**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 850**

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**850. Mrs N I Tarabella Marchesi (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

**(1) Whether, with reference to the information and communications technology material and gadgets provided to schools, her department has costed the price of the (a) laptops, (b) iPad/tablets and (c) smart boards that all public schools will require; if not, why not; if so, what total amount will it cost her department,**

**(2) is (a) there any evidence of improvement in the performance of learners who have received the above gadgets as compared to schools who do not have these gadgets and (b) her department finding value for money in providing the above gadgets; if not, in each case, why not; if so, in each case, what are the relevant details? NW1970E**

**Response**

1. (a), (b) and (c)

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Provincial Education Departments (PDEs) are using State Information and Communication Technology (SITA) and National Treasury transversal contracts to procure and rollout ICT devices to schools.

The DBE in collaboration with Department of Trade and Industry, National Treasury, State Information & Technology Agency are working together to develop an education specific contract. The department will use this education specific contract to leverage on the economies of scale. Furthermore, the DTI is conducting a study to determine the local capacity in the country to manufacture and assembly ICT devices. Based on the study the government will be able to determine the cost of providing ICT equipment to schools.

1. (a) The department has not conducted a comparative research study to determine whether there has been an improvement in the performance of learners who have received the above gadgets as compared to schools who do not have these gadgets.

(b) The primary value of providing ICTs in education is to transform teaching and learning to:

* Enhance learning experiences of learners;
* Improve efficiency in delivering educational services; and
* Leverage on ICTs to mitigate educational challenges.

However, drawing lessons from local experiences, the Khanya Project in the Western Cape was implemented to promote learning and maximize educator capacity by integrating the use of appropriate, available and affordable technology (computer technology) into the curriculum delivery process. In addition, the GDE ICT and e-Education Strategy is aimed at ensuring that schools in Gauteng are well resourced with ICT facilities to:

* Promote e-learning with the aim of introducing devices and smart software into the classroom using technology;
* Enhance teaching quality;
* Accessing materials to engage learners; and
* Train teachers and school administrators.

In conclusion, it should be noted that in order to bring 21st century skills to learners, the department is implementing the use of ICTs and eLearning programs to enhance the education environments that are best suitable for teaching and learning.