

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 693.

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

(1) Whether, with regard to schools in provinces such as Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape that have some of the most dilapidated and crumbling school infrastructure, the two provinces have furnished her and/or her department with any reasons for their inability to spend its R400 million school infrastructure grant, considering that there are hundreds of schools which need infrastructure refurbishment in the provinces; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what were the reasons;

(2) whether (a) there will be any accountability measures implemented to bring those in charge to account for the waste of resources and (b) her department will intervene in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, to capacitate the two provinces to increase their ability to use the grants effectively for their intended use; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details in each case?

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Response

1. The DBE engages with all Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) on a regular basis, to discuss with and assist PEDs that are not performing as expected. Some of the reasons for poor performance by the two PEDs include, but not limited to the following - :

- Project delays by business forums and community contestations;
- Procurement delays;
- System downtime ;
- Poor performance by Implementing Agents and contractors; and
- High staff turnover in the provincial infrastructure units.

2. (a) These provinces have developed and are implementing recovery plans to mitigate against their underperformance; and these are monitored by the DBE on a regular basis. If there are cases of negligence that lead to the underperformance, these are investigated, and measures taken in line with applicable legislation and regulations.

(b) As indicated above, the DBE is already intervening and providing assistance to these provinces. Matters relating to capacity and staff turnover, are dealt with in terms of the capacitation framework; and additional capacity has also been provided to these provinces.