

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1180.**

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**1180. Dr S S Thembekwayo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

What steps has her department taken with regard to the Zithume High School located in the King Cetshwayo District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal that has been underperforming since 2017?

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#### **Response**

Zithume High School is a small school. At the time of the visit by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in April 2021, there were 110 learners and eight (8) educators, from grade 8 to 10. Two Departmental Heads were declared as additional, thus leaving the school with 6 educators to teach two streams - Commerce and Sciences. The school presented a few Grade 12 candidates, approximately 23 learners. Due to the poor performance, the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Education Department sent the School Principal to Isandlwana Secondary for a three year mentorship programme on leadership and management.

In 2019 an Acting Principal was appointed in his place. The results further declined from 43.6% (2018) to 6.7% (2019). In 2020 the school slightly improved to 37,5%. Towards the end of 2020, the Acting Principal left the school, and went back to his former school. At the beginning of 2021, an HOD from within the school was appointed as Acting Principal, and in the same year (2021) Grade 12 learners were moved to Hlakaniphani Secondary School. The District tried to close down the school, due to decline in learner enrolment and other challenges, which could not be resolved. The community leadership (izinduna and Izinkosi) did not support the idea. The District resolved to retain the placement of the Grade 11 and 12 learners at Hlakaniphani Secondary School. As from 2022 the school is not offering Grades 11 and 12.

Furthermore, the department conducted monitoring and support visits to the school; and recommendations were made to the KZN Provincial Education Department (PED) to strengthen curriculum implementation, as well as strengthening monitoring and evaluation oversight at the school.