**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 854**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 06/09/2019**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 14/2019**

**854. Mr D Joseph (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) Whether, with reference to the incorporation of Early Childhood Development (ECD) into her department, any costing was done in terms of the (a) number of teachers who will be required and (b) qualification(s) they will need; if not, why not; if so, has the qualification programme already been developed and provided at various universities;

(2) whether the title of practitioner will change to educator; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether the salaries of the ECD teachers and/or practitioners will be raised to the level of educators instead of receiving stipends; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? NW1974E

**REPLIES**

1. The funding available currently is for Grade R only. This will be revised in the new financial year to accommodate for the new functions that have been transferred to the DBE.

(b) REQV 13 is the minimum qualification as determined in the Employment of Educators ‘Act and the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM). The Minister of Higher Education and Training gazetted the Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators in 2017. This Policy puts in place a set of qualifications for ECD practitioners who are delivering or assisting in delivering ECD programmes.

1. To be employed as an educator, one has to have an REQV 13 as a minimum qualification as determined in the Employment of Educators ‘Act and the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM). This translates to Matric plus three years of formal training for a teaching degree. In relation to compulsory Grade R, qualified Grade R practitioners will be appointed as educators in terms of the Employment of Educators Act and will be subject to the conditions of service as they apply to all other school-based educators. In relation to ages 0-4 years, the Department is still gathering information about these practitioners, including identifying a need for a full audit on the qualifications and skills set of the practitioners. The audit will inform the decisions that need to be taken in relation to career options for practitioners. This will also clarify what job titles should exist in ECD centres, the qualification framework required and the salary scales as well as the conditions of service that will exist for Early Childhood Practitioners.
2. Salary scales of educators are determined in terms of the requirements of the Employment of Educators’ Act and the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM). It will therefore not be automatic that the salaries of ECD practitioners will be equal to educators, if they do not meet the minimum requirements for appointment as educators. However, any qualified Grade R practitioners will be subject to the conditions of service applicable to other school-based educators.