

Over 500 Limpopo schools still do not have proper sanitation – PSA

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Over 500 Limpopo schools still do not have proper sanitation – PSA May 20, 2020 | by ANA Newswire File photo: Leon Lestrade/African News Agency (ANA) South Africa's Public Servants Association (PSA) said on Wednesday it was shocked by the decision taken by the department of education in Limpopo province to provide only 215 schools with proper sanitation facilities, while more than 500 schools still did not have proper toilets. In a statement, the PSA noted that the department had previously pledged that pit toilets would be eradicated by 2020, but said budget allocations were inadequate. "The Covid-19 pandemic calls for consciousness when it comes to hygiene and schools with unhygienic, dangerous, and dilapidated pit toilets will be a fertile ground for the spread of the virus," it said. "It is now even more important for the learners in the province to be provided with an environment conducive for learning and good health." South African schools and universities have been closed since mid-March in an effort to avoid the spread of Covid-19 among students and staff, and remain so even after the government relaxed the rules of a nationwide lockdown on 1 May. Late on Tuesday the department of education said all public school teachers would be required to return to class on 1 June, as well as Grade 7 pupils, who are set to progress to high school in 2021, and Grade 12 learners who are due to write their school ending examinations later this year. Basic education minister Angie Motshekga assured parents that school buildings would be sanitised and pupils screened daily to prevent the spread of Covid-19. On Wednesday the PSA urged the department of education to demonstrate its commitment to eradicating pit toilets in schools. "There is a need for ... fast-tracking ... the delivery of proper sanitation if the department is serious in ensuring the containment of Covid-19 at schools," it said.