**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 986**

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**986. Mr J Vos (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) With reference to her reply to question 490 on 31 March 2017, has any attempt been made by her department to settle on a working definition of decolonisation as it pertains to the school curriculum; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) (a) how have colonial powers influenced the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) curriculum since it was introduced in 2011, (b) why is decolonisation of the curriculum a process and not an event and (c) what is a fully transformed curriculum policy regime;

(3) since indigenous knowledge systems are already taught as part of the science curriculum, what steps need to be taken to ensure that learners are fully immersed in the indigenous knowledge systems;

(4) will Newton’s Laws and Application of Newton’s Laws remain part of the physical science syllabus in a decolonised curriculum? NW1114E

**Response:**

1. The Department of Basic Education has not formulated a definition of the term “decolonisation”, nor has it settled on a “working definition” of it as it pertains to the school curriculum. The reason for this is that decolonisation as a concept or term is not mentioned in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. However, Section 1.3 (c) of the policy does point out the principles that the policy is based on and includes, for example, social transformation; human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice; and valuing indigenous knowledge systems.
2. (a) The Curriculum and Assessment Policy statement was crafted by South African education experts and stakeholders, upholding the values of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and colonial powers have not influenced this process of development or its implementation in the education sector.

(b) Decolonisation of the curriculum is a process and not an event, as the development, review, assessment and strengthening of Curriculum in itself cannot be a once-off event. South Africa has developed and then reviewed several school curricula since 1998 as a process and the current CAPS of 2011, whilst hailed by many as the best Curriculum Statement to date, is also currently being subject to a process of review and strengthening.

(c) A fully transformed curriculum policy regime was referred to and explained in response to Internal Question Paper 09/2017, Question 490(c). It refers to a fully transformed policy reflecting the principles of CAPS and incorporating relevant policy documents that direct the content of all subjects, direct the assessment thereof and stipulate the requirements for promotion and progression of learners.

1. Steps to be taken to ensure that learners are fully immersed in the indigenous knowledge systems;

* Indigenous knowledge advocacy in the form of expos, heritage site visits etc.
* Inclusion of indigenous knowledge holders in local communities to link indigenous knowledge and school knowledge.
* Promotion of play based learning through indigenous games.
* Integration of indigenous knowledge in the social cohesion programmes.
* Collaboration with Department of Arts and Culture, Heritage Councils and other relevant stakeholders.

1. A number of scientific laws, for example Newton’s Laws and applications thereof are part of the Physical Sciences curriculum. Scientific laws and applications thereof will remain part of any future curriculum as they provide foundational knowledge in science.