

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA raises alarm regarding loss of 30 000 educators in South African public schools
DATE	27 November 2025
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about revelations that more than 30 000 educators have left South Africa's public schools in the past five years.

This was confirmed by the Minister of Basic Education in a parliamentary reply. These statistics reflect 30 992 and 1 245 dismissals, averaging over 6 000 departures annually. This exodus has created a critical educator shortage, resulting in overcrowded classrooms and declining education quality.

Reports indicate that more than 50% of primary school learners are taught in classes exceeding 40 learners, with some classes surpassing 50 learners. This places South Africa behind global norms and undermines efforts to deliver quality education. The reasons for this attrition include educator burnout and overwhelming workloads, compounded by excessive administrative duties. The situation is exacerbated by poor working conditions and safety concerns, including violence in schools. In addition, low salaries and a lack of incentives are driving educators to seek opportunities abroad or in other sectors.

This crisis threatens the future of millions of learners, and the PSA calls on the Department of Basic Education to urgently implement an educator retention strategy, addressing workload, safety, and salary disparities. As another option is to deploy the more than 12 700 qualified, unemployed educators listed on the National Recruitment Database to fill vacant posts immediately.

The PSA previously called on the Department to introduce adequate and resourced mental health and wellness support for educators to combat burnout. It is also important for the Department to reconsider its stance and offer rural incentives and career development opportunities to attract educators to underserved areas.

Education is one of the cornerstones of national development. The PSA urges government to act decisively to stem the loss of skilled educators, restore dignity to the teaching profession, and ensure that every learner has access to quality education.

END