



MEDIA RELEASE COVID-19: DBE to ensure readiness by 24 August 2020

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), which represents thousands of educators and administrative staff in schools across the country, regards the decision to close all public schools for a four-week period as the only option to curb the rapid spread of COVID-19 and ensure that schools can function safely.

The PSA believes that the loan that was secured from the International Monetary Fund should also be utilised to ensure that schools with inadequate infrastructure are brought up to standard to be ready to accept all learners back on 24 August 2020. This closure period should be used by all role players to ensure that all schools are equipped to ensure the health and safety of learners and school staff. The PSA also advises the Department of Basic Education to invest in the empowerment and training of role players, especially school management, to ensure consistent implementation of regulations.

The PSA urges schools to be transparent and about their readiness to accept all learners back and reveal positive COVID-19 cases. Non-compliance to standard operating procedures will fuel a second wave of infections that could eradicate the costly gains already made to curb the spread of the virus.

The PSA believes that the Department's commitment to provide resources to supplement classroom learning by implementing virtual tools has provided learners with the ability to continue with the curriculum and the remaining time should be sufficient for Grade12 learners to prepare for exams. South African learners have in the past managed to pull through despite lost schooldays owing to political unrest and protests. The PSA believes that with additional support, the academic year can be saved.

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