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SAOU verwelkom begrotingsverligting, maar eis duidelikheid oor onderwysbefondsing

Die Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie (SAOU) verwelkom die bykomende R20,5 miljard wat oor die mediumtermyn aan provinsiale begrotings beskikbaar gestel word om provinsies met stygende gesondheids- en onderwyskoste te help. Die organisasie wil egter duidelikheid hê oor hoeveel van dié befondsing vir onderwys beskikbaar sal wees, hoe dit aangewend gaan word en watter konkrete verbetering dit vir skole sal meebring.

“Die vraag is nie net hoeveel geld beskikbaar gestel word nie, maar of dit uiteindelik ’n verskil in skole se werksomstandighede en die gehalte van onderrig en leer sal maak. Die SAOU verwag dat die regering duidelikheid gee oor hoe die bykomende befondsing aangewend gaan word om skole se dringende behoeftes aan te spreek,” sê Paul Sauer, Hoof Uitvoerende Beampte van die SAOU.

Volgens die Unie moet begrotingsaankondigings aan die werklikheid in skole getoets word. Onderwysers moet oor die nodige hulpbronne beskik om hul werk te doen, en skole moet voldoende befondsing ontvang om hul kernfunksies te verrig. Die SAOU beklemtoon dat voldoende befondsing, gevulde onderwysposte en toegang tot onderrigmateriaal noodsaaklik is vir gehalteonderwys.

Die SAOU verwag verder dat die regering duidelikheid gee oor hoeveel van die bykomende befondsing vir onderwys beskikbaar sal wees en hoe provinsies dit gaan aanwend. Die behoud en vul van onderwysposte moet ’n topprioriteit wees. Waar poste ongevul bly en skole onder druk verkeer, moet begrotingsbesluite ’n merkbare verskil maak.

Brandstofverligting bied tydelike hulp

Die aangekondigde brandstofverligting bied welkome, maar tydelike verligting aan onderwysers en ander huishoudings wat onder toenemende lewenskostedruk gebuk gaan. Die petrolheffing word van 4 November tot 1 Desember 2026 met R1,50 per liter verlaag en die dieselheffing met R3 per liter. Van 2 Desember 2026 tot 5 Januarie 2027 word die verlaging R1 per liter vir petrol en R1,50 per liter vir diesel.

“Onderwysers is besonder kwesbaar vir stygende brandstofpryse. Anders as baie ander beroepsgroepe moet die meeste onderwysers daagliks by skole aanmeld en kan hulle nie bloot van die huis af werk nie. Pendelkoste plaas dus

verdere druk op huishoudings se begrotings. Die SAOU ondersteun FEDUSA, ons federasie, se oproep om die brandstofheffing te bevries en verwelkom die aangekondigde verligting, maar die verligting is tydelik. Die regering moet steeds aandag gee aan die voortdurende druk wat die lewenskoste op werkende huishoudings plaas," sê Sauer.

SAOU welcomes budget relief but calls for clarity on education funding

The South African Teachers' Union (SAOU) welcomes the additional R20.5 billion made available to provincial budgets over the medium term to help provinces meet rising health and education costs. However, the organisation wants clarity on how much of this funding will be available for education, how it will be used and what tangible improvements it will bring to schools.

"The question is not simply how much money is being made available, but whether it will ultimately make a difference to working conditions in schools and the quality of teaching and learning. The SAOU expects the government to clarify how the additional funding will be used to address the urgent needs of schools," says Paul Sauer, Chief Executive Officer of the SAOU.

According to the Union, budget announcements must be measured against the realities in schools. Teachers must have the resources they need to do their jobs, and schools must have sufficient funding to carry out their core functions. The SAOU emphasises that adequate funding, filled teaching posts and access to teaching materials are essential for quality education.

Further to this, the government must therefore disclose how much of the additional funding will be available for education and explain how provinces intend to use it. Retaining and filling teaching posts must be a top priority. Where posts remain vacant and schools are under pressure, budget decisions must make a tangible difference.

Fuel relief offers temporary assistance

The announced fuel relief offers welcome, but temporary, assistance to teachers and other households facing increasing cost-of-living pressures. The petrol levy will be reduced by R1.50 per litre from 4 November to 1

December 2026, while the diesel levy will be reduced by R3 per litre. From 2 December 2026 to 5 January 2027, the reduction will be R1 per litre for petrol and R1.50 per litre for diesel.

“Teachers are particularly vulnerable to rising fuel prices. Unlike many other occupational groups, most teachers must report to school every day and cannot simply work from home. Commuting costs therefore place further pressure on household budgets. The SAOU supports FEDUSA, our federation, in its call for a freeze on the fuel levy and welcomes the announced relief, but the relief is temporary. The government must still address the ongoing pressure that the cost of living places on working households,” says Sauer.