**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2375**

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**2375. Mrs J V Basson (ANC) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) (a) Whether her department has plans in place to realise the White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education in order that even learners with disabilities in rural areas can also benefit and have access to better education in the areas where they live; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what progress has been made;

(2) what plans does her department have in place to address the supply and demand of qualified educators who teach learners with disabilities in order to give them equal and quality education that will mould them to be valuable and independent citizens who also contribute effectively to the economy of the country? NW2553E

**Response**

(1)(a) Yes, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has plans in place to realise the White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education. The following is a selection of key examples in this regard:

1. The implementation of the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) and Curriculum Differentiation is instituted across the sector and settings whether urban, semi-urban or rural. To date, 81 076 teachers from 20 416 (80%) schools and 4 215 officials have been trained on SIAS and Curriculum Differentiation across settings in the sector.
2. The designation of ordinary schools to Full Service Schools (FSSs) has covered 849 schools across the settings, to provide access to quality and equitable education and support to all learners including those with disabilities as close as possible to where they live. Of this number, 219 FSSs have been provided with ramps and rails for accessibility to the physically disabled learners.
3. A total of 187 Care Centres were audited in the first quarter of 2018/19 during which 5 502 children with severe to profound intellectual disability (CSPID) were reached.
4. DBE has developed the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) Grades R-5 for learners with severe intellectual disability (SID), which is piloted in 177 Special Schools for SID learners in 2018, in preparation for implementation from 2019 onwards.

(2) The Funza Lushaka bursary programme is being offered at 24 public Higher Education Institutions offering Initial Teacher Education programmes. In order to strengthen the supply and demand of qualified educators who teach learners with disabilities, the Department has revised the priority areas for the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme to specifically include the fields of special educational needs, braille and sign language education from 2018. Universities such as the University of Johannesburg, WITS, UNISA and University of Pretoria have started to offer the fields of special educational needs, braille and sign language as major subject areas in the Bachelor of Education (B Ed) Degree and Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). It is worth noting that the University of Johannesburg has introduced Neurodevelopmental Disorders as part of the B Ed and PGCE from 2018.