**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2415**

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**2415. Ms N I Tarabella Marchesi (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(**1) Whether teachers are given specific extra training to enable them to teach a multigrade class; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;**

**(2) (a) what plans does her department intend to implement in order to reduce the number of multigrade classes and (b) by which date will the specified plans be implemented? NW2663E**

Response:

(1) Most teachers in Multi-Grade schools have no formal training in Multi-Grade teaching and consequently have limited skills in managing different content at different levels as well as classroom management of multiple groups. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) jointly with the Provincial Education Departments has since 2010 been training teachers in Multi-Grade teaching. In March 2018, the DBE in c ollaboration with Teacher Unions trained 2 083 teachers and 214 subject advisors in Multi-Grade teaching and the Multi-grade Toolkit. The training is geared to equip teachers with skills and knowledge that they require to mediate the curriculum effectively and efficiently in Multi-Grade schools. The training covers concepts such as Introduction to Multi-Grade teaching; Teaching strategies; Classroom management; Classroom organization; Timetabling; Display techniques; School Based Assessment; Lesson management; and the Multi-Grade toolkit.

(2) (a) The PEDs supported by the DBE are immersed in the rationalisation process that is aimed at discontinuing schools that have become unviable due to enrolment decline, while still guaranteeing the right to basic education of all learners as enshrined in section 29(1) (a) of the Constitution. Some schools with Multi-Grade classes with very low enrolment fall in this category. In order to strengthen the rationalisation process, the DBE has developed and adopted Guidelines on Rationalisation. The workshop on these Guidelines was conducted in all the provinces.

All provinces have drawn up plans with timeframes indicating the number of schools targeted for both merger and closure.

(b) Plans are being implemented by the respective provinces and there are dates already decided and unlikely to change on which the rationalisation processes must be concluded.