

# DA urges minister Hlengiwe Mkhize to act to prevent campus violence

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The DA has called on Higher Education and Training Minister Hlengiwe Mkhize to intervene in the registration processes at higher education institutions, to prevent them descending into chaos.



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This follows what it calls President Jacob Zuma's "reckless" announcement of free higher education for the poor and the EFF's "inflammatory" call for academically eligible students to present themselves for registration for 2018 at the higher education institutions of their choice.

The DA's spokesperson on higher education and training, Professor Belinda Bozzoli, said both Zuma and Mkhize had failed to provide strong leadership and the DA called on Mkhize to "decisively" intervene "in order to avoid a potentially violent crisis".

Bozzoli said: "Mkhize must now provide an unequivocal stance on whether she supports Zuma's announcement of free education and what her department intends to do to mitigate against registration processes turning violent.

"Zuma's announcement was ostensibly made without consulting National Treasury or the Department of Higher Education

and Training.

"It merely served as a tool of cheap politicking, aimed at scoring points ahead of the ANC conference in an attempt to salvage the legacy of his failed presidency.

"Similarly now, the EFF's ill-considered call for walk-in registrations evidences a failure to understand that placements at higher education institutions across SA have not increased - higher education institutions generally formulate their intake figures at least a year in advance in order to ensure that resources are adequately allocated to meet the needs of incoming students."

Bozzoli said the demand that higher education institutions accept walk-in registrations was in direct contravention of many institutions' registration procedures, and would place undue strain on their systems and resources.

"In addition, given the precedent for walk-in registration processes to turn violent, these calls place students' safety at risk," she said.

"The DA believes all deserving students should have access to higher education and that financial support should be provided for poorer students within the confines of the law and the country's available resources.

"Quality higher education for SA's youth can no longer be used as a tool for cheap politicking - political parties must not allow Zuma to cause division as he departs.

"Moreover, students should refrain from participating in activities that go against the rules of tertiary institutions - registrations must take place in accordance with higher education institutions' rules and procedures."

*Source: BDpro*

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