

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA concerned about impact of educators' salaries on education outcomes
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The role played by educators at their various levels of employment can never stressed sufficiently. Yet, the South African education sector remains under pressure for various reasons with a decline in the number of graduate educators to meet the growing demand from schools.

South Africa requires an average of 20 000 new educators every year to maintain teacher-pupil ratios, yet the sector is struggling to attract candidates. The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the impact of low compensation levels as a contributing factor. National Treasury also warned that the low compensation for educators together with early retirements will reduce the number of available teachers. Despite this, 51% of the Department of Basic Education's budget is allocated for salaries.

The PSA is concerned that private-sector funding allows it to better compensate educators and provide them with appropriate resources in an environment where leaners and educators thrive. This is at the expense of education in public schools, where too many schools remain underfunded with poor resources, unsafe or non-existent infrastructure and poor teacher support. As a direct result, learners struggle to achieve their goals. This is evidenced from the 2021-Matric results with Matric learners from private schools achieving a pass rate of 98.06% versus public-school matriculants who achieved a 76.4% pass rate. Teachers and leaners in thousands of public schools have to compete with their private-school peers, while they have no laboratories, no internet, no electricity and, in some instances, no sanitation.

The PSA calls on all officials to re-evaluate funding for Basic Education to ensure that these educators who are tasked with the responsibility of supporting the majority of South African learners are competitively compensated and resourced.

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