

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 123.

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123. Mr S L Ngcobo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

What measures has her department put in place to address the (a) employment of fewer graduates to curb teacher salaries that increase at a faster rate than the budget of her department and (b) looming retirement of 17 300 teachers in 2029 which constitutes 49% of teachers who are 50 years old and above?

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Response

a. Determination of salary increases in the public sector is a centralised process undertaken through the Public Sector Coordination Bargaining Council (PSCBC) with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) leading the negotiations on behalf of government. Therefore, the teachers get salary increases as part of the rest of the public service. Budgeting for salary increases and other improvements in conditions of service is also centralised allocated at National Treasury to departments and entities. The process to increase the number of posts in schools is informed by a number of factors; chief amongst them being the increase in the number of learners and introduction of curriculum reforms that require additional teachers. The Department has in this regard approached Cabinet to request support to add about 16 000 educator posts in schools focusing on the reduction of teacher learner ratios both in public ordinary schools and special schools; and address additional needs due to curriculum reforms. Cabinet has since referred the request to the Minister's Committee on the Budget (MINCOMBUD) to process.

b. As was indicated previously, the average overall attrition rate of teachers in public schools ranges between 3%-5%, which is relatively low by international standards; and thus, suggests a high retention rate overall. The Department, through its internal analysis and collaborative research with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and partners, such as ReSEP-Stellenbosch University, has taken note of the high retirement wave in the next 10 or more years; and working closely with the latter to address this concern.

The research into the retirement of South African teachers was also done by ReSEP-Stellenbosch University, which acknowledged that South Africa's universities appear prepared to deal with the retirement of teachers, and that university output is on a sound trajectory, and should be able to deal with a demand for a larger workforce.

In addition, and in anticipation of the injection of a high number of new entrants into the system, the Department will intensify the roll-out of a comprehensive induction programme. In short, the programme provides holistic support to new teachers, covering not only personal development, but professional and social support. This induction programme will ensure a smooth assimilation of young teachers into the system.