

MEDIA RELEASE PSA calls on Minister of Basic Education to act urgently to stop brain drain at public schools

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing thousands of education-sector employees across South Africa, is extremely concerned about the increasing exodus of educators from public schools owing to escalating crime, inadequate resources, and deteriorating working conditions.

Recent reports indicate that many educators are leaving government schools because they no longer feel safe, supported, or valued in the workplace. The PSA views this trend as a serious threat to the future of public education and the quality of learning of millions of learners. Educators are central to the education system. When experienced educators leave the profession or migrate to better-resourced environments, learners suffer the consequences through overcrowded classrooms, reduced subject offerings, declining educational outcomes, and increased pressure on the remaining staff.

The PSA calls on the Minister of Basic Education to urgently implement a comprehensive intervention strategy to curb this growing brain drain. Such interventions must include, strengthening safety and security measures at schools, particularly in crime-affected communities. The provision of adequate teaching resources, infrastructure, and learner support materials must be accelerated. Excessive workloads and administrative burdens placed on educators must be addressed. Vacant teaching posts must be filled without delay to reduce class sizes and improve working conditions. Psychosocial support programmes for educators exposed to violence, intimidation, and workplace stress must be expanded. There should also be meaningful engagement with organised labour to develop sustainable retention strategies for skilled educators.

The PSA further urges government to recognise that retaining qualified educators is a national development imperative. South Africa cannot afford to lose skilled educators whilst the Country is already facing significant educational challenges. The PSA is committed to working constructively with the Department of Basic Education and all stakeholders to ensure that public schools become safe, adequately resourced, and attractive workplaces where educators can perform their duties with dignity and pride.

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