

# Activists want Angie to drop norms appeal

**DBE wants Concourt to share out responsibility for school infrastructure**

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Lobby group Equal Education is going all out to prevent the department of basic education (DBE) from appealing a Bhisho High Court ruling on the norms and standards for school infrastructure.

The group is calling on citizens to sign an online petition which they hope will stop the appeal.

The court ruled in July that some regulations in the norms and standards for school infrastructure promulgated by the state five years ago are unconstitutional, invalid and need to be amended.

The ruling was in favour of EE's application to compel basic education minister Angie Mo-

tshekga to fix the "loopholes" or "escape clauses" in the legislation and to meet infrastructure completion deadlines.

Motshekga was ordered to amend the regulations and to pay the applicant's legal costs.

On the day of the judgment, DBE spokesman Elijah Mhlana told the Daily Dispatch outside court that the department would not appeal the ruling.

However, last month he confirmed their plans to appeal.

EE spokesperson Leanne Jansen-Thomas said they already had 1,000 signatures and they plan to hand the petition to President Cyril Ramaphosa once they have collected as many as possible.

"The petition will be handed over to President Ramaphosa, minister Motshekga and the nine provincial MECs. The aim of the petition is for the minister and MECs to recognise the criticalness of the norms and stan-

dards judgment of the Bhisho High Court, and to withdraw their appeal against it," said Jansen-Thomas.

The group has not set a target for how many signatures.

After a council of education meeting in Pretoria on Monday, Motshekga said the appeal had nothing to do with the department's willingness to provide school infrastructure.

"I do think it is important that we address some of the negative

responses we have seen about the decision to make an appeal to the Constitutional Court regarding the norms and standards for school infrastructure. This is a misleading stance and I encourage those who are interested to go through the court papers. We are continuing to roll out school infrastructure."

Motshekga said the reason for the appeal was that the July judgment would force the department to take responsibility

for things it has zero control over.

In her defence submitted to court, Motshekga wanted ministers from other state entities, such as water and sanitation, public works and Eskom, to also be held accountable for failure to meet norms and standards deadlines.

On Monday Motshekga once again stood by her defence when she said the department could not take sole responsi-

bility for the provision of services to schools.

"The provision of services like electricity lies with other organs of the state, such as Eskom and municipalities.

"All that the regulations say is that where that is the case then such organs of state should take responsibility for that particular service," she said.

Mhlana said they were still waiting for a date to submit the leave to appeal.