



## **EFF STATEMENT ON THE TRAGIC PASSING OF STUDENTS AT EQINISWENI SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Tuesday, 07 May 2024.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is deeply disturbed by the tragic suicides that have occurred at Eqinisweni Secondary School in Ivory Park, Midrand. The loss of four young lives within such a short period is abnormal and requires urgent investigation.

Within a span of just a few days, four young lives were lost to suicide. On April 26, a grade 10 girl tragically took her own life by consuming poison. This heartbreaking event was followed by the death of a grade 11 girl on May 2, also as a result of ingesting poison. The following day, a grade 11 boy was hospitalised after allegedly consuming poison and succumbed to his injuries while receiving medical treatment. On May 5, a grade 12 girl reportedly drank poison at home and passed away while being transported to a nearby clinic.

The incidents at Eqinisweni Secondary School highlight the urgent need for comprehensive mental health support and intervention in our schools. It is imperative that social workers be dispatched to the school immediately to provide counselling and support to the students, teachers, and staff members who are grappling with this trauma.

Unfortunately we have a mental health pandemic on our hands, with research showing a concerning statistic: Gauteng alone reported over 40 alleged pupil suicide-related deaths in 2023. Mental health issues, bullying, and sexual assault are pervasive challenges faced by students in schools and yet only one in 10 South African children with diagnosable and treatable mental health issues can access any form of mental healthcare.

The EFF calls on the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding these suicides and to implement measures to prevent such tragedies from occurring in the future. We cannot afford to lose any more young lives to preventable causes.

Our thoughts are with the families and friends of the deceased during this difficult time. May they find strength and solace in each other's support.

### **ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS**

Sixelise Gcilishe (Elections Spokesperson) 081 075 0936

Leigh-Ann Mathys (National Spokesperson) 082 304 7572

✉ [communications@effonline.org](mailto:communications@effonline.org)

🌐 <http://www.effonline.org>

📱 @EFFSouthAfrica

📺 @EFFSouthAfrica

📺 Economic Freedom Fighters