

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls on Department of Basic Education to employ more administrative staff at schools to increase learning and teaching time
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the recent study released by the University of Stellenbosch, which revealed that 50% of teachers want to leave the profession within the next ten years owing to an excessive workload.

The *Teacher Preference and Job Satisfaction in South Africa Report* discovered that excessive workload and administrative burden are the primary source of stress for the majority of teachers. Administrative burdens seem to be the major factor that demotivates and discourages teachers. This is over and above other known issues such as inadequate staffing, lack of resources, working in dilapidated structures, classroom sizes, limited career opportunities as well as security in the school environment. Many teachers feel that there is unnecessary paperwork, which they see as redundant and irrelevant to actual teaching needs. The findings echoed similar findings with the *Teaching and Learning International (TALIS)*, which revealed as far back as 2019 that South African teachers spend more time on administrative tasks, which could be better used for teaching time in the classrooms.

Upon receiving the *TALIS* report that at least 66% of classroom time is spent on actual teaching and learning in South Africa, compared to 78% in other countries, the then Minister of Basic Education endeavoured to address the lack of support staff to reduce the amount of time teachers spend on clerical tasks. Unfortunately, six years later, excessive administrative burdens are still carried by overworked teachers. Failure by the Department to adequately address the matter is affecting the quality of teaching and learning. It further impacts on mental health of teachers.

The PSA urges the Department of Basic education (DBE) to properly study the *Report*, address the challenges highlighted to prevent high stress levels, excessive administrative burdens, and inadequate support from driving experienced and competent teachers away from the profession. The DBE must appoint additional administrative staff at schools to reduce the burden on teachers. South Africa cannot afford to lose teachers when recent studies estimated that it needed more than 50 000 teachers whilst the country has an annual output of some 15 000 new teachers. The DBE has been building new schools, which necessitate more teachers, The DBE should urgently address teacher concerns in the interest of the country and teaching profession.

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