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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19/2021**

**2043.  Mrs D van der Walt (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

With regard to learner pregnancies according to each grade in each province (a) during the (i) 2019 and (ii) 2020 academic years and (b) since 1 January 2021, what (i) is the total number of pregnancies reported to her department, (ii) is the name of each school, (iii) total number of learners returned to complete school, (iv) total number of learners left school, (v) number of learners wrote exams whilst pregnant, (vi) number went into labour whilst at school and (vii) are the details of any assistance that was given to the learners by her department and/or schools?

**Response**

With regards to the question on learner pregnancy, it is necessary to note the difficulties in reporting accurate information on the number of learners that are pregnant at schools.  The school Principal or school Administrator captures the information on the South African School Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS), provided that the learners declare their pregnancy. There are many instances where the Principal might not be aware of a learner being pregnant, as it is not declared; and therefore, it cannot be recorded.  Furthermore, societal norms regarding teenage pregnancy, may prohibit learners from reporting that they are pregnant; hence there is under-reporting of teenage pregnancy on SA-SAMS.  The Department uses the General Household Survey (GHS), which provides the best information on learner pregnancy statistics.  Given that the GHS survey is sample-based, and that the proportion of learners that report pregnancy is very low, the actual number of pregnancies should be interpreted with extreme caution.