

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA: Northern Cape not ready to reopen schools**

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ENQUIRIES **Steve Ledibane**

The Public Servants Association (PSA), is extremely appalled and disappointed by the poor arrangements being made to prepare for the reopening of schools in the Northern Cape. The PSA has been in contact with the members across the province and it is clear that the Northern Cape is not yet ready to re-open schools. No repair work has taken place where schools were vandalised, some schools do not have water taps and those that were reported, were not replaced. In John Taolo Gaetsewe District, of the 173 schools about 30 were vandalised, no repairs have taken place. While there are pockets of schools where water is provided, many schools are still not compliant with the regulations regarding provision of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), there has been no appointment of additional cleaners and the screening protocol at points of entry is lacking.

Despite all the PSA's efforts to ask for the establishment of a Steering Committee at ZF Mqawu District of Education, to date our request have fallen on deaf ears. This failure to prepare, by this District is a complete disregard of COVID-19 regulations and human lives. The employer's exclusive meetings and failure to establish a body to bring all and sundry into their confidence, is indicative of non-existent preparations. A few schools in the other three districts, namely, Francis Baard, Namakwa and Pixley-ka-Seme have received extremely inadequate PPE, some vandalised schools have not yet been repaired, no additional cleaners have been appointed yet.

The PSA is disappointed that all the commitments made by the department, over the last three weeks have not come to fruition on a large scale. The failed virtual meetings with the MEC, which were conducted on Sunday 24 May 2020 and Monday 25 May 2020, did not assist in remedying the situation.

The PSA continues to advise members to stay at home if safety recommendations are not complied with. The PSA calls on the MEC and HOD to ensure that preparations for the reopening of the schools are properly done, and that no one is placed at a risk of contracting the virus.

END

