11 March 2025

**KwaZulu-Natal MEC: Finance**

Hon. Francois Rodgers, MPL

KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government

Dear Honourable Francois Rodgers,

**RE: Urgent Intervention Required for National School Nutrition Programme Disruptions**

The above matter refers, I trust this letter finds you well.

I write to formally bring to your attention the alarming disruptions to the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) in KwaZulu-Natal, particularly within the uMngeni Municipality. These disruptions stem from the financial instability caused by the closure of Ithala Bank, which has severely affected service providers responsible for delivering essential meals to schools.

Our recent oversight visit to uMngeni Municipality has confirmed that five rural schools have been significantly impacted:

* Lions River Primary – 200 learners
* Crystal Springs Primary – 422 learners
* Curry’s Post Primary – Approximately 400 learners
* Morton Primary – Approximately 350 learners
* Jabula Combined – Approximately 400-450 learners

In total, nearly 1,800 learners within these schools have been left without access to their daily meals, which for many is their only source of nutrition. The DA acknowledges and commends the prompt intervention by uMngeni Mayor Chris Pappas, who has allocated disaster relief funds to ensure that these learners continue to receive meals while a long-term solution is developed. However, this is only a temporary measure, and urgent provincial intervention is required to prevent further disruptions.

As the DA, we urge your office to immediately assess the extent to which Ithala Bank’s closure has impacted service providers across the province and to establish alternative financial mechanisms to ensure continued service delivery. We have also submitted a formal transversal question to all provincial departments to ascertain how many of their service providers are banking with Ithala, as we fear this crisis may extend beyond the education sector.

The well-being and education of our learners are of utmost priority. It is imperative that decisive action is taken to stabilise the NSNP, ensuring that no child is left hungry due to administrative and financial inefficiencies. I kindly request a response on the provincial government's planned interventions in this regard.

I look forward to your urgent attention to this matter.

*Yours Sincerely,*

**Hon. Sakhile Mngadi, MPL**

**DA KZN Spokesperson on Education**