



**Western Cape
Government**

Ministry of Education

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Ms Chandre N Stuurman
Equal Education Law Centre

By email: chandre@eelawcentre.org.za

Dear Ms Stuurman,

WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S PLANS FOR LEARNER ADMISSIONS FOR THE 2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

I refer to your letter dated 23 October 2020 regarding the above-mentioned matter.

You will recall that I have been saying for years that we do not have sufficient money – the continuous defunding of education in the Western Cape by the national government, is a profound challenge, with dire consequences.

Once again, severe budget cuts threaten to wipe out many of our projects and programmes. A third of our infrastructure budget this year has been wiped out as a result of cuts to the Education Infrastructure Grant and expenditure on COVID-19 compliance measures, for which we have received no compensation from National Treasury. The cuts being demanded by the National Treasury for the next three years are nothing short of devastating.

The simple fact that must be understood is this: without a proper budget, we are unable to pay for all the things we need to deliver quality education to learners in this province.

Budget cuts mean we cannot build enough schools for the additional 18 000 learners added to our province's schools each year, so there will be a major struggle to find school places every single year.

Budget cuts mean it is harder and harder to undertake speedy repairs and maintenance of schools, especially when they are shamefully damaged deliberately by vandals.

Budget cuts mean we cannot put high-security fencing around all the schools that need it, so schools will continue to fall victim to the malicious criminals in our communities.

Budget cuts mean we cannot provide learner transport to every learner who needs it, so we still have small children walking up to 5 kilometres to get to school.

Budget cuts mean that we cannot hire more teachers, so class sizes – and the pressure on our teachers – will continue to rise.

We cannot continue to provide a quality education to every learner in this province without the money to pay for it. It is a financial impossibility. While the Western Cape prioritises education during our budgeting process, every department will suffer when the national government demands massive cuts to the provincial share.

We are in a dire situation and I hope your organisation will join us in demanding that the national government prioritise the education of our children, by publicly stating that you do not support the continued diversion of funding from education to collapsing SOEs, and demand that the national government reverse the budget cuts made this year and increase its allocation of funding for education in our province.

We will continue to do everything we can to meet our statutory obligations.

Yours faithfully,



DEBBIE SCHÄFER, MPP
MINISTER OF EDUCATION: WESTERN CAPE

DATE: 29/10/2020