

**MEDIA RELEASE**                      **COVID-19: PSA appalled by reports that Gauteng Education spent R430 million on disinfecting schools**

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**EMBARGO**                                None

**ENQUIRIES**                              communication@psa.co.za

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), which represents thousands of educators and administrative staff nationwide, is appalled by media reports that the Gauteng Department of Education spent some R430 million to disinfect schools.

The PSA in 2020 already called on the Minister of Basic Education to make public the spending on personal protective equipment (PPE) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Inflating prices during a crisis cannot be tolerated by society and will ultimately harm the most vulnerable of society.

Previous reports from the Eastern Cape showed that sanitisers were purchased that did not meet the required standards. This led to more than 200 educators and learners being infected in a single school. Incidents of this nature underline the importance of making public Government spending to ensure accountability. Such instances of wasting taxpayers' money places endanger the lives of educators, learners, and parents and jeopardises service delivery to the most vulnerable in society.

The PSA calls on President Cyril Ramaphosa to instruct all Ministers to provide their spending reports on the procurement of PPE and cleaning services for the duration of the COVID-19 lockdown. Corruption should be dealt with swiftly and decisively to demonstrate that this will not be tolerated in the Public Service and that taxpayers' money is utilised for the intended purposes. Continued maladministration, corruption and fraud have contributed to Government pleading poverty and being unable to pay its employees their increases that were due on 1 April 2020.

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