

MEDIA RELEASE

PSA condemns threatened loss of 19 000 teaching posts in KwaZulu-Natal owing to reckless budget cuts

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EMBARGO

None

ENQUIRIES

communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is outraged by the revelation that approximately 19 000 teaching posts in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) are at risk owing to severe budget cuts imposed by government.

This reckless financial mismanagement directly threatens the future of education in the province and jeopardises the livelihoods of thousands of dedicated educators. The Minister of Finance has admitted that government is struggling to fund essential services, including education and healthcare. This is a direct consequence of inept fiscal planning, wasteful expenditure, and misguided policy choices. The PSA finds it completely unacceptable that government prioritises political patronage, bloated bureaucracies, and fruitless expenditure whilst undermining core pillars of service delivery.

KwaZulu-Natal has the highest number of public schools in South Africa, with more than 6 000 institutions and an impressive 89.5% matric pass rate. This progress is, however, now at risk owing to government's failure to ensure financial sustainability in the education sector. Should these 19 000 teaching positions be lost, the consequences will be catastrophic, resulting in overcrowded classrooms, and severely impacting the quality of education. Remaining educators will face increased workloads, leading to burnout and reduced effectiveness. There will further be a rise in youth unemployment, as qualified job-seeking educators will be without opportunities. These severe learning disruptions will disproportionately affect underprivileged communities.

The PSA refuses to accept the excuses of government leaders who have failed to act responsibly. The crisis in the Department of Education is a direct result of financial mismanagement and corruption, as evidenced by stalled infrastructure projects, misallocation of resources, and a lack of consequence management for corrupt contractors. The PSA demands a full investigation into these failures and the immediate prosecution of those responsible for siphoning public funds.

The PSA demands that National Treasury, the KZN Department of Education, and the Presidency take urgent action to prevent this crisis from unfolding. The PSA specifically calls for a moratorium on educator job cuts, ensuring that no educator is dismissed owing to budget shortfalls. The immediate reallocation of funds is required, prioritising frontline services such as education and healthcare. A forensic audit into abandoned school projects is needed, with legal action taken against all implicated parties. Unemployed qualified educators should be absorbed to addressing job creation and classroom shortages. Transparency in budgeting is further required, ensuring that education is protected from reckless austerity measures.

The PSA will not stand idly by whilst government dismantles the public education system. The Union will take every necessary action, including legal challenges, and other actions to defend the rights of public servants and the future of South Africa's learners.

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