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## BASIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SETS RECORD STRAIGHT ON TEACHER VACANCIES

The Department of Basic Education wishes to set the record straight on the reported shortage of teachers in the country.

The confusion emanates from an article by *Businessstech.co.za* which incorrectly reported that there was a shortage of 24 000 teachers. The reporter misunderstood the Minister of Basic Education's reply to a parliamentary question regarding the vacancy rate in the Basic Education sector.

DA MP Ms C V King asked the minister, amongst other things:

What (a) is the national vacancy rate of teachers in the Republic,  
(b) is the total breakdown of the number of posts that have remained vacant in each province.

In her reply, the minister said:

(a) 5.8% as at the end of February 2021.

(b) The vacancy rate reported is in terms of the actual vacancies at schools in relation to posts that each school was allocated for 2021. Provincial Education Departments are currently redeploying educators that are additional to the allocated post establishments at some schools to schools that have vacancies. Once this process has been finalised and the residual vacant posts have been filled through appointment of educators from outside the system the actual number of vacancies will be lower than the current rate. In a table presented with this written response, it shows a total of 24 556 vacant posts.

This however does not mean there is an actual shortage of teachers nor does it mean learners are being left unattended. It simply means the process of finalizing the appointment of the people currently in the posts is ongoing.

### Media Enquiries:

Elijah Mhlanga - Head of Communication: 083 580 8275 | Hope Mokgathe - Spokesperson to Minister: 079 817 0427

Terence Khala - Media Liaison Officer: 081 758 1546



The department has various teacher recruitment strategies:

- A register of qualified, yet unemployed graduates.
- The national recruitment base which is a register of qualified teachers who are not in the teaching profession.
- The district and community based teacher recruitment strategy for the Funza Lushaka bursary programme.

These databases have thousands of teachers who are requested to apply for jobs as and when they become available. In addition to this, universities produce an estimated total of 25 000 teachers a year, who are not able to get employment in the system due to the lack of capacity to absorb all of them.

This means there are more teachers in the country than the system can accommodate. The reported shortage is therefore inaccurate and misleading.

The Table below shows the number of teacher education headcount enrolments at universities as well as the graduates 2008-2018.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>HC Enrolments</b>	35 275	45 474	59 434	79 435	94 236	104 144	106 981	116 701	122 236	137 731	150 431
<b>Graduates</b>	5 939	6 855	7 973	10 593	13 702	16 496	19 077	20 738	23 818	25 877	28 203

*Source: Department of Higher Education and Training: Trends in Teacher Education*

The DBE worked with the 24 Universities offering initial teacher education programmes during 2020/21 to compile information on all initial teacher education students.

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A summary of the information is displayed in the Table below:

STUDY LEVEL	FP	IP	SP & FET	FET
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	10130	9576	18529	4971
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	7460	13513	11687	1960
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	2906	17327	13679	2129
4 <sup>th</sup> Year	2008	6855	7734	3624
PGCE	24	976	10336	1591
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>22528</b>	<b>48247</b>	<b>61965</b>	<b>14275</b>

Source: Unaudited reports received from 24 public universities

The consolidated 2020 awards list shows that 13,085 Funza Lushaka bursaries were awarded for initial teacher education by 31 March 2021. The table below shows the number of Funza Lushaka bursaries awarded from 2018-2020.

2018	2019	2020
13699	12954	13085

Source: Funza Lushaka Information Management System

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