



**CENTRE FOR CHILD LAW RESPONDS TO SOPA DELIVERED BY GAUTENG
PREMIER DAVID MAKHURA ON 26 FEBRUARY 2018**

“WHAT ABOUT SCHOOL SHORTAGES IN GAUTENG?”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2 March 2018

The Centre for Child Law (“the Centre”) commends Gauteng Premier David Makhura for a forward looking State of the Province Address (SOPA) that acknowledges the hard work the province still needs to do and that celebrates its successes. With regards to provision of basic education in the province the Centre congratulates the Gauteng province for achieving 95% universal access to Grade R; performing well with the 2017 Grade 12 results; and the evident turnaround of township schools and the overall performance of learners from townships. The Centre is also pleased to note that the Gauteng Premier is not afraid to acknowledge that much still needs to be done in the provision of accessible quality education.

The Centre for Child Law is however disappointed by the fact that the SOPA does not deal with the real problem of school shortages in Gauteng. The SOPA does not provide information on what the province plans to do to address this problem which negatively affects children’s constitutionally guaranteed right to basic education. Reports at the beginning of 2018 noted that approximately 31 000 children still had to be placed in schools at the beginning of the school year. This is largely driven by substantial population growth in the province a trend acknowledged in the SOPA by the following statement:

“...with regard to basic education, Gauteng runs the second largest education system after Kwa-Zulu-Natal, with enrolment having grown from 1.3 million in 1994 to 2.3 million in 2018”

As expressed in previous media statements the Centre is extremely concerned about the impact of late school placements on children and their parents. Late placement is likely to cause anxiety amongst children and parents; particularly for children who are

placed in schools after the term has begun and have to catch up with their peers. Parents are put under pressure because stationary, uniforms and other school materials are purchased late. The late placement of additional learners into schools would also necessitate that the Gauteng Department of Education approach and consult the Provincial Treasury for additional financial resources. The Centre believes that this can all be avoided with better planning from the Gauteng Department of Basic Education.

The Centre's report titled "*Budget & Bricks: Progress with school infrastructure following the Rivonia Primary School case*" suggests that better planning involves the updating of the school infrastructure master list so that it accurately reflects the actual capacity of each school based on the school infrastructure norms and standards. A further solution proposed in the report was improving methodologies utilised in projecting learner trends and numbers at district level using population and migration data from Stats SA; the annual DBE Snap Survey data on learner numbers and past growth trends in learner numbers.

These suggested measures would ensure that better planning is carried out and children are placed in schools at the appropriate time and overcrowding is reduced. The Centre for Child Law remains committed to engaging with the Gauteng Province and in particular the Gauteng Department of Basic Education on the report and recommendations it contains.

Ends.

For further information please contact the Centre for Child Law on 012 420 4502.

The report "Budgets & Bricks: Progress with school infrastructure following the Rivonia Primary School case" can be downloaded in PDF [here](#) (5MB).