

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION -EASTERN CAPE

17-06-2020

COVID-19 Infections: Closure of several Mthatha Schools

Members will recall that schools reopened for learners on 8 June 2020, albeit unprepared by the insistence of the Department of Basic Education. In just six days of the school reopening, the PSA was alerted to positive test cases of teachers at Mthatha High School, Mthatha International School, Zingisa PS, Ntshiqo PS, and Thamsanqa PS. The PSA commends the Principals of the above schools for closing the schools, to ensure proper compliance with the safety regulations.

The PSA, however, calls upon the department to ensure that the employees, learners, and parents who had direct contact with the teachers who tested positive for COVID-19 are identified, tested, and isolated to contain the spread of the virus. The PSA believes that with the current daily infection rate increasing, the daily closing of schools will become the norm across the province. This will result in disruptions to the academic year and would ultimately not benefit learners. This will certainly traumatise learners and will have a much more negative impact on learner's psychological well-being, a price that society will pay for years to come. Infected learners, that must be quarantined and those that were in close contact who must self-isolate, will fall behind during the recovery and development period, therefore further disadvantaging them.

Learners are our future and they must one day lead the country, but they cannot do this, if are left behind. The PSA reiterates its position that opening schools on 8 June 2020 was premature and call upon the Minister to save the lives of teachers and learners by closing the schools until such time that the schools are ready and compliant.

The PSA encourages members to report any challenges encountered to Zoleka.ngebe@psa.co.za or Kenneth.qikani@psa.co.za or contact the Office at (047)502500.

GENERAL MANAGER