

20 September 2016

List of demands

On school safety issues

1. The WCED, SAPS and other relevant government departments need to coordinate their efforts and work together more closely on the issue of school safety:
 - If there is already joint work taking place between SAPS and the WCED, they must explain to learners, parents and teachers what they are doing, why it isn't working and what they are going to do to improve it.
 - Going forward, this inter-departmental work shouldn't take place on an ad hoc basis as a response to specific situations, but through formally established joint committees and structures at every level of government from provincial government down to SGBs and police stations.
 - These structures should also be accessible to civil society and individual school communities so as to keep politicians and officials accountable to the people they are meant to serve.
2. The WCED, together with the Department of Transport and Public works and other relevant agencies, should make cholar transport available for learners attending afternoon classes and activities, not just for learners who go home straight after school:
 - Learners who do extra classes and extra-murals have to walk or hitch rides home and this exposes them to crime and violence. Our audit shows that we are unsafe on the way to school and on the way home, especially while walking.
3. The WCED must develop specialised, safe ways for learners to report rape and sexual assault:
 - Many learners who survive these experiences don't know how to report such serious incidents or don't trust that they can do so without being victimised or not taken seriously.
 - The WCED and other government departments need to enable schools to provide survivors with proper support to deal with post-traumatic stress.
4. Every teacher and learner needs proper education about rape, sexual assault, gender-based violence and issues of consent:
 - The DBE and WCED must make sure that the LO curriculum is used properly to educate school communities about these topics.
 - This should happen from ECD and primary school-level all the way to matric.

5. The WCED needs to act to end discrimination of any kind against learners:
 - Our audit shows that one third of learners surveyed suffer from forms of discrimination including sexism, racism, homophobia and xenophobia. We have also campaigned against policies that exclude pregnant learners and learners with dreadlocks from school.
 - This type of discrimination is carrying on in many schools on a daily basis and the WCED needs to put an end to it. Both learners and teachers must be engaged and educated properly about all forms of discrimination and oppression.

6. The WCED needs to make more serious efforts to end the practice of corporal punishment:
 - This should include efforts to engage parents throughout the province – many schools get away with corporal punishment because our parents don't know that it is illegal for a teacher to beat learners.
 - The WCED should speak to principals and teachers in township and rural schools who succeed without using corporal punishment and help other schools to learn from them.
 - Alternative methods like detention and cleaning of school premises should be implemented, but the WCED should also provide transport for learners who are disciplined in this way so that teachers can use these methods without endangering the lives of learners.
 - Verbal assault should also be considered illegal; teachers need support to use forms of discipline that are not abusive.

7. The WCED, the Department of Social Development and other relevant departments must ensure that schools get better access to social workers and psychologists:
 - Many learners' behaviour is affected by emotional issues and trauma they are faced with in their lives. These learners need to receive proper support instead of being subjected to discipline that is often abusive and ends with them being expelled or institutionalised.
 - One school, one social worker!

8. The WCED and the Department of Community Safety must explain why they don't pay for all schools to have proper security guards.

9. SAPS must patrol the routes that learners walk to get to and from school:
 - This doesn't happen for all school routes and this makes learners vulnerable to crime and violence.

10. The Minister of Police and the SAPS leadership in the province must deal with the issue of inequality in SAPS resource allocation urgently:
 - We can no longer tolerate apartheid-era resource allocation, where areas like Rondebosch and Camp's Bay have more police officers and resources per person than areas like Nyanga, Grassy Park, Mbekweni and Delft.
 - 31 young people were killed in gang violence in Delft, just in August. What are SAPS and the Western Cape Government doing about youth gangs? Recommendation 12 of the Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry must be properly implemented.

11. The Safe Schools Programme needs more funding and more capacity:
 - Why does the SSP have so little money? How can only 46 staff deal with school safety for over 1600 schools? MEC Schafer must explain how just 25 SSP fieldworkers and just 5



trained psychologists at the SSP call centre are expected to make a serious impact at school-level.

- MEC Schafer must also explain how our teachers must teach but also act as police officers and security guards. By underfunding school safety programmes, the WCED are basically handing over their responsibilities with regard to school safety to our teachers and principals, who are not police officers and who have to prioritise their main responsibility which is our education.
- Only 12 learners used the SSP call centre in the last two years. This shows that learners either don't know about the call centre, can't access it, or don't trust that it can help them. The WCED needs to investigate this and implement more effective ways for learners to get help.

12. We demand that the Western Cape Government shouldn't build any more bicycle lanes, dog parks or upgrades for rich areas until every school in this province is functioning with proper safety and sanitation infrastructure.

On sanitation issues

13. At 74% of schools that we audited, there was no toilet for learners with disabilities. The WCED needs to audit every school that doesn't have proper infrastructure for disabled learners and put together a plan to urgently provide this infrastructure:

- No disabled learner should be excluded from public ordinary schools because of infrastructure.
- Disabled learners must also be provided for in terms of sports and other activities.
- Learners who have disabilities that require them to be in special schools must have access to those schools – waiting lists are too long, and thousands of learners are sitting at home doing nothing because of this. According to the DBE, more than 600,000 children with disabilities are not in school – 58,000 of them are in the Western Cape.

14. We demand that the national government must put together a plan and a budget to provide pads and dignity packs to all learners who need them – these should be compulsory, same as with textbooks and stationery:

- The companies that sell these pads must also agree to lower their prices so that the government can more easily afford to implement this plan.
- The government must also look into the taxation of these products to see if there are ways to make them more affordable.

15. The WCED must establish a binding standard for the ratio of maintenance staff per learner:

- If some schools can't afford to hire enough maintenance staff, the WCED should provide additional funds for this.



On other school infrastructure

16. Container classes have been in some schools for decades – some schools are made entirely of container classes. The MEC must tell the public if there is or isn't a plan to replace container classrooms with proper classrooms:
 - If there isn't a plan, the WCED must develop one and share it with the public. The plan must tell us how, when and how much it will cost to replace container classrooms with proper classrooms.

17. The WCED has said that it will not provide infrastructure upgrades for 266 schools that are built on private land. We demand that the MEC retract this statement:
 - The MEC must explain in public how it can be legal to exclude these 266 schools from their Norms and Standards plan, and how they will ensure the safety of these learners in the meantime.

18. In cases where landowners refuse to agree to upgrades of school buildings, the WCED must look into the expropriation of that private land, as provided for in Section 58 of the Schools Act.

On misleading the public and lying about EE

19. The MEC and the Premier must both take back and apologise for the lies they have told about learners that are members of EE. They have misled the public about this social audit report and about the serious issues facing our education system, in violation of their oaths of office:
 - After 2000 of us marched to hand over some of these findings to WCED District Directors on April 26 2016 (in hard and soft copy), we received no response. When we followed up with the MEC, we were told that we had handed over nothing but "loose papers" and "vague allegations". WCED officials have since admitted that they had misplaced the data we handed over and that our data is sound.
 - The Premier has attacked EE and EE members consistently since our protest outside the MEC's house in June. She said that the "biggest challenge" facing education and a "root cause" for the issues we raise is absent fathers. We note that when education is bad in other provinces, the Premier rightly criticises poor delivery and bad governance, but in the Western Cape she wants to blame black parents for the WCED's failures. We refuse to accept that the Premier can trivialise the issues we face, insult our families and dodge her government's responsibilities all at the same time. The Premier also said that "EE's so-called 'social audit' was a pile of loose papers with unsubstantiated allegations." We know that any reader of our report will see that this is a lie.
 - The MEC and the Premier should now withdraw and apologise to the learners of the Western Cape for these incorrect and irresponsible comments. Instead of trying to hide from what our data shows, they should develop the political will to take the issues of learners in township and rural schools seriously and act accordingly.



On next steps

20. We demand that MEC Schafer as well as the provincial leadership of SAPS should attend a public hearing, organised by members of EE and provisionally scheduled for the 5th of October, to provide learners with feedback on the above demands:

- We want to see evidence of the plans we have asked for.
- We want to see serious commitment to solving these issues.
- We want to see government agencies and departments putting their party political loyalties aside and working together effectively.
- We want to hear the MEC retract the false statements she has made, which have misled the public in violation of her oath of office.

Received by:

Name:

Signature:

On behalf of:

