

**NATIONAL NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 641**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 31/2022**

**641. Ms S B Lehihi (North West: EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:†  
to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

***Safeguarding examination papers***

What actions is her department taking to safeguard the examination papers so that they do not end up in the hands of learners before the examination date?

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#### Response

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) closely monitors the nine Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) responsible for the printing, packing, storage and distribution (PPSD) of question papers for the November 2022 Examinations. The DBE conducts State of Readiness (SoR) visits. Challenges are identified during these SoR visits and question papers are released for printing only to PEDs that fully comply with security requirements. All PEDs need to adhere to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the handling of question papers.

In addition, all printing and packing sites for question papers are jointly audited by the DBE officials and the State Security Agency (SSA). The DBE and PEDs will monitor all processes relating to PPSD for the full duration of the examination.

Furthermore, all PEDs have devised measures to improve security at the storage points for question papers. These storage points were audited by the PEDs and DBE, and monitoring will be done for throughout examination period. In relation to the distribution from the nodal points on the day each examination, norm times will be set by the DBE and PEDs to prevent the early opening of question papers.

Moreover, in order to cultivate an ethical culture and promote the integrity of the National Senior Certificate, all learners writing the NSC examination together with their parents sign a “*Commitment Agreement*” to maintain honesty and not participate in irregularities during the conduct of examination. The *Commitment Agreement* binds the learners and parents to follow specific rules relating to the examination. They are also expected to:

- a. To make any irregularity related information immediately available to the school principal or the DBE hotline.
- b. Surrender cell phones if there is an allegation of involvement in an act of dishonesty.

Learners are briefed on all the rules and regulations pertaining to the examinations and they are thoroughly briefed on the consequences should they be implicated in irregularities.