



**National Council:** Sindisa Monakali (Chair), Lawrence Manaka, Yolanda Sewela, Tebogo Tsesane, Noncedo Madubedube, Nombulelo Mabaso, Ntsakiso Mbalati, Abner Thabang Serite, Lolita Mbongwa, Gcina Mtya, Sylvia Gadu, Thandile Maliti, Amanda Precious Buthulezi, Kopano Molekoa, Mmopane Betty Mothapo, Buhle Salman, Moyo Chumani, Roy Johane, Thembela Theo Jacobs.

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20 July 2022

**To:**

**Mr Panyaza Lesufi**

Gauteng MEC for Education

By email: [asanda.madikida@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:asanda.madikida@gauteng.gov.za)

**To:**

**Mr Edward Mosuwe**

Head of Department

Gauteng Department of Education

By email: [lorraine.mokoatle@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:lorraine.mokoatle@gauteng.gov.za)

**And to:**

**Mr Albert Chanee**

Deputy Director General (Strategic Planning Management)

Gauteng Department of Education

By email: [neo.mataboge@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:neo.mataboge@gauteng.gov.za)



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Dear MEC Lesufi,

**RE: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION AND A MEETING TO DISCUSS EQUAL EDUCATION'S OVERCROWDING REPORT**

Equal Education (EE) is a youth-led, democratic movement of learners, parents, and community members working for quality and equality in South African education, through analysis and activism. Our core membership base is high school learners known as Equalisers, who actively advocate for quality education across five provinces - Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng.

EE's learner members in Gauteng (Equalisers) have long spoken of the challenge that overcrowding in schools has on the ability of teachers and learners to create an effective learning environment. In 2019 and 2020, we conducted research into overcrowding in Gauteng schools. This research culminated in a report, *No Space For Us - Understanding Overcrowding in Gauteng's Schools*, which you may find [here](#).

EE requests a meeting with the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) before **31 August 2022** to discuss the following:

- the contents of our overcrowding report;
- the ways in which overcrowding in schools can be measured; and
- EE's recommendations to alleviate overcrowding in Gauteng's schools.

EE will continue to monitor the extent of overcrowding in schools as well as overcrowding interventions, such as teacher, non-teaching staff, and classroom distribution. We would therefore like to discuss and get information on the following at our meeting:

**1. A list of overcrowded schools**

A comprehensive list of overcrowded schools in Gauteng, similar to the list contemplated in sections 78-82 of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding. When determining whether a school is overcrowded, the various components of overcrowding must be taken into account in a relational way, including:

- a. class sizes in different grades and subjects;

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- b. teacher workload and spread;
- c. predicted growth in learner numbers; and
- d. school building capacity.

## **2. Report and justification of poverty redress posts**

A report and justification on the percentage of poverty redress posts that were allocated in 2022.

## **3. Report and justification of non-teaching staff distribution**

A report and justification of non-teaching staff distribution and spending in 2022. Specifically:

- The percentage of the GDE's staff budget that was spent on non-teaching staff in 2022;
- The distribution (percentage and actual number) of non-teaching staff between out-of-school office-based positions and in-school positions; and
- A justification of the distribution of non-teaching staff between out of school office-based positions and in school positions.

## **4. A forward-looking infrastructure development plan**

Section 78 of the National Norms and Regulations for School Funding states:

*The construction of new schools or additional classrooms and learning facilities should be targeted to the neediest population. In this expenditure category, "need" is defined in terms of -*

- a. *Lack of current schools, or*
- b. *Overcrowding of existing ones.*

Section 82(b) further states that in the allocation of new school construction funds, preference must be given to "extensions to existing schools, rather than new schools, *except where extensions would result in schools that are too large to be pedagogically sound*".

Therefore, we would like to discuss the development of a comprehensive and forward-looking infrastructure development plan that aims to fix current overcrowding and to prevent future overcrowding in schools. This plan must:


- a. Explicitly include predicted future growth in learner numbers and in areas where learners come from;

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**Postal:** PO Box 40114, Elonwabeni, 7791  **Office:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Isivivana Centre, 8 Mzala Street, Khayelitsha

 **E-mail:** [info@equaleducation.org.za](mailto:info@equaleducation.org.za) ~  **Website:** [www.equaleducation.org.za](http://www.equaleducation.org.za) ~ **Telephone:** 021 361 0127

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- a. Include an explanation and justification for adding new classrooms to existing schools and the steps the GDE will take to prevent overcrowding and the overuse of infrastructure in these schools;
- b. Prioritise the urgent implementation of infrastructure projects to overcrowded schools;
- c. Include measures for placement and transportation of unplaced learners at the beginning of each academic year.

Overcrowding in schools is a long-standing and systemic issue in South Africa's basic education sector, and its effects have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognise that the basic education sector has been profoundly impacted in the last two years. However, learners have experienced huge learning losses due to school closures and rotational timetabling, and overcrowded classrooms pose a real threat to the health and safety of learners and teachers, especially during times of COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, we hope to work with the GDE to ensure that learners' rights and needs are addressed as a matter of urgency.

We request that you respond in writing to this letter by no later than **05 August 2022**.

Kind regards,



**Kgomotso Kgasi**

**Head of Gauteng | Equal Education**

East Rand Junction, Office 1001

23 Frank Road, Boksburg, 1459



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Office: 011 333 2523 | Cell: +27 (62) 472 0448

Website: [equaleducation.org.za](http://equaleducation.org.za)



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