

MEDIA RELEASE Teachers Day: PSA calls for more support for Educators

DATE 4 October 2019

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

For many, education is a stepping stone out of poverty, a key that equips individuals for a brighter future. Therefore, the quality and the professionalism that is required from those who offer education should be of the utmost highest importance.

On 5 October 2019, the Public Servants Association (PSA), representing thousands of members in the Education sector honours the dedicated Teachers who chose this profession that has the potential and responsibility to change many lives. Teachers' Day is celebrated annually worldwide, and the PSA would like to acknowledge the day by saluting those who go above and beyond in this profession but also calls out the shortcomings that are still experienced in the sector.

Limited resources, poor infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, poor remuneration and safety in schools are a major challenge in education. These challenges are some of the reasons the education system in the country is suffering from a shortage of skilled teachers, as a huge number leave the profession to search for greener pastures abroad. The increasing reports of violence perpetuated against teachers in schools, where they are often subjected to verbal and physical violence from learners, is condemned in the strongest terms by the PSA. Government needs to ensure that more stringent safety measures are provided to ensure the safety of teachers. The PSA has on many occasions called for the prioritization of the safety in schools and believes that all stakeholders should be part of the solution to this scourge, but the government should lead the way.

Constant changes of the curriculum which, at most times the feasibility or sustainability seems to be not properly reached is a problem. Owing to poor socio-economic circumstances in communities, the behavioural patterns of learners in schools has been a challenge for educators who are not trained to deal such matters and affects the outcomes of learning. This often leads to a lack of moral and passion for their work. As a responsible Union, the PSA also condemns any attempts by labour to interfere with school administration, especially in terms of placements of personnel for personal gain. Several worrying allegations have been made over attempts by education unions to sell teaching and principal posts in exchange for bribes. This not only undermines the profession but also the quality of teaching.

Teachers are the greatest public servants as they prepare future public servants and leaders. As the world commemorates Teachers Day, the PSA encourages the promotion of professionalism in this important sector.

END

