**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2999**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 33/2018**

**2999. Ms H S Boshoff (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

**(1) With reference to her department’s presentation on the progress of the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for SA Sign Language (SASL), Grades R-12, presented to the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education on 12 September 2018, (a) why was the development of the SASL CAPS only done following a court case in 2009 between *Springate and Others v the Minister of Basic Education and Others* and (b) why did her department wait for legal proceedings to introduce CAPS for SASL, which is a deaf person’s constitutional right;**

**(2) in view of 2018 being the first year that deaf learners will be examined in SASL as a Home Language subject, has she found that (a) the deaf learners are well prepared to be examined and (b) her department and the education system are sufficiently prepared to examine deaf learners in SASL;**

**(3) what is (a) the number of suppliers of SASL learning and teaching support materials on her department’s database and (b) the experience of the specified suppliers in the field of SASL? NW3313E**

**Response**

(1)(a) The development of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for South African Sign Language (SASL) prior to the 2009 court case of *Springate and others versus the Minister of Basic Education and others* was impeded and limited by challenges faced by government which had not yet been finalised. This is in reference to the fact that SASL is not yet the Official Language of government which essentially means it may not be provided at Home Language level in Basic Education, which is what it is for Deaf learners. However, it must be noted that the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 already recognised Sign Language for use as language of learning and teaching (LoLT) for Deaf learners. Following the court case, the Minister instituted a process of developing SASL CAPS which is already being implemented even though the Department of Arts and Culture and the Pan South African Language Board have not yet concluded the process of making SASL one of the official languages of government.

(b) In addition to the response in (1)(a) above, it must be noted that there is nothing in legislation that prevents right holders from claiming their right from those who have a hold on it. This claim was inadvertently directed to government largely than it was directed to Basic Education given the response in (1)(a) above.

(2)(a) In preparation for the first Grade 12 NSC examinations and in an effort to prepare candidates for the exit examination, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has set and released SASL HL exemplar question papers for Grade 10 and Grade 11 in 2017. In 2018, the DBE has set the preparatory examination question papers for SASL HL in Grade 12, so that learners have full exposure to an examination that is equivalent to the final examination.

(b)The DBE appointed a panel of experts to set and internally moderate question papers for the Grade 12 NSC examinations. These question papers were externally moderated and approved by Umalusi. In preparation for the implementation and administration of examinations in SASL HL, the DBE established a task team to ensure that all schools, teachers and learners are fully prepared for the November examination. This task team developed Guidelines for the Implementation and Conduct of Examinations in South African Sign Language Home Language and this document was issued to schools prior to the preparatory examination. The DBE and PEDs also conducted an audit of all centres where SASL HL examinations are to be conducted. In cases where there were deficiencies, these were addressed. In addition, the DBE took a decision to mark the preparatory examination papers nationally in Pretoria. Teachers from schools that offer SASL HL in Grade 12 were appointed as markers. The DBE appointed a national team for the moderation of School-Based Assessment in SASL HL. All portfolios of candidates that offer SASL HL were moderated and feedback was given to schools.

On the basis of the above initiatives, the DBE is confident that we are adequately prepared to examine Deaf learners in SASL.

(3) (a) There are six (6) suppliers of South African Sign Language (SASL) learning and teaching support material in the DBE database.

(b) The DBE puts a call for submission of SASL materials to all suppliers. The following are the only suppliers that have responded: Sign Language Education and Development (SLED), National Institute for the Deaf (NID) and University of Stellenbosch. These are the only institutions that have developed and submitted SASL materials over the years.