

**Teacher Accountability in South African Public Schools:  
A Call for Professionalism from Teachers****Cosmas Maphosa<sup>1</sup>, Edmore Mutekwe<sup>2</sup>, Severino Machingambi<sup>3</sup>, Newman Wadesango<sup>3</sup> and  
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**ABSTRACT** Many times teachers hide behind “The Department”, “The Standards”, “The Examinations”, and “The Resources” when taken to task about their poor instruction and lack of adequate care for learners and commitment to duty. A lot of public funds are used to finance education. Such huge funding has to be justified through calls for responsibility and accountability in schools, particularly by teachers. There is a general view that if public schools were managed in exactly the same way private companies were managed and the reward and punishment for teachers was on the basis of how much students learnt, teaching and learning would improve in schools. Teachers often see themselves as teaching learners without critically reflecting on the extent to which they are accountable to parents of the learners and to the learners they teach. Such a lack of a complete understanding of the view that teachers as professionals have high levels of accountability often see teachers exhibiting unprofessional conduct in wanton disrespect and despise of parents and learners. In this paper the researchers explore the concept teacher accountability. They further examine the different types of accountability teachers have and also outline some of the elements of unprofessional conduct teachers exhibit due to lack of accountability. The reasons why teachers should be fully accountable to parents and learners are outlined. In this paper the researchers also outline conditions that should be in place before teachers are made accountable and they recommend the licensing of teachers and the introduction of performance-related incentives as some of the measures that to ensure teacher accountability in public schools in South Africa.