

Reading comprehension takes top priority for DBE

Reading comprehension in the first years of school will take top priority for the Basic Education Department (DBE) in the short to medium term. This according to Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga in her remarks at the meeting of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education held in Parliament on Tuesday, 10 July 2019.



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It was the DBE's first appearance before the Portfolio Committee in the sixth administration.

The DBE delegation led by the minister and her deputy, Reginah Mhaule presented and discussed the department's annual performance plan (APP) for 2019/2020 with members of parliament from various political parties.

The APP is a detailed outline of the sector priorities as undertaken by DBE together with Provincial Education Departments.

Second, on the DBE agenda is the migration of early childhood development centres from the Social Development Department.

In his State of the Nation Address in February, the President announced the move of ECD responsibilities to the DBE.

"To this effect, the DBE has started to develop work plans in the first three months of the sixth administration to drive the workstreams in ECD migration," said the Carol Nuga-Deliwe, chief director for strategic planning and research, when she delivered the presentation to the committee.

The digitisation of learning material, assessments, violence and social cohesion in schools and a focus on sanitation in schools are also among the DBE's priorities over the next five years.

On the provision of digitised material for learning on a tablet device, the department said it would prioritise the most disadvantaged schools which are in the poorest communities, including multi-grade, multiphase, farm and rural schools.

Infrastructure

The DBE also said it will ensure the practical completion of 15 "inappropriate schools" and 41 sanitation projects by September 2019, in support of enhancing learner access to safe infrastructure in schools.

School safety

Parliament's portfolio committee commended the department for the sector and national plan in place to address violence in schools.

The minister said although all parties are aware of violence in schools – involving both learners on learners and learners on educators – it is important not to militarise schools.

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