**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 568**

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**568. Mr E J Marais (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) Whether (a) her department and/or (b) provincial education departments have given any production unit in South Africa the go-ahead to develop books for the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) curriculum as indicated in the CAPS catalogue in (i) braille and (ii) large print for the (aa) 2013-14, (bb) 2014-15, (cc) 2015-16 and (dd) 2016-17 financial years; if so, what are the relevant details in each case;

(2) whether these books were delivered to all (a) schools for the blind and (b) full-service schools in the specified years; if not, in each case, why not? NW626E

**Response:**

1. (a) Yes, (b) the department has made the list (National Catalogues) public, for any institution to develop and sell the material in collaboration with the copyright owner, in this case the publishers. (i) The catalogue is for both the Braille and (ii) large print material. (aa), (bb), (cc) and (dd) Since 2012/13, the National Catalogue for learners with Visual Impairment was developed for all grades, listing one title per subject per grade, and sent to provinces. This catalogues was developed in conjunction with the 22 Special schools for both the Large Print and Braille. These catalogues are still in use to date. Provinces were advised to facilitate the procurement of Braille as well as Large Print material listed in the national catalogues directly from Pioneer Printers who had already made Master copies available.
2. Provinces have been procuring these materials from Pioneer Printers since the development of the National Catalogues of Braille and Large print textbooks. However, due to the extended time period required for the adaptation of ordinary text and high costs of the Braille master copies, the full range of textbooks have not as yet been procured. Provinces have been gradually procuring the Master copies of these materials from Pioneer Printers.

The orders were placed by provinces and schools directly with Pioneer Printers and deliveries have taken place to (a) schools for the blind and (b) full-service schools that have notified the respective provincial department of visually impaired learners at the schools.

According to the provincial monitoring report some provinces have funds for procurement of Braille and some provinces do not have the funds.

In addition Grades R-9 Braille workbooks are annually printed and delivered to 22 special schools in the country. This process ensures access to quality education to children who experience barriers to learning.

All Braille workbooks developed are accompanied by Teachers’ Guides. The workbooks have been provided to mainstream schools at a request of such schools. Mathematics and languages workbooks are accompanied with toolkits.

It must be noted that the adaptation process takes a protracted time and has implications on time frames for printing and delivery of Braille workbooks to Special Schools. Provinces and schools have been advised on ICT solutions for Braille onto which textbooks are uploaded. Western Cape and Limpopo provinces have procured such equipment for their schools.