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**4040.  Mr B B Nodada (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1)       Whether she will furnish Mr B B Nodada with information relating to the Teacher Connect Application (App); if not, why not; if so,

(2)       whether the App is currently operational; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3)       what total (a) amount in funds have been allocated towards the App and (b) number of (i) schools, (ii) teachers and (iii) learners are currently using the App?

**Response**

1. Yes
2. Yes.

The DBE's TeacherConnect Application service is operational since April 2020. It provides information and resources to teachers and the public via the WhatsApp number 060 060 3333.

Services offered include single-sign access to a zero-rated learning environment with SACE-accredited teacher training and other DBE-related resources.

Resources and services are currently teacher and school-management focused, though learners, parents and other members of the public may register and access appropriate resources and services.

The TeacherConnectchat is also being used to provide orientation and support resources to youth who are appointed as school assistants and the schools that they are placed into through the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI).

TeacherConnectChat users may also opt-in for relevant communication based on their needs and interests. Cohort-targeted surveys (by subject or role etc.) have a high response rate and have provided valuable supplemental information for the DBE on teacher experiences and needs.

All data are treated according to POPIA-compliant best practices, with the user having complete control of what communication they opt in for. Clear and straightforward instructions to opt out are given in every communication.

1. a) The application does not receive any voted funding. Currently it is funded through Donor funding. The total set-up and running costs for the WhatsApp bot, from April 2020 to date is R4,263,244.46.

        3. b) The number of:

           (i) schools- 11,254 (on TeacherConnectlearn)

          (ii) teachers- 17,300 (registered users)

          (iii) learners- 13,333 (registered users)