

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 2866.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 02/09/2022

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 29/2022

2866. Mrs C C S Motsepe (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

What is the time frame with regard to the integration of private and public schools so that they follow the same curriculum?

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Response

It needs to be noted that at the secondary school level i.e. Grades 10 -12, both public and independent/private schools follow the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), which is the national policy promulgated by the Minister of Basic Education. This is in keeping with the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), section 6A which states as follows:

"6A Curriculum and assessment

(1) The Minister must, by notice in the Government Gazette, determine—

- a. a national curriculum statement indicating the minimum outcomes or standards; and
- b. a national process and procedures for the assessment of learner achievement.

(2) The curriculum and the process for the assessment of learner achievement contemplated in subsection (1) must be applicable to public and independent schools".

Hence, independent schools that write the final National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination offered by the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) or the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI), follow the NCS and the examination is based wholly and fully on the NCS. The Quality Assurance Council, Umalusi has the core responsibility of ensuring that the standards offered in the examinations set by the IEB, SACAI and the Public schooling system are equivalent and compliant with the NCS.

In the case of the Primary schools (Grade R - Grade 9), the majority of the independent schools follow the National Curriculum Statement, except for a small number of schools that offer a curriculum that is alternate to the NCS. These schools have been allowed to operate given that the section 29 (3), of the Constitution, states that:

"(3) Everyone has the right to establish and maintain, at their own expense, independent educational institutions that—

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(a) do not
discriminate
on the
basis of
race;

(b) are registered with the state; and

(c) maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public educational institutions".

However, the Department of Basic Education is currently engaging the National Alliance of Independent Schools Association (NAISA), and Umalusi to ensure there is uniformity in the application of the prescripts of the Constitution, section 29 (3) and the South African Schools Act, section 6A.

Therefore, essentially it can be concluded that the majority of independent schools and all public schools follow a common curriculum.