

NATIONAL NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 795 [*124]

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795 [*124] Ms M Dlamini (Mpumalanga: EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

Violence/destruction of property in schools

Whether, noting the escalation of violence and destruction of property in schools, any intervention measures have been taken to combat the ongoing security threats which threaten the safety of learners and educators; if not, why not; if so, (a) what measures and (b) what are the further relevant details?

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Response

a. Every year the DBE conducts the *School Readiness Survey* to establish and monitor the security measures that ought to be in place in schools, this is also complimented by the Department through its monitoring of the National School Safety Framework (NSSF) and school safety matters through districts. For the reporting period 2022/2023, the DBE is conducting monitoring and support in seventy-five (75) districts on the implementation of the NSSF. This includes the functionality of School Safety Committees and the uptake of guidelines and protocols developed to improve the reporting of incidences. The National School Safety Framework was developed to assist schools in dealing with incidences of violence, this includes management and prevention of bullying, gender-based violence, corporal punishment and the use of safety audit tools to support safety standards and reduce risks. The NSSF remains the primary strategic response to school security and violence prevention responsiveness. It is a comprehensive approach that coordinates and consolidates all school safety interventions in the sector. The NSSF is based on a social ecological systems model which locates the school within its broader community. It relies on collaboration and partnerships for a more coordinated approach to responding to school safety and security.

b. The NSSF provides the framework within which:

1. Schools have active **school safety committees** and school **safety plans** based on an audit of needs are in place and are reviewed frequently
2. **School perimeter is secured** (fenced) and access controls (guard and/or surveillance) are in place and managed.
3. **School codes of conduct are aligned with the Constitution of South Africa and child-protection legislation**; and is communicated and adopted/ agreed to by all school stakeholders
4. **Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and alternatives on positive discipline** are implemented in all schools
5. **Protocols are in place to enforce consequence management** timeously and is consistently applied when responding to contraventions that put the learning environment at risk
6. Schools have **systems in place to report** violent incidences and criminal behaviour at local police station, to district and provincial office bearers and SACE.

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7. Schools have **established relationships with their intergovernmental counterparts**: Departments of Social Development; Health and Justice, to progressively ensure services such as counselling services (SBSTs); medical examinations and access to justice are effective and in the best interest of the child. The Deputy Minister of Basic Education is leading a collective of Deputy Ministers in the roll-out of the Inter-Departmental Campaign on the Prevention of Violence, Bullying, Corporal Punishment, Gender-Based Violence, Learner Pregnancy, Drugs and Substance Abuse, which was launched in Gauteng during May 2021. The Campaign proceeded to Limpopo in October 2021. In March 2022 the campaign was launched in Mpumalanga and in North West it was launched in August 2022. The campaign pulls together efforts of various government departments that contribute to the eradication and management of bullying incidents amongst learners as well as making communities aware of various available interventions.
8. Schools conduct random searches and seizures to ensure that schools are weapon and drug-free environments
9. Youth Crime Prevention programmes are implemented in collaboration with the Departments of Justice, Social Development and SAPS
10. Schools develop Disaster Risk Management/ emergency and evacuation plans.