QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY

**NAME OF MEMBER PUTTING THE QUESTION: HON. S. MNGADI**

**QUESTION ADDRESSED TO: MEC FOR EDUCATION**

DATE: 29 May 2025

QUESTIONS:

RE: Pinetown Girls’ High and Pinetown District

1. **Regarding the former principal of Pinetown Girls’ High School who was suspended approximately three years ago, allegedly on charges related to serious financial mismanagement:**
   1. On what specific date was the principal formally suspended?
   2. What were the full charges laid against the principal, and under which provisions of the Employment of Educators Act or any applicable departmental regulations were these charges formulated?
   3. Was a formal disciplinary hearing convened? If so, on what date(s) was the hearing held, and who presided over it?
   4. What was the official outcome of the disciplinary hearing, including any sanctions or recommendations made?
   5. On what date was the outcome of the disciplinary hearing finalised, and who within the Department was responsible for receiving and actioning the report?
   6. Why has the outcome of the disciplinary process not been communicated to the School Governing Body, school staff, or district stakeholders despite the matter being of public interest?
2. **Regarding the subsequent appointment of the same individual as Acting Circuit Education Manager (CEM) in the Pinetown District**
   1. On what exact date was this individual appointed as Acting CEM, and who authorised this appointment?
   2. What recruitment, vetting, or appointment processes were followed prior to her appointment, including whether a risk or integrity assessment was conducted given the pending or concluded disciplinary proceedings?
   3. Was the Department or the appointing official aware of the disciplinary charges and pending outcome at the time of appointment? If so, provide the rationale used to justify the appointment in spite of this.
   4. Was any waiver, deviation, or special consideration applied in order to facilitate the appointment? If so, under what policy framework was this permitted, and who approved the deviation?
   5. Was the appointment endorsed by the Provincial Head of Department and/or the MEC?
3. **In relation to performance and oversight of Circuit Education Managers in the Pinetown District:**
   1. Has the Department received any written complaints, whistleblower reports, or formal submissions from educators, SGBs, unions, or community stakeholders regarding the conduct, competency, or integrity of this Acting CEM? If yes, please provide a summary of all such submissions since 2022, including the nature of allegations and actions taken in response.
   2. Has the Department undertaken any performance evaluations, audits, or oversight reviews into the management of the Pinetown District under the current Acting CEM? If so, what were the findings and were any remedial steps recommended or implemented?
   3. How does the Department ensure that officials with unresolved or adverse findings against them are not placed in positions of oversight over school principals, SGBs, and financial governance?
   4. Is the Acting CEM currently responsible for oversight of Westville Senior Primary School, and if so, does the Department view this as appropriate given the background and allegations previously mentioned?
4. **With regard to broader concerns of weak management in the Pinetown District:**
   1. What strategic interventions has the Department implemented in the past five years to address leadership instability, poor performance, and governance challenges within the Pinetown District?
   2. Has the Department undertaken any external evaluations or third-party assessments of the leadership and governance capacity in Pinetown District? If so, kindly table the reports and findings.
   3. Does the Department intend to initiate a review of all current acting appointments at Circuit and District level to ensure only fit-and-proper individuals hold positions of authority?

Regards

Hon. Sakhile Mngadi, MPL