

Student funding report due for release

Blade Nzimande's department is due to table a report to Parliament that will reveal how the government will tackle the crises in higher education.



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The Cabinet has signed off on Ikusasa (the future) Student Financial Aid Programme which will address the funding needs of poor and "missing middle" students - the main driver of the #FeesMustFall protests.

The Department of Higher Education on Thursday said the full report would be made available next week, when it will be presented to the higher education and training portfolio committee after which it will be gazetted and published.

Sizwe Nxasana, who chairs the ministerial task team appointment by Nzimande to develop a support and funding model for poor and missing middle students, has said Ikusasa will seek to encourage the public to put in money to support students.

Part of the plan is to appeal to people to buy coupons from commercial banks.

The coupon or student support investment scheme would entail people making deposits into their savings account, which would then be used to finance needy students.

Nxasana said investors would earn "a little bit of interest" due to students repaying their loans once they graduated and found employment.

Tensions have been running high at universities across the country as students continue with their campaign for no-fee increases and free education.

The Cabinet said on Thursday that funding higher education remained a priority for the government and the additional R17bn allocated to universities over the next three years would help to ease the burden on needy students. President Jacob Zuma has appointed a fees commission to explore the viability of free higher education.

Source: Business Day

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