

## Schools re-opening: Northern Cape Department of Education

As members are already aware schools reopened on 26 August 2021, with all schools in the Northern Cape reopening on the same date. The PSA is concerned regarding the safety of learners and staff members, especially with the emergence of the Delta variant during the Third Wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, while some schools struggle with means to ensure proper social distancing. Most schools in the province have resorted to the rotation arrangement they practiced prior the closing of schools in the last quarter. There are 4 schools that could not open due to burglaries and vandalization during the recent school holidays. Two positive cases among Educators have been reported so far, with the PSA calling on the Steering Committee of the Education Department to strengthen screening and tracing protocols. If protocols are observed, together with social distancing and wearing of masks, the battle against upsurge of the virus can be won.

The PSA understands members' personal choice on vaccination, however, Educators as frontline workers are still encouraged to vaccinate. The most effective way for the virus to be controlled is for the population to reach "herd immunity", which means that the vaccination of a high percentage of the population could reduce the spread of infectious diseases. This is however only possible, if a majority of people are willing to be vaccinated.

Members are advised to report any contravention of health and safety measures to the PSA at 053 839 1000.

GENERAL MANAGER