

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **GENERAL 20/2022**

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Teachers' Day 2022

The South African education sector is facing a crisis that is receiving very little attention - the impending exodus of half of the sector's employees as they reach retirement age. Education plays a critical role in the country's societal development and economic growth. Multiple reports indicate that South Africa is not producing enough educators, with 20 000 new qualified educators being needed per year to maintain teacher-pupil ratios in classrooms. The PSA calls on authorities to acknowledge the realities and mitigate by recruiting educators, including from the current unemployed graduates with relevant teaching qualifications.

The PSA also calls on education officials to encourage assistant teachers employed by the Department of Basic Education to complete their training and be absorbed in the system. The transfer of skills must take place before existing educators exit the system. Incentives, including bursaries, must be provided to make the profession attractive and attainable for young graduates. The PSA further urges the Minister of Basic Education to develop and implement transitional plans to ensure that improved learning and teaching, especially in rural schools still hampered by poor infrastructure, skills shortages, and poor resource management. Rural schools are severely affected by the scrapping of the rural allowance, which hampered the recruitment of educators in these areas.

Educators are regarded as essential drivers of a quality education system. If South Africa cannot train, recruit, and retain sufficient qualified educators, it will not be able to provide quality education to citizens to meet the country's social and economic needs. Government should expand distance education to enable more student educators to access learning. The education system must provide a conducive work environment and offer support to educators. This will contribute towards the retention of educators, especially those with experience and with scarce skills. In addition, educators in oversubscribed subjects must be re-skilled to empower them to teach subjects where there is a shortage of educators.

Educators, despite all circumstances, continue to impact on, inspire and influence future generations of workers. A good educator can never be erased. Educators are pillars of strength and motivation and as the country commemorates Teachers' Day, the PSA encourages all to remember the impact of educators on their lives and to respect the profession as a pillar of society.

GENERAL MANAGER