

NATIONAL NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 123

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**123. Ms B T Mathevula (Limpopo: EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:
to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

Increase in drug abuse

. What recent interventions have been made to fight the increase in drug abuse in high schools such as Nghonyama High School where educators are facing such a challenge?

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QUESTION 123

Response

1. National School Safety Framework

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Provincial Education Departments continue to implement the National School Safety Framework (NSSF), which is a guiding framework in addressing all forms of violent incidences in schools including drug abuse. The NSSF empowers schools to identify and manage all safety threats in schools, establish school safety committees comprising of stakeholders such as teachers, police officers, school governing body members and learner representative council members. Furthermore, The NSSF also empowers schools to develop incident reporting mechanisms, establish collaborations with external stakeholders such as the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Department of Social Development and civil society organisations, develop school safety plans and policies to respond to safety challenges of drug abuse in schools. Through the implementation of the NSSF, access control measures in schools are strengthened and substance abuse awareness programmes by partner departments and civil society are implemented in schools. For example, the KeMoja Substance Abuse reduction programme by Social Development is being implemented in Gauteng schools.

2. The National Strategy for the Prevention and Management of Alcohol and Drug Use Amongst Learners in Schools.

The DBE and Provincial Education Departments continue to implement the National Strategy for the Prevention and Management of Alcohol and Drug Use Amongst Learners in Schools which aims to create an enabling environment for those learners who have become addicted to alcohol and drugs to access treatment, care and support services. Through the Strategy, schools are empowered to conduct drug testing, and manage learners who have tested positive accordingly. To date, in the financial year of 2022-23; the North West has trained 1332 schools on drug testing, while the Western Cape trained 46 schools on drug testing.

3. Inter-Departmental Campaign on the prevention of Violence, Bullying, Corporal Punishment, GBBV, Learner Pregnancy, Drugs and Substance Abuse

The Department and its partner Departments: Social Development, Justice and Constitutional Development, Correctional Services, the South African Police Service and the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies have also embarked

NATIONAL NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

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QUESTION 123

on an Inter-Departmental Campaign on Violence Prevention. This Campaign raises awareness on issues such as the prevention of bullying, corporal punishment, gender-based violence, teenage pregnancy and drugs and substance abuse in schools. The Campaign has been championed by the Deputy Minister of Basic Education and is supported by other Deputy Ministers from the partner Departments. The Campaign has been targeting districts with high levels of crime and violence known as hot spots. The Campaign includes build up events that take groups of learners through priority content areas related to violence prevention; including drugs and substance abuse.

To date, the Campaign has been rolled out in four provinces such as Gauteng (Gauteng West District), Limpopo (Sekhukhune East District), Mpumalanga (Nkangala District) and the North West (Dr Kenneth Kaunda District). In March 2023, the Department plans to roll out the Campaign in the Eastern Cape, Nelson Mandela District.

4. Partnership Protocol between the Department of Basic Education and the South African Police Service (SAPS)

The Department also has an established Protocol with SAPS to address crime and violence in schools. The Protocol has enabled all schools to be linked to their local police stations, SAPS to conduct searches and seizures in schools and conduct crime awareness campaigns in schools. Regularly, schools work with SAPS and local community police forums and social workers to address drug abuse issues. Constantly, searches and seizures of illegal drugs and weapons are done in schools. However, these searches and seizures are only done if there is reasonable suspicion of regular drug abuse issues in the school.