

MEDIA RELEASE PSA calls for urgent psychological support for educators and learners at Tlamelang Special School, North West

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about escalating emotional and psychological challenges faced by educators and learners at Tlamelang Special School in Gelukspan owing to the complete absence of dedicated professional psychological support.

The School serves vulnerable learners with disabilities and the lack of access to essential mental-health services undermines the well-being of staff and learners. Educators manage complex emotional and behavioural needs without specialist backing, whilst learners experience trauma, anxiety, and other difficulties without adequate intervention.

Despite repeated formal requests by the School to the North West Department of Education for deployment of a psychologist, the Province reportedly has only “one psychologist”. This critical shortage is unacceptable and leaves educators and the learners without urgently required professional support. Compounding these challenges is a reported lack of adequate parental support from some caregivers.

The PSA urges the North West Department of Education to immediately prioritise and deploy psychologists to special schools, particularly in underserved areas such as Gelukspan. The number of psychologists allocated to North West Province should be increased substantially to address the real and growing needs of learners with disabilities and the educators who support them. In addition, reported misuse of disability grants should be investigated and addressed to ensure that these funds benefit children in accordance with the *Social Assistance Act*.

The well-being of educators and learners at Tlamelang Special School cannot continue to be neglected. Without urgent intervention, the long-term educational and developmental outcomes for these learners, as well as the mental health of educators will be severely compromised.

The PSA is committed to advocating for the rights and working conditions of educators and the best interests of the learners they serve. The PSA calls on the North West Department of Education and relevant government stakeholders to act decisively and collaboratively to resolve this crisis and uphold South Africa's constitutional democracy.

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