

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 676.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03/03/2023

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 06/2023

676.. Mrs Y N Yako (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

Whether her department has any plans to establish schools that will specialise in the oceans economy in light of the importance of the sector; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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Response

Since 2009, the National Curriculum Statement has provided for two subjects directly relevant to the Ocean Economy, namely Maritime Economics and Nautical Science. In 2019, the first cohort of Grade 12 candidates wrote and passed the National Senior Certificate Examinations in Marine Sciences, an internationally acknowledged and highly regarded novel subject incorporating Oceanography, Marine Biology, Humans and the Ocean Ecology. These subjects are all offered to Grade 12 at both Public Ordinary Schools and schools described in legislation as catering for 'learners with special talents' in Focus Schools, also referred to in some provinces as Schools of Specialization

There are three legislatively distinct categories of schools; Special Schools for learners with Special Educational Needs, Public Ordinary Schools and Focus Schools.

Regarding the provision of specialized subject offerings, and with appropriate foresight, the Minister of Basic Education promulgated an amendment to The South African Schools Act (SASA) (Act No. 84 of 1996) in section 12(iii), which provides for the establishment and recognition of Focus Schools as distinct entities within the Basic Education milieu. The types of subjects offered at Focus Schools constitute but one of the features that distinguish Focus Schools from Public Ordinary Schools. The overwhelming majority of Public Ordinary (Secondary) Schools, deliver a generalised curriculum, whereas the Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Focus Schools provide Provincial Education Departments with the specific characteristics that Focus Schools should exhibit. The Department of Basic Education has developed the Three-Streams Curriculum Model to accommodate the multiplicity of learner's aptitudes, talents and interests, by developing curricula that provide Academic, Vocational or Occupational learning pathways.

Marine Sciences, Maritime Economics and Nautical Science are offered in both Public Ordinary Schools and Focus Schools, in the coastal provinces of the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, as well as the inland province of Gauteng, in Sharpeville, at the Mohloli School of Specialization - the only inland Maritime Focus School, providing a highly relevant specialisation within the economic corridor encompassing the Vaal Dam and River.