

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 370.

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

Given the results of the 2023 Background Report for the 2030 Reading Panel which found that by the end of Grade 1 about 60% of children have not learnt most of the letters of the alphabet, while by the end of Grade 2 over 30% of children still don't know all the letters of the alphabet, what (a) strategies does her department intend to implement to address the literacy of learners in schools and (b) are the relevant details of the manner in which her department has championed the 2030 Reading Panel's recommendation in 2022?

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Response

(a) The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has a National Reading Sector Plan and Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) have developed their Reading Strategies that target the early grades informed by the National Reading Sector Plan, but taking into account the provinces' contexts. The PEDs' reading strategies outline different activities that are being implemented in schools to improve reading outcomes, and PEDs report to the DBE twice in a financial year (September and March), on their implementation. To ensure that the DBE also tracks the implementation, the implementation of the Reading Strategies forms part of the indicators of the DBE's Annual Performance Plan (APP).

There are also various intervention programmes and strategies that are coordinated at the DBE to support the improvement of reading outcomes in the early grades. They include the following:

- Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs) for Home and First Additional Languages
- Guidelines on the implementation of ATPs
- National Framework for the Teaching of African Languages in the Foundation Phase
- Primary School Reading Improvement Programme (PSRIP) for Home Languages and English First Additional Language (EFAL)
- Early Grade Reading Study
- Early Grade Reading Assessment
- Workbooks Programme
- Foundation Phase Home Languages literacy lesson plans
- Reading Norms
- Reading Champions Programme
- Read to Lead campaign
- Language across the curriculum

(b) The DBE noted the recommendations in the 2030 Reading Panel report, some of which are addressed by the National Reading Sector Plan. In terms of strengthening the National Reading Sector Plan, the DBE, supported by the National Education

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Collaboration Trust (NECT), is currently engaged in processes to strengthen the Sector Plan.