

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 5272

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5272. Mr V Pambo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

How are teachers held accountable for their perpetual underperformance, especially considering that some schools in similar conditions are able to perform well?

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Response

The Honourable Member is advised that accountability for teacher performance is embedded in the broader framework of educator management and support within the basic education sector. In terms of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), principals and school governing bodies play an important role in ensuring quality teaching and learning. Furthermore, in terms of the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act 76 of 1998), educators are employed by Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), which hold the legal authority and responsibility for managing their performance, including disciplinary processes where required.

Performance management and development

- Educators' performance is appraised annually through the Quality Management System (QMS), a framework agreed upon in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC).
- Evaluations are conducted by school management teams, moderated at district and provincial levels, and linked to professional development and support.

Support and development interventions

- Teachers identified as underperforming are supported through performance improvement plans, mentoring, in-service training, and participation in professional learning communities.
- The DBE also coordinates national professional development programmes in priority areas such as literacy, numeracy, Mathematics and Science.

Accountability and consequence management

- If underperformance persists despite support, the relevant PED must follow procedures outlined in the Employment of Educators Act. This can lead to formal disciplinary processes, with sanctions ranging from written warnings to dismissal.
- Principals are further held accountable for school performance through performance agreements signed with PEDs, which cascade down to teachers.

Comparative performance monitoring

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- School performance is closely monitored through learner achievement data, including the National Senior Certificate (NSC) results.
- Best practices from schools performing well under similar conditions are identified and shared across provinces to strengthen accountability and improve outcomes.

The DBE recognises that while socio-economic and contextual challenges contribute to learner performance, teachers remain central to delivering quality education. Accountability is therefore ensured through legal frameworks, structured performance management systems, and provincial oversight, while professional development initiatives are used to support continuous improvement.