
MEMORANDUM

TO BE DELIVERED ON 31 MARCH 2016 TO

**KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR EDUCATION, MS PEGGY NKONYENI AT THE KZN EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT IN PIETERMARITZBURG**

**WE DEMAND SCHOLAR TRANSPORT IN NQUTHU AND THE EXPANSION OF
SCHOLAR TRANSPORT IN KZN**

ACCES TO EDUCATION MEANS ACCES TO TRANSPORT

1. We are students from Nquthu, KwaZulu-Natal. We are members of Equal Education (EE), a national movement of learners, parents, teachers and community members, campaigning for quality and equality in the South African education system.
2. We are here today to demand scholar transport for all students in KwaZulu-Natal who need it.
3. Many of us walk long distances of up to 24 kilometres a day to get to and from school. We wake up very early in the morning and leave home in the dark. Some of us have to wake up at 4 o'clock in the morning to prepare and start walking to school.
4. We walk for 4 hours across fields, forests and dongas. We swim across rivers and climb mountains. We walk for 4 hours in the hot sun and rain, through lightning and thunderstorms. We do this because we want an education and to be able to provide a better life for our families. We know that education is our ticket to the future.

5. Not getting scholar transport makes getting an education very difficult. Some of us have been robbed, raped and kidnapped while walking to school. Students have been knocked over by cars, and every day we are scared that something bad might happen to us.
6. When we arrive at school, we are tired and hungry. Many of us don't have breakfast in the morning because there is nothing to eat at home. In class we feel tired and sleepy, and struggle to concentrate. This means that we can't do our best at school and get the marks we want.
7. Sometimes we arrive late and find that the gate is locked. We have to go home again and miss the whole day of school.
8. When we get home from school we are tired. But we still have to herd the cattle and cook food before we begin our homework. By the time we are done with this, it is late and all we want to do is sleep. It is hard to open your books to study and do your homework when you are so tired.
9. We see the students in the old Model C and private schools driven around in safe busses. We know that those students have transport for sports and school trips. These are luxuries we can only dream of. We know they do not fear getting kidnapped, raped or harassed on their trips to school like we do. We have different educations, unequal and unfair. We cannot go on like this, we are all equal.
10. If there was scholar transport we would do better at school. We would arrive at school on time and not feel tired. We would also attend the extra classes which the school has in the morning and afternoon for Grade 10, 11 and 12 students.
11. We know that it is not only the students in Nquthu that need scholar transport. We also know that students in other provinces like Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga are also suffering and need scholar transport. But we also believe that the government in KZN can and should be doing much more to provide transport to the students in the province.

12. KwaZulu-Natal has the highest proportion of learners in South Africa who walk to school, as well as the highest number of learners who walk to school for more than an hour (in one direction). According to the national General Household Survey, published by Statistics South Africa in 2013, more than two million learners walk to school in KZN. Of those learners, 210 000 walk for more than an hour.
13. KZN currently spends less on scholar transport than any other province, with the exception of Limpopo, the Free State and the Northern Cape. However, the Northern Cape Province still manages to provide transport to a greater number of learners than KZN. In the 2014/2015 financial year, KZN allocated R168 430 000 to provide for the transport of 34 814 learners in the province. By comparison, the Eastern Cape, (which has less learners in need of scholar transport than KZN), allocated R356 076 000 and spent R431 214 000 to transport learners in that year.
14. The national transport policy does not clarify who must qualify for scholar transport in South Africa. It also does not have binding deadlines. This worries us a lot, we have already lost many students from walking and taking private transports. How many of us should die in order for the department to realise that scholar transport is important to us?

Our demands

1. We demand that there be emergency relief for the 11 schools in Nquthu that qualify for scholar transport.
2. We demand the proper and full implementation of the National Scholar Transport Policy.
3. We call on the provincial department as well as the provincial treasury, to allocate sufficient funding for the provision of scholar transport in the province.

We request a response to this memorandum by Thursday 21 April 2016

Received by:

Name, signature and title

Name, signature and title

Date

Handed over by:

Name, signature and title