welcome;</li> <li>• providing the necessary safety infrastructure; and</li> <li>• engaging with local policing forums and community-based security clusters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Total</b></p>	<p><b>11 209</b></p>		

## **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

### **WRITTEN REPLY**

#### **QUESTION 2929**

Since 2023, the DBE, together with PEDs, has continued implementing the NSSF across provinces through both in-person and digital training as reflected in the table above. These efforts were undertaken despite serious capacity constraints in some provinces, including staff shortages in district safety directorates, financial limitations, and external environmental challenges such as high crime rates and infrastructure vandalism in certain communities. Provinces have identified various implementation plans for the 2025/26 financial year, ranging from training additional schools and circuit managers to improved monitoring and stakeholder engagement, particularly in underperforming or high-risk areas.

To supplement provincial efforts, the DBE and the Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute (WRHI) developed an accredited digital training course on the NSSF, accessible to school communities nationwide. This course, which provides 15 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points upon completion, has been completed by 328,015 educators, SGB members, school assistants and officials since its inception in 2020.

In addition, district-level support interventions were implemented in Gauteng (Sedibeng East and West) and Limpopo (Capricorn South and Mogalakwena) in 2024. These included workshops with school leadership and stakeholders on the NSSF, the Protocol on Reporting and Managing Sexual Abuse and Harassment in Schools, learner pregnancy policy, bullying prevention, psychosocial support, disaster risk management and learner discipline procedures. More than 600 participants were engaged across both provinces.

The DBE also conducts annual monitoring of all nine provinces to assess the fidelity of NSSF implementation and compliance with the SAPS Protocol and the Prevention and Management of Bullying Framework. Over the past two financial years, the DBE has monitored 50 districts, with an additional 25 districts scheduled for monitoring in 2025/26. Where necessary, underperforming districts are supported through targeted interventions.

In 2022, the DBE collaborated with UNICEF to print and distribute 27,000 NSSF manuals to provinces and districts. These resources have been disseminated to schools as part of the DBE's capacity-building initiative.

The DBE acknowledges that ongoing fiscal constraints, including budget reductions and cost containment measures, have adversely affected the ability of provinces to fully implement and expand the NSSF. These constraints have limited the capacity of PEDs to appoint additional school safety personnel at district level. To address this, the Minister of Basic Education has formally communicated to all MECs and Heads of Department, during the Council of Education Ministers meeting held on 26 May 2025,

## **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

### **WRITTEN REPLY**

#### **QUESTION 2929**

the requirement to submit credible financial recovery plans. These plans are intended to guide provinces in reprioritising expenditure toward essential services, including school safety, and will be reviewed by the DBE to determine alignment with the broader objective of protecting teaching, learning and learner well-being. Furthermore, the DBE and PEDs are actively engaging with international development partners, including UNICEF and UNESCO, to mobilise additional resources to support school safety programmes.

In parallel, the Minister of Basic Education is finalising a joint safety protocol with the Minister of Police, which will strengthen intergovernmental cooperation between schools and law enforcement authorities. This protocol builds upon the existing DBE–SAPS partnership and will formalise joint responsibilities for preventing and responding to school-related crime, strengthening visible policing around schools and enhancing the reporting and referral pathways for school-based incidents. This initiative is intended to ensure that school safety is addressed through a whole-of-government approach, especially in contexts where broader community violence spills over into the school environment.

The DBE remains committed to strengthening school safety through continued training, improved monitoring, multi-sectoral collaboration and community engagement to ensure that every school becomes a safe environment conducive to quality teaching and learning.