

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2096.**

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**2096. . Ms N N Chirwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) Notwithstanding her reply to question 544 on 8 March 2023 and the recent debacle on the tenders for the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) being problematised and disturbed in KwaZulu-Natal, accompanied by reports of substandard food being given to learners, how does her department ensure that the learners receive nutritious food via the NSNP;

(2) whether her department has been informed of any other concerning reports in the schools concerning fights between learners and the personnel who assist with distributing food to learners; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) how (a) does her department ensure that the food is inspected and (b) frequent are the inspections carried out by her department in each (i) school and (ii) province?

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#### **Response**

(i) The DBE reviews and approves the Provincial menus annually in line with a cost effective food basket aligned with the Conditional Grant Framework. Food specifications from the Department of Health are used to guide quality and quantities. NSNP performance on menu compliance at schools is measured using monitoring tools, based on a key performance indicator (KPI) scores, that include time for feeding, balanced meal, quantities in starch, protein, fruit and/or vegetables.

(ii) Fighting between learners and the personnel who distribute food to learners is condemned and unacceptable. However, the School Management Teams and School Governing Bodies are responsible for discipline in schools. The school code of conduct is adhered to to deal with disciplinary matters.

(iii) (a) Warehouses are monitored and inspected by the local authority through Environment Health Inspectors, to ensure compliance to food safety standards. The NSNP has employed monitors in each district to assess compliance on quality, quantity and food safety, when monitoring in schools. (b) District-based Food Safety Teams do spot checks periodically, and educators responsible for NSNP, are trained on food labelling etc., for daily inspections.