

● **Principal refuses to take in kids, staff after Thamsanqa High closed by department**

# Pupils, teachers locked out of new school

**Zizonke May**

mayz@tisoblackstar.co.za

A Port Elizabeth principal has refused to incorporate more than 100 pupils and three teachers from a school that is being closing down until the department of education delivers on its promises.

Thamsanqa High School is being absorbed by Sophakama High School in phases, with only 13 matrics admitted so far.

But Sophakama acting principal Nokuthembela Mavuso,

who declined to comment, has put a stop to the merger until the department adds two more teachers to her roster.

The teachers and pupils from Thamsanqa have been barred since Thursday from entering Sophakama.

Education department spokesperson Malibongwe Mtima said officials met with staff and governing body members from both schools on Friday.

“In the meeting, all relevant stakeholders were given the final decisions.

“Firstly, all pupils from Thamsanqa must be allowed back in class as of Monday.

“Two, the department will fast-track the appointment of a maths teacher.

“Lastly, there is a business studies teacher who is supposed to retire in June but has taken leave until June.

“We have given that teacher 24 hours to return to school.”

On Mavuso refusing to allow the teachers and pupils on the premises, Mtima said:

“Mavuso is not an authority at

the department, she is an employee of the department.

“She can’t tell the department what to do or what not to do.

“She must not undermine the department.”

On Friday, teachers, pupils and parents sat outside Sophakama.

All the parents agreed that if the department did not act, they would soon take matters into their own hands.

Thamsanqa school governing body member Vuyani Mz-

## ‘This can turn ugly and I’m sure the department does not want that

**Vuyani Mzizani**

THAMSANQA GOVERNING BODY MEMBER

izani said parents had been civil but their patience was running out.

“This can turn ugly and I’m sure the department does not want that,” Mzizani said.

Ntombizanele Vusani, a mother of twins in matric at Thamsanqa, said she was unhappy her children were missing out on their school work.

“It pains me to think that they are now forced to sit idle at home or roam the streets because the department is not taking action.

“The principal wants two teachers but there are three teachers from Thamsanqa – what more does she want?”

Since the start of the year, 113 pupils from the Kwazakhe-

le school have not picked up a book or had a teacher conduct a lesson, with none of them receiving a first-term report.

Attendance of pupils and the three remaining teachers has been sporadic and none of the pupils has written a test, done any homework or received stationery and textbooks.

The school remains in limbo as to its teacher allocation and school premises, which are due to be reclaimed by the department of public works.

The school was earmarked

for the department’s rationalisation and realignment programme – in which smaller schools are merged with another school.

Grade 11 pupil Ncumisa Booii, 17, said she felt defeated and was starting to lose hope.

“We haven’t had a class since the year started,” she said.

facebook

[www.facebook.com/HeraldLIVE](https://www.facebook.com/HeraldLIVE)

