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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2356**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 20 JUNE 2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 24 - 2022**

**2356.   Ms A L A Abrahams (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development: *[Interdepartmentally transferred from Basic Education with effect Thursday, 7 July 2022]***

(1)        With regard to learners who are child support grant beneficiaries within the public-school system in the academic period 2017 to 2022 in each province, what number of learners (a) were 18 years and older in the period 2017 to 2021, (b) are expected to turn 18 years in 2022, (c) have remained in school after turning 18 years old and (d) completed their schooling to matric level after turning 18 years old;

(2)        what has she found are the reasons that the learners who are 18 years and older do not complete their schooling until matric;

(3)        what has she found have been some of the benefits of the child support grant to learners;

(4)        whether she has found that the child support grant supports and encourages vulnerable learners to attend and complete their schooling; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?                NW2778E

REPLY:

(a) The Department only started collecting statistics on the age categories of learners on social grants in 2021 Grade 12 Report. Prior to that, the Department was collecting data on the educational performance on learners who are beneficiaries of social grants. The information is not by grant type, but indicates information for all child Social Grant Beneficiaries (SGB). It is difficult to only report on CSG.

**Table 1: 2021 Grade 12 Social Grant Beneficiaries achievement by age**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** |  | **Age congruent**Age<18 | **Age 19** | **Over-age**Age 20+ |
| **Mean age** | **Wrote** | **Pass rate** | **Wrote** | **Pass rate** | **Wrote** | **Pass rate** |
| **Eastern Cape** | 19.4 | 34,764 | 84.8% | 17,055 | 70.7% | 26,351 | 55.1% |
| **Free State** | 19.5 | 11,580 | 93.5% | 6,565 | 86.5% | 9,842 | 73.0% |
| **Gauteng** | 19.1 | 50,514 | 88.8% | 19,788 | 75.0% | 16,863 | 57.5% |
| **KwaZulu-Natal** | 19.3 | 36,558 | 86.8% | 13,709 | 73.6% | 20,007 | 58.2% |
| **Limpopo** | 19.9 | 38,095 | 83.1% | 19,929 | 68.4% | 34,749 | 44.8% |
| **Mpumalanga** | 19.1 | 25,321 | 84.8% | 12,450 | 72.9% | 19,959 | 56.2% |
| **North-West** | 19.2 | 15,837 | 91.1% | 7,590 | 78.4% | 10,844 | 54.9% |
| **Northern Cape** | 19.6 | 4,719 | 84.2% | 2,355 | 68.7% | 3,252 | 47.0% |
| **Western Cape** | 19.1 | 22,375 | 85.2% | 8,302 | 68.8% | 5,440 | 49.4% |
| **Total** | **19.3** | **239,763** | **86.5%** | **107,743** | **73.0%** | **147,307** | **54.3%** |

The categorisation of congruent age for Grade 12 used the UNESCO levels that suggest that official ages for this grade are between the ages of 17 and 18 (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Learners that were over this age were considered over age.

The number of Social Grant Beneficiaries were 19 years of age was considered large (107 743), therefore necessitating independent analysis of performance for learners of this age. Results confirm that SGB learners who were age congruent had higher performance compared to those who were age 19 and older. In fact, the learners that were 19 years had a 13.5 percentage points reduction in their pass rate compared to those who were age congruent. The learners that were 20 years and older had a 32.2 percentage point reduction in their pass rate compared to the age congruent learners. Some provinces experienced an average pass rates that is below 50% for over-age learners. These provinces are Limpopo (44.8%), Northern Cape (47.0%) and Western Cape (49.4%). This is a major concern and suggests that programmes to ensure that factors that lead to older age enrolment per grade are addressed.

b) The information is not readily available at it can only be determined upon receipt of registration data of learners from the DBE.

C) The information is not readily available and can be explored once the LURITS data from DBE is available.

d) The information that is available is only for 2021 Grade 12 learners as depicted in Table 1 above. It has to be noted the information is not disaggregated by grant type, therefore it is difficult on report on Child Support Grant Beneficiaries.

(2)  This information still needs to be explored. Evidence currently not available

(3)  A wealth of evidence shows that CSG receipt is good for children’s health and welfare: children who received the grant saw improved nutrition, more schooling, and less labour-force participation, and were more likely to possess formal identity documents.

The impact evaluation study conducted by Department of Social Development in collaboration with SASSA and UNICEF in 2012 indicated that the CSG appears to play a compensatory role for children with less educated mothers, narrowing the schooling gap between children whose mothers have less education and those who have more. In these ways the Child Support Grant promotes human capital development, improves gender outcomes and helps to reduce the historical legacy of inequality. Receipt of the CSG by the household reduces adolescent absences from school, particularly for male adolescents, even when the household does not receive the grant specifically for the adolescent. Recent evidence has also complimented this robust evidence on the positive impact of CSG on children and their families.

(4) The impact evaluation study conducted by Department of Social Development in collaboration with SASSA and UNICEF in 2012 indicated that for younger children, earlier receipt of the CSG improved girls’ grade attainment by a quarter grade compared to receipt of CSG at age six. In addition, early receipt of the CSG reduces delayed school entry of girls by 26.5 percent.

Receipt of the CSG by the household reduces adolescent absence from school, particularly for male adolescents, even when the household does not receive the grant specifically for the adolescent.