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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1322**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 14/05/2021**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 13 OF 2021**

**Ms H S Winkler (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(1) Whether he has been informed of the ongoing protests by students due to nonpayment of National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funds at the Umzikhulu TVET Campus in KwaZulu-Natal; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, (a) how is the matter of non-payment being resolved, (b) on what date will the students with outstanding NSFAS payments receive their funds, (c) how will the campus prevent a recurrence of nonpayment and thus disruption to the academic year going forward;

(2) whether all NSFAS students have received the laptops that were promised to them; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

**NW1517E**

**REPLY:**

1. The Department has been informed about the protest of students at Esayidi TVET College, Umzimkulu Campus. However, the students were not protesting over non-payment of allowances but rather over their dissatisfaction with the implementation of the Bursary Rules and Guidelines, particularly the provision on the 60/40 split regarding the awards for travel and accommodation allowances. It should be noted that the matter has been resolved and students are back in class after it was addressed by the college management and the Central Student Representative Council (SRC) together with the campus SRC.

(a) The majority of student allowances at the college have been paid to qualifying students with the exception of approximately 500 students. These exceptions are being attended to by an official from NSFAS who visited the college during the week of 17 to 21 May 2021 to help the college's financial aid office.

(b)  NSFAS is currently making weekly allowance payments, instead of the usual monthly payments, to reduce the backlog.

(c) The college uses various platforms to share information with students on the administration of NSFAS including through the college financial aid committee, which includes representation of the SRC.

(2) According to NSFAS, the procurement of laptops has been completed and will be distributed in batches as of May 2021 to all eligible TVET college students.