

## **STATEMENT ON DA's 2019 ELECTION MANIFESTO: EDUCATION**

The Democratic Alliance's (DA) vision for education set out in its 2019 election manifesto is sound and largely in line with those of other political parties.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) features strongly and is supported, although NAPTOSA is a proponent of all ECD functions falling within the jurisdiction of a single Department, whereas the DA seems to accept that the functions remain split between the DBE and Social Development.

The party's commitment to teacher development resonates with NAPTOSA's view in this regard - especially the vision of establishing specialist Teacher Training Colleges for primary school educators in every province.

Assessments being a major bugbear of educators, the DA's view, that apart from international benchmarking of Gr 3, 6 and 9 learners, other continuous testing will be limited to only what is necessary, will find favour with members. What will be regarded as "necessary", will ultimately determine if this is a positive proposal?

Focus on safer school environments for learners and teachers, as well as the provision of safe afterschool spaces are welcomed, as is the view that "dodgy middlemen" involved in infrastructure delivery and maintenance be eradicated.

Whilst we agree with many of the education views of the DA, such as making it a criminal offence to employ any educator on the register of sexual offences and using technology to improve teaching and learning in preparing learners for work in a modern economy, there are also areas we fundamentally differ on.

NAPTOSA has been a critic of collaboration schools in the Western Cape, mainly because of the influence and participation it will give to contributing external parties in the running of those schools. The DA clearly sees this as an option to improve the management and teaching of struggling schools.

We also do not support the view that principals ought to be declared essential services, because it will deprive those employees of a fundamental constitutional right.

Ultimately economic circumstances and the financial capacity of the state will determine how feasible the education manifestos of the various political parties are.

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