MEDIA RELEASE	**PSA condemns Limpopo Department of Education's failure to address safety concerns at Rehlahleng Special School**
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is outraged by the Limpopo Department of Education's failure to address critical safety concerns at Rehlahleng Special School, culminating in an alarming incident where School Governing Body (SGB) members obstructed entry of two employees attempting to report for duty.

The employees, acting in their professional capacity, had previously raised significant concerns with the School's Principal regarding risks to learners' safety. The Principal refused to address these concerns, prompting the employees to escalate the matter to higher authorities, including the Circuit and District Offices, and to the PSA.

Of particular concern is the hazardous practice of taking nearly 100 learners, many living with severe intellectual disabilities, on a 10 to 14 km walk along a busy main road each morning, supervised by only two educators. This not only exposes learners to physical injuries owing to uneven and narrow sidewalks but also poses the risk of them being struck by passing vehicles, including buses, during peak-hour traffic.

Despite repeated attempts by the PSA to engage the acting Head of Department who is neither taking nor returning calls, and other stakeholders to address these safety risks, no substantive action has been taken. Consequently, the PSA filed a formal complaint with the Human Rights Commission to intervene and ensure the protection of these vulnerable learners.

It is extremely troubling that instead of providing support to the concerned employees, the Department has allowed SGB members to engage in illegal activities, disrupting the School's operations, and further jeopardising the rights of these vulnerable learners. In addition, the absence of essential support services such as a Social Worker and Professional Nurse, exacerbates the challenges faced by the School.

The PSA urges the MEC for Limpopo Education to demonstrate commitment to ensure order and safety of learners at Rehlahleng Special School by promptly addressing these concerns. SGB members' conduct should be above reproach and the Department must take decisive action against these members who threaten the safety of learners and educators. The safety and well-being of learners and employees must be the Department's top priority, and immediate action is required to rectify this unacceptable situation.

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