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# Teachers 'are the problem'

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DURBAN — The reason some schools experienced high failure rates had less to do with a lack of resources than the lack of accountability among teachers, said University of Pretoria dean of education Prof Jonathan Jansen on Friday.

Jansen told a teacher development conference at the Durban International Conference Centre that the high failure rate among matriculants was politically embarrassing. Pupils were not solely to blame for it.

And while more resources and a change in school culture could improve pass rates, these were long-term solutions and failed to take into account that many schools with few resources continued to achieve academic successes.

He suggested that teachers' abilities be assessed every three to five years, and if found wanting they be required to do two years of training in their specific area of weakness. If they failed again, they should not be allowed to teach, Jansen said.

University personnel were tested for their competence, as were other professionals such as accountants.

"To continue to have a culture that resists close scrutiny of our work is counterproductive. The children are not the problem. There is a serious breakdown in the culture of teaching in this country," Jansen said.

He said most people did not have the option to "buy themselves out of the problem" by sending their children to formerly whites-only schools.