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TO ALL MEDIA HOUSES
PRESS RELEASE

NO EMBARGO

Al Jama-ah slams the Western Cape Education Department's decision to appeal against a restorative justice ruling by the Labour Court in favour of Southfield principal, Wesley Neuman:

Veteran Labour Relations specialist, Hon Ganief Hendricks who is Al Jama-ah 's President and Deputy Minister of Social Development, and a leader of the GNU (Government of National Unity), has slammed the WCED's (Western Cape Education Department) decision to appeal against a restorative justice ruling by the Labour Court that principal of Heathfield High School should be reinstated.

Wesley Neuman was dismissed in 2020 following a decision to keep the school closed due to safety concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic. "The Labour Court's ruling was correct in stating that "the dismissal was not an appropriate sanction." There was no disrespect and breakdown in the employer-employee relationship as WCED has offered Neuman several positions elsewhere including a pathway to return to a principal position," said Hendricks.

He added that Neuman's defense should have included in its arguments, that the then Minister of Cogta (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs) Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, told Parliament that no one will be sanctioned if they disagree with the call that learners return to school. The decision by WCED department to dismiss Neuman went against the Disaster Regulations.

"The WCED can continue with its frivolous appeal but the revolutionary judgement should be implemented and Neuman should take up his former post as principal of Heathfield High School as from 2 February 2026," said Hendricks.

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