

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	PSA welcomes exceptional results from KwaZulu-Natal Class of 2024 and calls for urgent employment of more Educators
<b>DATE</b>	14 January 2025
<b>EMBARGO</b>	None
<b>ENQUIRIES</b>	Mlungisi Ndlovu 082 903 6805

---

The Public Servants Association (PSA) in KwaZulu-Natal congratulates the province's Matric Class of 2024 on achieving a remarkable 89.5% pass rate.

This outstanding performance reflects the dedication, hard work, and resilience of all key stakeholders in the education sector despite facing various socio-economic and educational challenges. The PSA also commends the relentless efforts of Educators, who played a pivotal role in mentoring, supporting, and guiding learners towards success. Their determination, often in overcrowded classrooms and under resource-constrained conditions, is commendable.

The PSA acknowledges the indispensable role played by support staff, including school administrators, cleaners, and kitchen personnel, who contribute significantly to maintaining an environment conducive to learning. The work of after-school tutors, who provided vital academic support in critical subjects, deserves special recognition for their impact on learner performance.

Whilst celebrating this milestone, the PSA stresses the urgent need to employ more educators to ensure sustainable progress in the education sector. The current shortage of Educators has led to overcrowded classrooms, placing an undue burden on existing staff. To maintain and improve on the province's academic achievements, it is essential for the Department of Education to prioritise the immediate recruitment of permanent Educators and support to fill existing vacancies in key subjects. It is vital to reduce learner-teacher ratios to improve individual learner attention and teaching quality, whilst ensuring job security for temporary Educators, many of whom have contributed to learners' success despite being employed on short-term contracts.

The PSA calls on the Department of Basic Education to accelerate recruitment efforts and improve conditions of service for educators to prevent burnout and improve morale. The PSA also recognises the work done by former Education MEC, Mbali Frazer, whose strategic initiatives contributed to the sector's current success. Under the leadership of the current MEC, strides have been made in improving school infrastructure, enhancing learner support programs, and expanding professional development opportunities for Educators. These initiatives, coupled with the efforts of unions in the Sector, have played a vital role in creating an environment conducive to learning.

The PSA also commends all unions in the Sector for their collaborative efforts in advocating for better working conditions for Educators and support staff. By ensuring labour stability and fostering constructive engagement with the Department, these unions have contributed to uninterrupted learning and teaching as crucial for academic success.

Whilst this year's results are commendable, sustained progress requires continued investment in human resources, infrastructure, and learner support programs. The PSA urges the Department to improve school infrastructure by prioritising the upgrading and maintaining school buildings, especially in rural areas. The Education budget must be increased, and more funding must be allocated to employ additional Educators and provide adequate learning resources. Safety measures must be strengthened by enhancing security at schools to ensure a safe learning environment for learners and staff. Digital learning should be advanced by expanding access to technology to prepare learners for a digital-driven future.

The PSA remains committed to supporting Educators, learners, and support staff, and will continue engaging with the Department to address challenges in the sector. This historic pass rate is a testament to the potential of KwaZulu-Natal's learners when provided with the required support.

END