

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA concerned about damage to schools in KwaZulu-Natal following severe weather conditions
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the state of readiness of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education to deal with damaged school infrastructure, after some 39 schools in the province were affected by severe weather.

Severe wind and storms in the province have resulted in physical damage of school infrastructure, disrupting education and posing safety concerns to learners, staff, and communities. The South African Weather Services issued a level-four warning for damaging winds, snow, and storms that may bring heavy downpours, which can lead to flooding in low lying areas.

Kwa-Madlala Primary School in Elandskop in Pietermaritzburg has been affected by damaging winds. Parts of the School's corrugated iron roof were ripped off affecting some six 6 classrooms. Hlambamasoka Primary School in Taylors Halt also suffered storm damage, with the roofs of various classrooms being ripped and destroying infrastructure.

According to a media release by the Msunduzi Municipality, 16 wards have been affected, with Vulindlela circuit mostly affected. Homes sustained damage and fallen trees caused power outages.

Damaged school infrastructure can force schools to close, resulting in the disruption of teaching and learning. With most schools approaching exam season, this can have severe impact on academic progress as the process to repair and rebuild these structures will take time. The damaged infrastructure may pose as a risk to injury as there are exposed wires, sharp debris, and unstable structures. There is further a loss of resources such as books, textbooks, and school equipment.

The PSA calls on the Department of Basic Education and other spheres of government for urgent intervention in this disaster by repairing school infrastructure or finding learners alternative park-home classrooms to enable them to write their exams. The disaster management unit is also urged to work diligently and effectively to ensure public servants' safety.

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