

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 1183.

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1183. Ms A M Siwisa (Northern Cape: EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

School safety

What recent interventions have been made to ensure the safety of (a) staff and
(b) learners in
schools?

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Response

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) continues to prioritise the safety, protection and well-being of both staff and learners across all schools. Several recent interventions have been implemented to strengthen collaboration, improve prevention and ensure effective responses to incidents of violence, crime and other safety risks in schools.

(a) and (b) The most recent interventions include the revision and re-signing of the Implementation Protocol on Prevention and Management of School-Based Violence between the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the DBE. The revised Protocol reaffirms the collaborative partnership between the two departments and introduces a joint workplan with measurable activities to ensure effective implementation at national, provincial, district and school levels.

Following the signing of the Protocol by the two Ministers, a series of district-level activation events have been held in identified high-risk areas to strengthen operational collaboration between SAPS and education officials. These activations have taken place in KwaZulu-Natal (Pinetown and Umgungundlovu), the Free State (Motheo), and the Eastern Cape (Buffalo City and Nelson Mandela Bay). Preparations are currently underway for activations in Gauteng (Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg Central) scheduled for October 2025.

Districts across the country have also been directed to localise and implement the Protocol by signing it at district level, establishing school-level safety committees and implementing the associated workplan to promote violence-free and secure learning environments.

In addition, the Campaign on the Prevention of Violence in Schools was recently carried out in the Mangaung Metropolitan District, Free State, in August 2025. The campaign was preceded by a month of district activities addressing key safety and social challenges, including bullying, substance abuse, gangsterism, sexual harassment, school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), online safety and learner pregnancy. Training sessions were also conducted for educators and school safety committees on topics such as restorative justice, preventing corporal punishment and conducting lawful searches and seizures.

The main event, held at Lenyora La Thuto Secondary School, was attended by over 600 learners and featured participation from national and provincial political principals, including the Premier of the Free State, Hon. MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, Deputy Ministers of Basic Education, Home Affairs, and Communications and Digital Technologies, and the MEC for Health in the Free State. The event also included a

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jamboree featuring career exhibitions and access to essential health and social services, including mobile clinics and Home Affairs registration services.

The DBE has further advanced digital safety through the Online Safety Integrated Programme, under which 457 educators and 20 School Governing Body (SGB) members from schools in North West, Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, Gauteng and the Free State have been trained. The training, developed in collaboration with Google, equips educators to deliver online safety content effectively within the Life Orientation and Life Skills curricula. Media Monitoring Africa, in partnership with the DBE, has also conducted learner awareness sessions on online safety in schools across Gauteng and the North West.

These initiatives complement the ongoing implementation of the National School Safety Framework (NSSF) and its associated protocols, which remain the core policy instrument guiding the prevention and management of violence, bullying and other safety-related incidents in schools.

The DBE recognises that schools are an extension of their surrounding communities, and that ensuring safety in schools is a shared responsibility that extends beyond the education system. A whole-of-society approach – involving parents, learners, educators, law enforcement agencies, social partners and communities – is essential to creating and maintaining safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments where every learner can receive an education free from fear, violence and harm.