**BASIC EDUCATION BUDGET VOTE**

1. Covid-19 has further widened the inequality gap and exposed the elite nature of South African education system and the Department of Basic Education is in a permanent state of crisis as a result with its obsession with matric pass rate and saving the academic year at all costs.
2. Despite years and years of the department's incompetence and failure to provide proper classrooms; basics like water and sanitation the budget adjustment is premised on the insistence of saving the academic year at all costs while members of parliament are debating the budget adjustment from the comfort of their home.
3. Since the so-called phased in reopening of schools by the department; at least 775 schools and over 1169 teachers contracted Covid-19 with over 500 learners having tested positive.
4. The reopening of schools was allowed when all conditions for reopening were not met.
5. Teachers were not training on COVID-19 protocols, even to date, this has not happened.
6. We know that there was no quality assurance of PPE’s sent to schools. Some schools received wrong facemasks and poor quality sanitizers. As things stand; Makaula senior secondary school were 204 learners and staff tested positive were provided with shoddy sanitisers.
7. Nine other schools in the Alfred Nzo District had shoddy sanitisers; essentially the department seeks to engage in a dangerous experiment with learners and teachers while politicians work remotely in the comfort of their homes with heaters and fireplaces.
8. We are also not confident that the R600 million for school infrastructure backlogs allocated will be used effectively since the DBE has not been able to adhere to its norms and standards for many years now; many schools particularly in Limpopo; Eastern Cape and Kwazulu Natal remain in appalling conditions without water and sanitation.
9. The EFF will never forget the ANC government which killed Michael Komape a grade R learner in Limpopo who fell in a pit toilet. We shall never forget the ANC government which killed Lumka Mkhethwa a grade R learner in the Eastern Cape who fell in a pit toilet. May their soul continue to Rest In Peace.
10. It is an open secret that the supply of water tanks and water delivery has become a way for the politically connected to dispense political patronage even when we warned that this is not the most practical way to deliver water to schools because schools need permanent water infrastructure.
11. Both Sace and Umalusi have included their adjustment budget allocation for travel and accommodation while the DBE stated that no travelling will be taking place.
12. The EFF does not believe that the budget vote is in the best interest of learners or educators but in the interest of saving the academic year at all costs which widen the inequalities that already exist in the education system.
13. We have leaders who do not the capacity or the political will to reimagine the education of our children.
14. We must do away with the two-tier system for the whites and black people.
15. We must train our teachers to use technology to teach and assess learners.
16. We must move the curriculum for all to online, television and radio channels.
17. Every learner must get a locally manufactured tablet loaded with tutorial videos, assessments and study material.
18. We must do this so that we close schools until such time we know that we are not sending our children to school to die.
19. We can always reopen schools, but the life our children we cannot get back once lost.