**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 99**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 02/2019**

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

Has her department considered implementing a multi-department plan in order to introduce social workers into the school system in light of the alarming reports of violence and mental health issues suffered by both pupils and teachers in school as well as the high unemployment rate of social workers? NW964E

**Response:**

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) works together with education stakeholders, social partners and the Departments of Social Development, Health and the South African Police Service to address the causes as well as the effects of violence prevalent in schools, as in society. In the implementation of the Integrated School Health Policy by the Departments of Basic Education, Health and Social Development, mental health screening is included in the school health service package. In addition, the Department has developed the draft DBE National Guidelines for Resourcing an Inclusive Education System, wherein social workers are included in the multi-disciplinary team at various levels of the education system.

In implementation, Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) establish partnerships with the Provincial Departments of Social Development (DSD) as well as universities and partners to provide social work services to schools. In addition, PEDs engage and place unemployed social workers as Learner Support Agents.