

MEDIA STATEMENT

RELEASED ON 04 AUGUST 2026

EMBARGO: NONE

BLOCKING SEXUAL PREDATORS FROM EDUCATION

The SAOU supports the court order against the DBE that all educational staff members who have contact with learners should be vetted against the Child Protection Register.

Allegations of sexual misconduct against educators indicate serious concerns in the South African society.

In reference to a settlement agreement of the Gauteng High Court which has been made an order of court, where the Department of Basic Education and the Provincial Education Department, the vetting of all individuals who work with children should be vetted by 31 March 2027.

The SAOU would also like to point out that the lack of capacity of police stations and the Department of Justice, puts learners consistently at risk. In requiring vetting processes, other systemic challenges should also be prioritised. The inability of a system to investigate and prosecute offenders, leads to sexual misconduct cases dragging on for extended periods.

Vetting should be extended to educators who leave the public education system, but return to teaching in other provinces or in the private education system.

The best interest of the child is the building block for education. Educators are trained to implement schools as safe spaces where the focus is on teaching and learning.

Funding for effective preventions programmes is needed, as well as the availability of school emotional support structures and social workers. Collective responsibility from the side of schools and communities is a necessity.

The SAOU condemns the acts of any educator who is found guilty of sexual misconduct and therefor welcomes and supports the court ordered vetting of educators as well as the maintenance of the National Child Protection Register.