

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA calls for an intervention to improve the current state of schools**

DATE 19 June 2019

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA), continues to be discouraged by the never-ending deterioration of the country's schools, especially in lower-income communities and rural areas. Inadequate protection of teachers and learners with the increasing spate of violence perpetuated against them, clearly indicates that action needs to be taken.

Violence and crime have put the country's education system in crisis in a country where for many education is seen as an escape from poverty. The legislative protection is in place through the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *South African Schools Act*, *Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools*, *Department of Education Schools Management Manual* and others. It is the government officials and school administrators that are failing to implement these policies and plans that aim to improve schools.

South African schools are already plagued with many problems, violence and bullying need to be addressed in order to also manage frustrations of learners. In terms of the escalating incidents of violence, more stringent measures need to be taken to ensure the protection of both school staff and learners. School administrations and government officials need to implement security measures, as police officers do not have the capacity to act as school guards.

Research has been conducted into the poor literacy and numeracy levels found in Basic Education, levels of violence in schools, yet no solution has been employed. No serious and functional learning can be expected to take place in an environment where teachers and learners feel unsafe. Schools need to be a safe place for personal development and cultivation of talent.

There is a need to deepen parent and community interaction with schools. The Department of Education and Social Development must run dedicated training workshops for parents to equip them with skills to support their children and offer platforms through which parents get involved in the school activities and can act as a check on learners. The PSA calls all stakeholders to be active in their roles to improve the quality of learning and discipline in schools and government needs to steer the ship. A safe and productive schooling environment for both learners and educators will ensure that the youth is equipped for the future.

END

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of a blue wave-like shape on the left and a green triangular shape on the right, both pointing towards the center.

