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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 15/2021**

**1520. Mr M G E Hendricks (Al Jamah-ah) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1)       Whether, with reference to a certain instruction (details furnished) issued by a principal of a certain school (name and details furnished) to parents and staff not to allow learners to discuss and/or debate the latest Israeli-Palestinian fighting at school and in which the specified principal threatens to take further action in line with the school’s Code of Conduct should anyone overstep the specified instruction, her department will take any steps against the principal; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what steps;

(2)       whether her department will issue a directive to all educational institutions to refrain from issuing threats to learners, parents and teachers who wish to address any crisis involving humanitarian matters; if not, what is the position in this regard if so, what are the relevant details?

**Response**

(1) It is not yet necessary for the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to take any steps against the Principal until the Gauteng Department of Education, through its relevant Education District authority, has had an opportunity to interact with the School Principal to provide proper hearing on how the standpoint of the Code of Conduct at the school on such matters has been interpreted.

The Provincial Department and District Office will be advised ahead of time of their interaction with the School Principal, to clarify with the School Principal the fundamentals of the DBE Human Rights Education programme offering, in raising awareness among learners, regarding constitutional imperatives; as well as violence and crimes against humanity.  Thereafter, the necessary adjustments and modifications will follow, which could include further clarification in the provisions in the Code of Conduct, or retraction of the instruction by the Principal where violation is detected.

(2) The DBE will not be issuing any such directive at this stage.  Instead, an invitation is being extended to all Provincial Departments and schools to participate in the Oral History, Moot Court, and Youth Citizen Action programmes, where such matters are safely discussed and debated, to support the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) existing provisions in Social Sciences, Lifeskills and Life Orientation.