**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 827**

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**827. Ms H S Boshoff (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

Whether she has been informed of a protest by up to 5 000 school pupils in the Johannesburg Central Business District on 15 March 2017; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, (a) was permission obtained from her department for the protest, (b) why were the pupils protesting and (c) what steps will her department take to resolve the concerns of the pupils? NW890E

**RESPONSE:**

1. The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) was not informed of the protest prior to the protest day, and therefore, permission to protest was not granted. The number of learners that participated in the protest led by COSAS on 15 March 2017 is estimated to be around 2 000 and not 5000.
2. The demands of the protesting learners, as captured in the attached memorandum, Annexure A, submitted to the MEC on 15 March 2017 include the following:
3. Termination of contracts between GDE and the National School Nutrition Programme service providers who distribute food to schools.
4. National School Nutrition Program to include breakfast.
5. Provision of Economic Empowerment (Entrepreneurship) lessons in the school curriculum.
6. Provision of still water and not Rand water to schools.
7. Provision of scholar transport to learners that walk for more than 5Km.
8. Provision of sanitary towels for girl learners.
9. Provision of free uniforms to learners.
10. Replacement of chalkboards with smartboards in all schools.
11. Construction of swimming pools in townships schools.
12. Construction of schools of excellence in all townships.
13. The GDE will be engaging the learners through COSAS with regard to all their demands. However, the Department takes exception to the violent behaviour displayed by the learners during the protest.