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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER:50/2020**

**2866.  Mr S L Ngcobo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1)       Whether, with reference to a process which her department began in 2019 to develop a new subject for Grades R-9 to address a wide range of coding and robotics competencies in order to develop skills and expertise needed to usher in the fourth industrial revolution in the Republic, her department has considered implementing coding and robotics principles into existing subjects rather than introducing a new subject; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2)       whether her department will furnish a progress report on the drafting, consultation and implementation of the new subject; if not, why not; if so, (a) by what date does she envisage the new subject to be introduced into schools and (b) what is the total budget allocation towards the new subject?

**Response**

1. The Curriculum for Coding and Robotics Curriculum for Grades R-9 has been developed as a stand-alone subject for the following reasons:
* There is not enough space in NS & T as well as in Technology to include enough of the new content without removing too much content in NS&T and Technology which is necessary for learners to acquire.
* Infusing Coding and Robotics in the existing subject might require reducing the content of the other subjects that might affect the articulation, flow and progression of the subject
* The notional hours are linked to Annual Teaching Plan (ATP), the content and assessment, new content will interrupt the flow of the content
* Teachers may fall back to what they are comfortable with, meaning that the new content in the curriculum may never reach the learners effectively if we infuse it
* Infusing into Life Skills, NS & T and Technology would involve updating three different curriculums as opposed to creating one new one
* The Coding and Robotics curriculum is more skills focused than theory focused, meaning there is still a large need for the theory knowledge contained in NS & T and Technology
* The 4IR needs more skills taught to learners and not just a change in focus of subjects that are already offered - more time is needed to prepare learners.
1. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) initiated a process of developing the draft curriculum and Policy Statement for Coding and Robotics for Grade R-9. The development process was highly inclusive of DBE and PED specialists, and stakeholders with expertise and knowledge in the field of Coding and Robotics from business and sistergovernment departments, NAPTOSA, NATU, PEU, SADTU, SAOU, Academia (5 Universities) and NGO Sector.

The Draft Coding and Robotics Curriculum for Grades R -9 was presented and approved at Heads of Education Committee (HEDCOM) and Council of Education Ministers (CEM) and has been submitted to UMALUSI for Evaluation and Quality Assurance. The Draft Curriculum and Assessment Policy statements (CAPS) documents for Coding and Robotics for Grades R-3, Grades 4-6, and Grades 7-9 are developed. A process of gazetting the draft CAPS documents for public comments is underway.

The draft CAPS for Grades R-3 and Grade 7 for Coding and Robotics curriculum will be piloted in 2021-2024 for Grades R-3 in two hundred (200) schools and for Grade7-9 in one thousand (1000) schools. Full implementation in will commence in 2025.

(b)The Department of Basic Education has secured funding for the Grades R-3 from ETDP-SETA and the amount secured is seven million (R7 000 000). A business plan was submitted to the National Treasury requesting funding for the strengthening of Technology subject in Grades4-9 through integration of Coding and Robotics. The amount approved by National Treasury for the request was sixty million R60 000 000.