

Electronic clocking may combat teacher absenteeism

The Department of Basic Education is forging ahead with plans to introduce an electronic clock-in system at schools around SA to curb teacher absenteeism.



Angie Motshekga. Image: GQS

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga said that work had been done to investigate the feasibility of introducing the system in schools, but she did not indicate exactly when it would be rolled out across the provinces.

Teacher absenteeism is a major problem in most schools in SA.

Last year, Motshekga said SA had the highest teacher absenteeism rate in the Southern African Development Community region, with teachers absent for 19 days a year on average. However, the South African Democratic Teachers Union has said the real average is only eight days a year.

The union has also said the electronic clock-in system or fingerprint/biometric machines would unnecessarily police teachers and "de-professionalise" them.

But Motshekga said last year, when the plan to roll out system was first announced, that it was meant to make teachers more accountable.

She said work had been done to investigate the feasibility of a system and identify the most cost-effective and efficient one that could be standardised nationally. One option was the expansion of the electronic leave management system used in the Northern Cape and the Western Cape education departments.

"This system has been developed using state funding and can be therefore be rolled out to other provincial education

departments at a minimal cost," Motshekga added.

Source: Business Day via I-Net Bridge

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