

Media Statement issued by Lawrence Manaka
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Minister Nzimande needs to be held accountable for the corruption and maladministration at NSFAS

The corruption and maladministration taking place at the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is unacceptable and we can no longer tolerate these kinds of actions.

NSFAS is solely responsible for the higher education funding of 1,1-million underprivileged students in South Africa; and with a 2023 annual budget of R46,6-billion, it seems the vultures have been allowed to creep in and tamper with what is meant to be for the youth of South Africa.

Under the leadership of the current Minister of Higher Education, Blade Nzimande, NSFAS has become an institution that is prone to scandal, corruption, and grave fiscal mismanagement. Yet he still enjoys the protection of the ANC, after their Secretary-General, Fikile Mbalula, proudly announced that no ministers would be removed from their positions prior to the 2024 General Elections. Indeed we need new leaders with new answers.

This illustrates that, to the ANC, cadre deployment matters more than the 1,1-million students who remain to be vulnerable and at the mercy of an uncaring government.

Whilst RISE Mzansi, welcomes the decision of the NSFAS board to terminate contracts with the four fintech companies who were responsible for payment delays, and dubious withdraws in students' accounts, barring the back-and-forth accusations between the institution and its suspended CEO, we cannot ignore that the correct procedures were not adhered to when these companies were procured which ultimately led to the payment delays.

We can no longer accept government ineptness whilst the most vulnerable of society continue to suffer.

RISE Mzansi not only calls for better systems and governance, but we also call for Minister Blade Nzimande to be held accountable and to take full responsibility for the position we currently find ourselves in.

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As RISE Mzansi we continue to fight for the rights of students, and we will continue to fight against government incompetence that threatens the materialisation of equal opportunities to education.

For the change we want to see, young people must use the power of the vote to usher in a reset in 2024. All young people must register to vote during the registration weekend of 18 and 19 November 2023 so we can build a safe, prosperous, equal, and united South Africa.

ENDS...

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