

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls for further investigation into findings of the Department of Basic Education's Portfolio Committee visit to Bukhosibetfu Inclusive School, Mpumalanga
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is concerned about a report by the Department of Basic Education's Portfolio Committee following recent site visits to schools across Mpumalanga, including Bukhosibetfu Inclusive School in Malelane.

The aim of these visits was to assess readiness for the 2024 final examinations, as well as monitoring curriculum support, infrastructure, nutrition, and the provision of inclusive education. During the visit to Bukhosibetfu Inclusive School, the Portfolio Committee found severe gaps in support for the 443 learners. It is unacceptable that, as per the Committee's findings, these vulnerable students are not receiving adequate services. Key issues include the absence of food provision, the late appointment of teachers for deaf learners, which only started in August 2024, and a lack of essential healthcare professionals such as nurses, occupational therapists, and social workers.

This situation demonstrates the systemic failure of the Department of Basic Education to ensure that children with disabilities have equitable access to quality education, a right enshrined in the Constitution. The PSA demands that the Minister of Basic Education adheres to the *Schools Act*, section 12(4), dictating that where reasonably practicable, the Member of the Executive Council must provide the necessary educational support to learners with special education needs in public schools.

The PSA calls for an immediate and thorough investigation, in collaboration with stakeholders such as the Public Service Commission, to examine the findings of the Portfolio Committee. This inquiry should focus on the Department's action plan to address the critical staffing and support deficiencies identified at the School. It is essential to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to provide the required resources and support for these learners. The PSA will monitor the situation to protect the rights of the educators and learners.

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