

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 5667**

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**5667. Mr V Pambo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

What mechanisms and/or programmes does her department have in place to ensure that the school governing body members understand their roles in (a) school governance, (b) policy development and (c) financial oversight?

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##### **Response**

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has established a comprehensive framework of mechanisms and programmes to ensure that School Governing Body (SGB) members fully understand their statutory roles in school governance, policy development, and financial oversight.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) develops and issues Comprehensive Capacity Building Guidelines for SGBs after each election cycle. These guidelines are aligned with the South African Schools Act (SASA) and outline key governance responsibilities, including:

- School funding and financial management;
- Learner discipline and safety;
- Maintenance of school assets and infrastructure;
- Recruitment and selection of school staff; and
- Support for curriculum delivery and oversight of school performance.

In line with SASA, Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) are responsible for funding and implementing these programmes through structured orientation and capacity-building workshops at school, circuit and district levels. Circuit managers and district officials also provide ongoing mentorship and support to ensure that SGBs operate within the applicable legislative and policy framework.

The DBE monitors these processes through provincial reports and intergovernmental governance forums to ensure consistency and compliance across provinces.

As part of their induction and ongoing training, SGB members are capacitated on their roles in developing, reviewing and adopting school policies in accordance with national education legislation and policy frameworks.

The DBE encourages consultation and collaboration between SGBs, principals, educators, parents, and Representative Councils of Learners (RCLs) in secondary schools, to ensure that school policies are inclusive, transparent and responsive to community needs while remaining consistent with national education priorities.

SGB associations also play a crucial role in strengthening governance by facilitating peer learning, leadership development and policy workshops across schools.

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Financial management and accountability are central to good school governance. In line with sections 42 and 43 of SASA, every SGB must:

- Maintain accurate records of all investments, donations and funds received and spent by the public school and of its assets, liabilities;
- Prepare quarterly financial reports on all income and expenditure and submit them to the Provincial Head of Department (HOD);
- Ensure that the annual financial statements reflect all the investments, donations and funds received and spent by the public school in accordance with the guidelines determined by the relevant MEC for Education;
- Present the financial records and statements to a general meeting of parents upon after having made these available for inspection at least 14 days prior to such general meeting;
- Have its records and financial statements audited annually by a qualified auditor; and
- Submit the audited annual financial statements to the HOD as soon as practicable but not later than three months after the end of the financial year.

The DBE provides oversight through compliance monitoring reports from PEDs and through guidance on financial management aligned with the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

While the training and direct implementation of SGB capacity-building programmes fall under PEDs as the implementing authorities, the Minister of Basic Education has directed that the DBE intensify national oversight of school governance through:

- Standardised monitoring tools to assess the effectiveness of SGB training programmes;
- Strengthened collaboration with SGB associations to support capacity-building in under-resourced schools; and
- Inclusion of governance and financial management compliance indicators in the Annual Performance Plan (APP) of the DBE.

Through these measures, the DBE can ensure that SGBs are empowered to exercise their governance and oversight roles effectively, fostering accountability, transparency and community participation in the management of public schools.