

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA questions readiness for school reopening in Limpopo**

DATE 27 July 2021

EMBARGO None

Enquiries communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) has observed with concern the state of readiness for school reopening in Limpopo.

Despite the 26 July 2021 date for reopening of schools announced earlier, Limpopo was unfortunately found wanting in many aspects. The inability to deal with basic issues compromises the health and safety of employees, learners, and communities. In the face of third wave of COVID-19 infections currently being experienced, it is critical for the Limpopo Department of Education to ensure compliance with COVID-19 protocols.

The PSA conducted assessments at various schools in Limpopo to assess the state of readiness. The PSA was shocked to find that some schools are experiencing problems ranging from inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE), dysfunctional scanners, and no sanitisers over and above the common problem of intermittent water supply and broken toilets.

The PSA appreciates that most schools received groceries to ensure that learners will receive meals. Although the groceries are only for a week, it is trusted that this matter will receive the necessary attention and that groceries will be provided for prolonged periods. Most schools are observing social distancing with the implementation of staggered timetabling.

Schools such as Mmampatile Primary, Hleketani Primary, Jinnah Park Primary, Maope Secondary, Masedibu Secondary and Dennis Matlaba Secondary are examples where challenges are experienced. The PSA calls upon the Head of the Department of Education to ensure the provision of functional scanners to enable schools measure temperatures as a critical requirement of COVID-19 regulations. The need to prioritise the supply of PPE and sanitisers at schools cannot be overemphasised to limit employees' risk of contracting the virus as even though most employees were vaccinated, this does not guarantee immunity.

END