**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2270**

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**2270. Mr M Bagraim (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(a) What is her department’s policy on educators leaving school to attend union meetings during school hours and (b) does her department monitor the number of meetings that take place resulting in educators leaving school during school hours; if not, why not? NW2445E

**REPLY**

1. Time-off is regulated in Chapter F of the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM). According to the PAM, a reasonable period of notice must be given to the responsible person designated by the employer for time off to attend meetings, training courses, and other agreed to activities. The PAM provides further that when requesting time-off for such activities, every effort should be made to hold them before or after official school hours, or during lunch breaks. The granting of time-off is also not unlimited as the PAM provides specific limitations to unions depending on the position of the teacher in the union.

Only duly elected, identified trade union representatives are allowed time-off, including during school hours, to attend meetings for collective bargaining purposes and other union activities.

1. My Department does not monitor the number of meetings that take place resulting in educators leaving school during school hours. In terms of the PAM, it is the responsibility of the Provincial Departments of Education to keep records as well as details of time-off allowed with full pay and without pay. However, the PAM is quite specific that time-off may only be granted if the teaching and learning programmes of a school is not interrupted.