**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 98**

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**98. Ms L L van der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

Whether her department has devised a specific plan for the sole purpose of combating the scourge of violence in our schools; if not, why not; if so, how effective has she found the plan projected to be? NW963E

**RESPONSE**

The National School Safety Framework (NNSF) provides the Basic Education Department with an organising framework to coordinate all efforts in response to school related violence. This Framework provides evidence-informed approaches based on accurate and comprehensive data of the effectiveness of existing programmes.

A key pillar of the NSSF is collaboration and partnerships. School violence cannot be separated from the high levels of violence that are experienced in some of our communities. The Framework encourages partnerships with sister departments like the SAPS, civil society organisations, academic institutions and education stakeholders. The Minister convened a School Safety Summit in October 2018 and one of the recommendations of this summit was the establishment of a School Safety Steering Committee comprised of a wide spectrum of education stakeholders including SGB federations, learner formations and teacher unions.

The Department has provided a manual on how to address violence at school level to all schools. The provincial education departments continue to provide training and support to schools, particularly those schools in high crime areas, to effectively respond to school violence and bullying. These hotspot schools have also been linked to local police stations through a national partnership with the SAPS. The manual encourages all schools to establish school safety committees and provides evidence informed strategies to address bullying, homophobia, xenophobia and gangsterism.

In addition, through the Council of Education Ministers, the Department has made available two key protocols on how to address corporal punishment and sexual abuse in schools. The Department has provided training to all provinces and districts on how to utilise these protocols in schools.

The Department, in partnership with UNICEF and Save the Children, will be undertaking the third School Violence Survey in 2019 to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the NSSF.