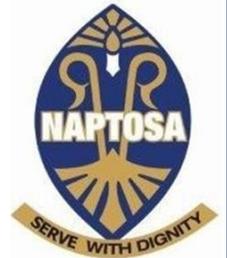


NATIONAL NEWS FLASH



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NNF 1 of 2022

19 January 2022

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I would like to welcome all NAPTOSA members to the 2022 academic year and wish to extend the best wishes of the NAPTOSA leadership to each and everyone.

In 2021 there were many uncertainties at the beginning of the year. First the late re-opening of schools and then the requirement that all staff, including those on comorbidity concessions, resume their duties. We are proud that our members heeded the call and regardless of all the negative comments, showed up and continued to serve the country's future leaders to the best of their ability.

The 2022 school year has just started, and we remain concerned about the continued impact of Covid-19 on our education system. It is disturbing that after two years of living with the virus, not much has been done to ensure that we get back to normal schooling. While some schools are able to accommodate a full return of all learners, most, however, are unable to receive their complete cohort on a full-time basis due to infrastructure deficiencies and overcrowding, thus increasing the inequality amongst our learners and in society.

It is NAPTOSA's position that ALL children should be back at school EVERY day. We call on the Department of Basic Education and the provincial education departments to put measures in place to ensure that this happens as soon as possible but not at the expense of the health and safety of learners and educators. We simply cannot afford a situation where the massive learning losses encountered up to now are perpetuated.

We are painfully aware that to achieve a full return to school, certain concessions will have to be made, but given the trajectory of the virus and the advice of the medical experts this is no longer a choice but an inevitability.

While it is common cause that learning and teaching should happen the moment the learner enters the classroom, many problems, hampering the progress of our learners, are compromising our education system at the start of this year. In Gauteng, some learners had by the first day of school not been placed due to problems experienced with the online system. In the Eastern Cape stationery has not been delivered on time. In KwaZulu Natal there has been a failure to appoint substitute and temporary teachers.

Add to this the damages to schools (as a result of flooding and the unceasing break-ins during school holidays) as well as the actions of certain communities in preventing teachers from entering school premises and it is clear that the education authorities have their work cut out for them.

The NAPTOSA leadership applauds all educators who have received their vaccinations as well as their booster shots (your selfless acts have kept many, as well as yourselves, safer) and appeal to those who have not done so yet, to get

it done as soon as possible. The evidence speaks for itself – post vaccinations, the hospitals are emptier and the death rate lower. Also encourage parents of learners who fall in the qualifying age group to take their children to be vaccinated at their earliest convenience.

Teachers provide the power of education to our youth, thereby giving them the possibility for a better future. As members we subscribe to the NAPTOSA charter of professionalism committing to a code of ethics in which we acknowledge the honour and responsibility entrusted to us as professionals. We commit to upholding the dignity of our chosen profession, engaging in the holistic education of each child in our care and the continuing development of our peers, our communities and ourselves.

Let this be the year of restoring the culture of school attendance, hand in hand with the culture of learning and teaching.

Members should note that the salary saga linked to PSCBC Resolution 1/2018 continues. We are still awaiting an outcome from the Constitutional Court regarding the 2018 salary agreement and the implementation of the last leg in 2020. We are currently in talks with other public service unions and in FEDUSA regarding the 2022 salary increment. We will continue to keep members informed of any new developments.

NKOSIPENDULE NTANTALA

PRESIDENT: NAPTOSA