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 **Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**Minister**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION NUMBE 2786 DATE OF PUBLICATION 20 NOVEMBER 2020 IN THE INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER 49 OF 2020**

**National Assembly written Reply: 2786 of 2020**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

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**TBJ Memela-Khambula**

**CEO: SASSA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION NUMBER 2786 DATE OF PUBLICATION 20 NOVEMBER 2020 IN THE INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER 49 OF 2020**

**National Assembly written Reply: 2786 of 2020**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

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**Ms B Sibeko**

**DDG: Comprehensive Social Security**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

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**Mr. L Mchunu**

**Acting Director-General: Department of Social Development**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION NUMBER 2786 DATE OF PUBLICATION 20 NOVEMBER 2020 IN THE INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER 47 OF 2020**

**National Assembly written Reply: 2786 of 2020**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

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**Ms H Bogopane- Zulu**

**Deputy Minister \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2786**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 20 NOVEMBER 2020**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 49 - 2020**

**2786. Ms A L A Abrahams (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

In view of the fact that one of the conditions attached to the child support grant (CSG) is that the recipient must be enrolled in and attend school, (a) how are the current conditions of the CSG being (i) enforced and (ii) applied and (b) what recourse and/or intervention is taken when a CSG recipient is not enrolled in, nor attends school regularly? NW3610E

**REPLY:**

In terms of Regulation 6(5)(a) to the Social Assistance Act, a primary care giver applying for a child support grant for a child aged between 7 and 18 years, has the responsibility to ensure that the child is enrolled at and attends school.

Regulation 6(5)(d) requires the National Department of Social Development to notify the Department of Education, if it is aware that any child benefitting from a child support grant does not attend school, and the Department of Education has a responsibility to take steps to ensure that the child does attend school.

1. Currently, when an application is taken for a child support grant, the primary care giver is requested to provide proof that the child is enrolled at school. This is in the form of a report card or a letter from the school. If the applicant does not have the required letter, the application is still taken and processed but the letter of award, if the grant is approved, requires the care giver to submit the required proof within a period of 6 months.
2. There is no provision in the Social Assistance Act or Regulations to suspend payment of the grant if the confirmation of school attendance is not provided. This is considered a “soft” condition, as there are no consequences for failure to meet the requirement. There is therefore no enforcement of this particular provision.

**National Assembly Written Reply: 2786 of 2020**

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**Approved by the Minister of Social Development**

**Date……………………….**

**Possible follow up questions from the ANC:**

**Question**

What is the current position regarding school attendance by children in South Africa?

**Response**

School attendance, particularly for children younger than 16 years of age is relatively high. Generally, where children are not attending school, it is because there is no school available within their vicinity. The challenge with school attendance is generally with children older than 16 years, where attendance is not compulsory.

**Question**

Is there any incentive for care givers to keep their children in education?

**Response**

The Department of Social Development, working together with SASSA, has signed an agreement with the Departments of Basic and Higher Education to identify all children who benefit from social grants, to ensure that they are the first priority for funding from NSFAS for their further education and training. This project has yielded very positive results, with some of our grant beneficiaries doing extremely well in both the matric examinations as well as in the higher education environment.

It is believed that this is the first step towards breaking the cycle of poverty – through education, children who benefitted from grants are able to compete on an equal footing with their more privileged peers.

**Possible questions from the opposition**

Why is the requirement in legislation if it is not enforced?

**Reply**

The inclusion of school attendance in the Social Assistance Act was to raise the profile of the importance of school attendance in ensuring that all care givers are aware of the importance of creating a solid foundation for children. The linking of child support grant beneficiaries to NSFAS funding is a further incentive for care givers to keep children in school, and then to get financial support for their further education and training.

Despite the obligations which are placed on the Department of Education, this cannot be managed through the Social Assistance Act, 2004.