



**SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**RACISM, 'RACIAL INTEGRATION'  
AND DESEGREGATION  
IN SOUTH AFRICAN  
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**CONFERENCE ON  
RACIAL INTEGRATION IN SCHOOLS**

**COMBINED REPORT**

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**A Report on  
a Study by the  
South African Human Rights Commission**

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PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**A Report on a Study  
by the  
South African Human Rights Commission  
(SAHRC)**

**Salim Vally and Yolisa Dalamba**

**February 1999**

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## PREFACE

The education system in South Africa has undergone far-reaching changes since 1994. Beyond the structural changes initiated to conform to our Constitution, efforts have been made to introduce a value system totally at variance with the past but one that affirms internationally accepted standards. Central to this system of values are “human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms...” (Section 1 (a) of the Constitution, 1996). The Constitution reinforces this commitment to equality and human dignity by spelling out an aversion to discrimination on the basis of race and gender. This is further elaborated upon in the Bill of Rights.

In support of these commitments, South Africa ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The instruments of accession were deposited with the United Nations in New York on 10 December 1998, to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Department of Education has translated these ideals into policy and challenges which have been incorporated in the National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

And yet, at the same time as these laudable developments are underway, the situation in schools is far from complementary. In fact very little progress has been made to ensure an end to racial discrimination and prejudice in schools. Our Commission has had to deal with a large number of complaints: discrimination in disciplinary measures, racial violence, and cultural prejudice. Schools continue to be characterised by racial separation and discrimination. Efforts at racial integration have not achieved the desired results, in part because learners approach school with the prejudices imbued in their home environments and the schools have no mechanisms to challenge and stimulate the unlearning of ingrained prejudices, as well as transform the minds of learners. Educators exhibit little or no commitment to constructing a learning environment free from discrimination and prejudice. Too many prefer to deny the existence of racism or presume a superficial tolerance. Some prefer to have their schools as laboratories for cultural assimilation where black learners are by and large tolerated rather than affirmed as of right. Four years since the miracle of 1994, school playgrounds are battlefields between black and white schoolgoers. Formerly white schools have become theatres of struggle for transformation as black parents demand access for their children. In a real sense the real task of education and learning has ceased to take priority. In the long term, our country will pay the price.

It was with such a background that the Commission resolved to conduct a study on racism and racial integration in schools. There had been several flashpoints in different parts of the country that have drawn headlines: Potgietersrus, Vryburg, Senekal, etc. We became aware that there was resistance to integration of schools but also fears about integration. Schools were battling without direction and assistance by the education authorities. Generally, there is a policy vacuum in the area of racial awareness and sensitivity. This report is intended to bring these matters to public consciousness so that, aware of it, methods of dealing with it can be devised. Racism should not be a reality to be denied but something that should be viewed for what it is, a malady that negates learning. Through this study, the Commission believes that we are setting in place the mechanisms for the construction of a society that is at one with the ideals of the Constitution. It is our hope that this study will inform education policy and assist in the development of programmes to combat the scourge of racism and racial intolerance in schools.

The process of reception and consideration of the report will be staged principally through a national conference which will be hosted by the Commission in Randburg on 4-6 March 1999. We are delighted to report that the Department of Education has given strong support to our endeavour. Our hope is that the conference will debate the issues raised by the report and will make proposals for dealing with these matters in the school environment.

In commending this study, I wish to end by quoting the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance adopted by the General Congress of UNESCO on 16 November 1995:

Tolerance is the responsibility that upholds human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments.

Any project for building a society free of racial prejudice must begin with a proper understanding of tolerance. The UNESCO Declaration is the latest effort that challenges the international community to eschew prejudice which is the root of so many conflicts in the world. South Africa, take note!

*N Barney Pityana*  
*CHAIRPERSON*

*February 1999.*

# 1.0 Introduction

Despite the political changes that have taken place in South Africa since 1994, numerous socio-economic challenges remain. With schooling for example, although various policies have been unveiled and legislation enacted to hasten desegregation, the incidence of racial rancour in many school communities attests to the intractable and continuing racialisation of schooling. Over the past few years, there have been many well-publicised outbursts in places such as Vryburg, Groblersdal, Trompsburg, Richmond (Northern Cape), Potgietersrus, Christiana, and Delmas. Urban centres have not been immune either; witness for example the racial discontent at Linpark High in Pietermaritzburg, Voortrekker High in Pretoria and Vorentoe Skool in Johannesburg.

The long shadow of apartheid ideology, to borrow the title of an article on 'open' schools written before the 1994 elections (Carrim, Mkwanazi & Nkomo, 1993), continues to cast its Stygian gloom not any longer through racially explicit policies, but by proxy: high school fees, exclusionary language and admission policies, and other transparent manoeuvres such as 'crowding out' black learners by bussing-in white learners from outside the feeder area.

Confronted with sporadic eruptions of overt prejudice and faced with persistent reports of a pervasive and insidious racism in many schools, including formal complaints from eight provinces, the South African Human Rights Commission (henceforth SAHRC) embarked on a study of human rights, prejudice, racial conflict and racial integration in public schools. This investigation is in line with the SAHRC's Constitutional mandate to protect fundamental rights.<sup>1</sup> Section 184 of the Constitution (1996:100-101) also contains the following imprimatur:

- (1) The Human Rights Commission must –
  - (a) promote respect for human rights and a culture of human rights;
  - (b) promote the protection, development and attainment of human rights; and
  - (c) monitor and assess the observance of human rights in the Republic.
  
- (2) The Human Rights Commission has the powers, as regulated by national legislation, necessary to perform its functions, including the power –
  - (a) to investigate and to report on the observance of human rights;
  - (b) to take steps to secure appropriate redress where human rights have been violated;
  - (c) to carry out research; and
  - (d) to educate.

Ninety schools, ten from each province, were selected in order to:

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<sup>1</sup> The preamble of the Human Rights Commission Act declares that: "...the Human Rights Commission shall, *inter alia*, be competent and obliged to promote the observance of, respect for and the protection of fundamental rights; to develop an awareness of fundamental rights among all people of the Republic; to make recommendations to organs of state at all levels of government where it considers such action advisable for the adoption of progressive measures for the promotion of fundamental rights within the framework of the law and the Constitution; to undertake such studies for report on or relating to fundamental rights as it considers advisable in the performance of its functions; to request any organ of state to supply it with information on any legislative or executive measures adopted by it relating to fundamental rights; and to investigate any alleged violation of fundamental rights and to assist any person adversely affected thereby to secure redress..." (Para 2 of the Preamble to the Human Rights Commission Act, 1994)

- ascertain the level of integration in public high schools ;
- determine the various ways in which racial prejudice manifests itself in the schooling sector;
- identify the problems and causes that inhibit racial integration;
- determine what schools are doing to implement racial integration and how they respond to learner diversity; and
- develop guidelines and recommendations for promoting racial integration.

The study sought not only to examine overt racial manifestations and practices that prevent integration but also the more elusive, but nonetheless inhibiting, visceral and inferential forms of racism. While this study unsurprisingly shows that subtle racism is ubiquitous and has the ability to mutate and adapt in post-1994 South Africa; it has also revealed shockingly stark and crude practices of racism, all the more startling because of its prevalence.

Public schools in this study include previous English- and Afrikaans-medium white schools, parallel-medium and dual-medium schools, as well as former ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ schools. The schools were chosen to represent a variety of factors: urban and rural schools, co-educational and single sex schools, as well as hostel and ordinary schools. Data obtained from questionnaires directed at senior learners and school managements was supplemented by interviews with teachers, principals and learners. The schools’ admissions policies, mission statements, codes of conduct, yearbooks and fee structures were also gathered.

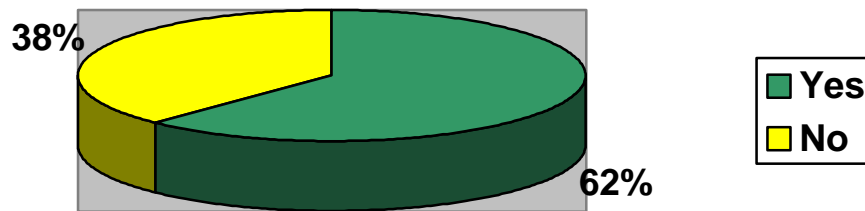
The compilers of this report make no claim to be objective and neutral observers of racism. Research on racism – or on other social relations for that matter – is never detached. We agree with Rizvi (in Troyna, 1993) that:

To study racism involves ‘seeing’ the world in a particular manner, against the understanding the researcher has of its salience. The researcher cannot simply stand apart from the social and political relations that constitute the research process, and is inevitably implicated in the dynamics of racial restructuring. In seeking knowledge about racism, the researcher enters into a relation with the object of knowledge. And as these relations change, then so might the way the researcher theorises racism.

### ***Racism and Education***

This study shows that of the 1729 learners, both black and white, from 60 schools who responded to the question, “Have there been racial incidents or examples of racism in your school?” 1075 (or 62%) answered in the affirmative (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Have there been 'racial incidents' at the school?\***



\* Most of the cases reported involved incidents between pupils, a significant minority between educators and pupils, and only a handful between educators. Please note the sub-section 'Limitations' under 'Methodology'. This section explains how some principals endeavoured to influence learners' responses and in this way cast the school in a more positive (for them) light. Also, about 15 schools had 5% or fewer black learners, resulting in fewer incidents. If it were not for these two factors the percentage of 'yes' responses would be considerably higher.

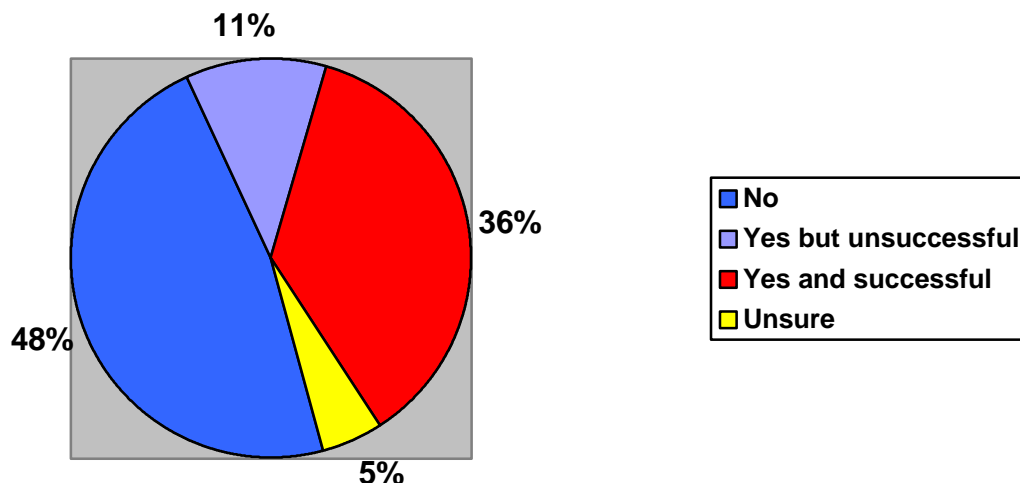
Racial incidents were typically described as derogatory and racial name-calling and various forms of racial harassment, often resulting in physical altercations. In one instance a racially-inspired murder was committed. It must be borne in mind that these are manifestations of overt or direct racism, expressions of a self-conscious and volitional practice. There are also numerous examples of institutional racism in schools. These often occur without any direct references to attitudinal factors or individual prejudices. Spears (1978), writing of the UK, defines institutional racism in the following way:

It is in its most profound instances covert, resulting from acts of indifference, omission and refusal to challenge the status quo. Thus, an individual need never have wilfully done anything that directly and clearly oppresses minorities; she/he need only have gone about business as usual without attempting to change procedures and structures in order to be an accomplice in racism, since business as usual has been systematised to maintain blacks and other minorities in an oppressed state.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The use of the word 'minority' in this quote parallels the situation in formerly white South African schools where blacks form a numerical minority.

Almost 60% of learners felt that their schools either did not have a policy/programme to eliminate racism or that it is unsuccessful (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?**



From the outset, it was understood that a study of present-day racial integration in schools has first to acknowledge racism as a structural feature of society and to understand it in its historical context. The writers of this report support the view that racial inequality in schools is not merely an aberration nor an excrescence, but is structurally linked to wider social relations and the economic, political and social fabric of society. Racism is not merely about cultural ignorance or misunderstanding. Aldous Huxley (1935), in a reply to Nazi propaganda, had this to say about racism: “It is a cloak for selfish economic aims which in their unclad nakedness would look ugly enough.” The apartheid education system engineered ‘race’, class, gender and ethnic categories to serve and reinforce the political economy of the racial capitalist system. Present-day racism in education in South Africa has to be understood with reference to this history and to contemporary political and economic disadvantage and patterns of inequality in society. Racism in education does not constitute an autonomous form of oppression, but rather is inextricably linked to power relations and reproduced in conjunction with class, gender and ethnic inequalities. The wider context in which racism is generated is therefore important; even if sound anti-racist educational policies for the classroom, corridor and playground are developed, this will not be enough to eradicate racism from society. What happens outside the school gates will inevitably impact on the gains made in schools. Despite the requirement of long-term structural change to effectively eradicate the scourge of racism, we do not wish to imply that inequalities in schools cannot be mitigated in the short term. On the contrary, as far as racial integration is concerned this study will show that a number of strategies can be employed – in fact must be implemented if fundamental rights are not to be breached – even within the constraints of present social relations. Despite our caveats then, we share Gillborn’s (1995) conviction that particularly in South Africa “ the education system does have the potential to challenge racism in ways that may have a lasting impact on school students (of all ages and

ethnic backgrounds) and the communities of which they are part.”

This, the first national study on racism and integration in schools, contributes to a steadily burgeoning corpus of recent local and regional studies on the same issue. (See, for example, Christie, 1990; Carrim, 1992; Naidoo, 1996a; Akhurst, 1997; Zinn, 1997; Carrim, 1998; Duncan, 1998; Soudien, 1998; Zafar, 1998; Carrim & Soudien, 1999.) This SAHRC study confirms the view of these authors that “racism in the school system will not disappear simply because schools have become desegregated” (Duncan, 1998), and the disappointment that:

- Almost five years since 1994 ... there is no nationally instituted anti-racist programme or package which has been put into place.
- There are no structured, co-ordinated programmes to help teachers cope with multi-racial/cultural/lingual/ability classrooms.
- There are no nationally or provincially co-ordinated programmes for students to develop anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-discrimination awareness or consciousness in the formal workings of the school. It is almost as if these are expected to occur almost entirely of their own accord (Carrim, 1998).

Even a perfunctory glance at this report will show that you do not have to be a modern-day Nostradamus to predict that “failure to develop a coherent school policy on desegregation will leave the status quo intact and current racial and ethnic tensions will fester and eventually erupt in direct confrontation and bitter disputes” (Zafar, 1998).

Racism in South African schools exists and is flourishing. It is not a transient phenomenon that will gradually vanish over the course of time. It cannot be wished away. Racism in schools has to be acknowledged and confronted.

We hope this study is of benefit to those with the political, legal, financial, and personnel means to facilitate the processes at local, provincial and national levels that are needed to develop relevant policy and implementation strategies. This can only be successfully accomplished with the meaningful participation of all constituent members of school communities – parents, educators, and learners.

Following this brief Introduction, the report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 2: Terminology
- Section 3: The Apartheid Legacy
- Section 4: The New Constitution and Post-1994 Policies
- Section 5: Examining Assimilation, Multiculturalism and Anti-racism
- Section 6: Methodological Issues
- Section 7: Interpreting the Data
- Section 8: Recommendations

## 2.0 Terminology

In studies of this nature, it has rightly become habitual to explain the usage of key categories, terms and group descriptors. This is necessary since language is more than a reflection of the communications structures in society. According to the linguist Benjamin Whorf, “language not only expresses ideas and concepts, but it actually shapes thought...” Language is intimately linked to the creation and perception of reality itself. Thus, eliminating biased terminology is one way to change and correct the way we view ourselves and others. It is not merely about terminological issues nor simply deference to political correctness. In South Africa, this custom of explaining the use of terms is imperative since apartheid marshalled a taxonomy of racial classifications to aid in the pursuit of its policies. The fragmented apartheid education system, perhaps more than any other sector, reproduced the stereotyped categories of ‘African’, ‘coloured’, ‘Indian’ and ‘white’. It has in no small measure contributed to people seeing themselves primarily in terms of racial and ethnic subjects – a process encouraged by the differential allocation of resources roughly corresponding to these racial classifications. How one was categorised by the population registrar often affected one’s material conditions. Also, and despite the efforts of the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s, these terms took on a salience and an acceptance amongst the majority of people so classified. It is therefore understandable why many social researchers find it difficult for pragmatic reasons to avoid usage of apartheid categories, albeit with greater or lesser degrees of reservation and qualification.

Apartheid South Africa, like Nazi Germany, deified the notion of ‘race’. Unfortunately, the concept of ‘race’ in South Africa has come to be used too glibly and uncritically. However, most people agree that there is no biological basis for assuming that different ‘races’ exist, some of whom are deemed genetically superior to others in terms of intelligence and personality characteristics. This view has been thoroughly discredited and debunked, and nowadays is adhered to only by rabid racists.

Many, though, do see ‘race’ as a social construct and point to the need to come to terms with the power of ‘race’ as a discursive category. Others (Carter & Green in Gillborn, 1995; McLaren & Torres, 1999) argue that labels such as ‘race’ and ‘ethnic group’ must be abandoned as analytical categories within the social sciences. For McLaren and Torres “it is racism as an ideology that produces the notion of ‘race’, not the existence of ‘races’ that produces racism.” Carter and Green warn that such categories “prevent people from recognising what they have in common, representing the contingent, signified differences between them as transhistorical and fixed.” Treyna and Carrington (1981) alert us to the danger that researchers who use these categories might encourage ‘race’ thinking among participants through the construction of questionnaire items or interview questions. These arguments are very different from that which motivated many principals who were reluctant to co-operate with the SAHRC in providing statistics of learners, staff and school governing bodies, disaggregated along racial categories. Their stated ‘colour-blind’ approach to racial integration, which purports to ignore racial difference, is often an attempt to maintain the dominant status quo of the school. These principals seem to suggest that racism is eradicated simply by denying identification. Gillborn (1995), while appreciating the danger of analysts actually replicating the very fictions they want to expose, ponders whether abandoning these terms or championing a new vocabulary is the only or best way of addressing the complex ways in which people routinely adopt ‘race’ thinking. For him an urgent task is to “understand the ways ‘race’ figures in educational policy theory and school practices”.

This study initially employed questionnaires based on the categories ‘black’, ‘coloured’, ‘Indian’ and ‘white’. Commenting on similar exercises in Britain, Troyna (1986) dubbed the practice one of ‘discursive racialisation’ – a form of benign racialisation aimed at refuting and eliminating racism via the



identification and use of racial categories. It represents a sincere attempt to minimise discrimination and inequalities through the use of racial categories for purposes of identification, monitoring, clarification and analysis. As one of the commissioners explained to a dissenting school principal,

Racial classification for pernicious and unjustifiable motives cannot be sanctioned but in the case of this study it is necessitated by the large number of complaints received by the Commission and the need to remedy and redress the consequences of our apartheid past.

Besides the use of racial categories *per se*, the kind of categories to use is also open for debate. Some researchers steadfastly use the term 'black' to include all those who were previously oppressed and not classified white. Zafar (1998), in her study on racial and cultural diversity in newly-integrated public schools, argues instead that "the term 'black' inaccurately homogenises the Indian, coloured and African race groups and conceals the ethnic differences that are crucial to this study."

Yet this is problematic since, for example, neither 'coloureds', 'Africans', 'Indians' – nor whites for that matter – are culturally or economically homogenous. It could be argued that the category 'coloureds' could be further broken down into Malays and Christians, and 'Indians' into Muslim, Hindu and Christian, and 'Africans' into Zulu, Tswana and so forth. In the latter case schools were designated for separate 'African' groups and received differential resource allocations. Furthermore, as Naidoo (1996a) points out, 'African' learners in private or Model C schools may identify themselves as 'Africans', but their economic interests may be closer to those of their 'white' and 'Indian' peers than to poorer 'Africans'. In arguing for a critical anti-racism, Carrim and Soudien (1999) see the need for a 'de-essentialised conception of identity', one which can capture how people live their lives, the nature of the experiences they have, and the ways in which their identities are formed. Critically for schooling, they argue that,

Being African in an Indian or coloured school is decidedly different from being African in a white school. Being African, middle-class and proficient in English, is very different from being African working class from a rural area and not having any English at all. Being Indian, female and lesbian would have rather different implications in a white school environment as opposed to being Indian, male and heterosexual in the same school.

While we accept this argument, we still feel that the term 'black' used in particular contexts need not be construed in essentialist terms. Both in South Africa from the 70s and in post-war Britain, it was employed not merely as a reaction to the widely used but undermining phrase 'non-white' but also to generate solidarity among diverse black communities in order to promote collective action.

For Brah (1992), the term 'black'

can have different political and cultural meanings in different contexts. Its specific meanings in post-war Britain cannot be taken to have denied cultural differences between African, Caribbean and South Asian people when cultural difference was not the organising principle within this discourse or political practice.

The concrete political struggles in which the new meaning was grounded acknowledged cultural differences but sought to accomplish political unity against racism. Brah also urges us to be vigilant as the discourse of ethnic difference could be deployed by certain politicians as a means to create their own power base rather than to empower those whose 'needs' are supposed to be better met by jettisoning the

term 'black'.

This lengthy and somewhat convoluted explanation of terms indicates our discomfort with the previous apartheid classifications and the need to continue problematising and interrogating the terms and their associated dangers and shortcomings. While we retain the categories used by the SAHRC, it should not be misconstrued as lending legitimacy or credibility to the many popular stereotypes and caricatures that accompany these group descriptors. We do, however, signal our suspicion and ambivalence of the use of various terms by tediously placing inverted commas around them. In this report, 'black' will be used to denote 'African', 'coloured' and 'Indian' except when this obscures greater conceptual and analytical clarity. Also, and however repulsive, racist terms such as 'Kaffir', 'Boesman', 'Hotnot' and 'Koelie' as they appear in respondents' answers will be retained. The frequency and ease with which these terms have been used conveys the prevalence and intensity of racist thinking in South African schools.

## 3.0 The Apartheid Legacy

### 3.1 The Legacy of Segregation

Through the legislative provisions contained in the Bantu Education Act of 1953, the Extension of University Education Act of 1959, the Coloured Persons Act of 1963, the Indian Education Act of 1965, and the National Education Act of 1967, education for black people was linked explicitly to the goals of political, economic and social domination of all black people. Predating apartheid, from the first school for slaves in 1658 and through the colonial period, education was designed to fit black people into subordinate positions in the racially-structured division of labour and aimed to reproduce this structure.

As elsewhere, formal schooling in South Africa has its roots in mission and colonial forms of education. In the 1950s Verwoerd introduced the notorious ‘Bantu Education’ system in terms of which schooling for ‘Africans’ was removed from missionary control and brought under the control of a state committed to white supremacy and the pursuit of these policies through education.

Expansion of primary, secondary and higher education for ‘Africans’ in the 1960s and 1970s occurred in the context of the development of bantustan policy, where ‘African’ political aspirations were to be redirected to artificial and economically unviable ‘homelands’. It also occurred on the basis of unequal spending on education for children administered under ‘white’, ‘Indian’, ‘coloured’, ‘African’ and various bantustan education departments. But expansion of poor quality education in the context of political and economic oppression resulted in the growth of massive resistance amongst youth. Resistance in education to the goals, control and quality of education was a feature throughout the 70s and 80s.

Efforts to reform the system failed. First the de Lange Commission of Inquiry, which reported in 1981, was subjected to attack. In 1986 the then Minister of National Education, F.W. de Klerk, announced a ten year plan to finance upgrading black education. In 1989 he admitted the plan had failed: a sluggish economy was unable to realise the funds necessary to keep pace with rising numbers. Thus, enrolments at primary and especially secondary levels were increasing sharply at the same time as resources were being squeezed.

The 1980s saw the growth in South Africa, as elsewhere, of private provision in education as state schools were either unable or unwilling to admit black children. The majority of the black children who failed their matriculation examinations could not be reabsorbed into the system. Age restrictions on entry to secondary schools had been imposed in the early 1980s. As a result private schools began opening their doors to increasing numbers of black children, but prohibitive fees meant that they were restricted to children whose parents could afford the fees. In the 1980s, ‘alternative schools’ – whose fees and standards varied as widely as their ability to sustain themselves – also mushroomed to absorb increasing numbers of children. Pressure to open white schools increased in major centres like Cape Town and Johannesburg in 1989. In 1990, white schools were permitted to admit black students under limited conditions which included a provision that the school remain 51 percent white and that the ‘ethos and character’ of the school was maintained.

In black schools, apartheid education meant minimal levels of resources, inadequately trained and few staff, poor quality learning materials, shortages of classrooms, and the absence of laboratories and libraries. Besides these tangible deprivations, schools also inculcated unquestioning conformity, rote learning, autocratic teaching and authoritarian management styles, syllabi replete with racism and sexism, and antiquated forms of assessment and evaluation (Vally, 1998).

Schools were fragmented into 19 different education departments and funding varied on the basis of 'race'. In 1986 per capita subsidies for 'whites' were R2 365 compared with R572 for 'Africans' in Department of Education and Training schools. Per capita subsidies in the homelands were even lower, with KwaZulu-Natal the lowest at R262. Between 1985 and 1992, there was an increase in real spending per pupil and a move towards closing racial gaps in funding. Nevertheless, in 1992 four times as much public money per capita was spent on white pupils as on Africans. In 1993, average spending on pupils was R4 700 for whites, compared with R1 440 for Africans (Chisholm, Vally & Motala, 1998).

### 3.2 Reforms in Education

Segregation was strictly enforced since 1948. However, after the 1976 Uprising, the South African Catholic Bishops Conference decided to defy apartheid educational legislation and to enrol black students in Catholic schools. In the 1970s as well, private schools traditionally catering to an elite group of South Africans also enrolled black students. These were usually the children of African diplomats, black South African government officials, or exceptionally wealthy black parents (Carrim *et al.*, 1993). Limited desegregation of white state schools only began in 1990, following educational reforms. Coloured and Indian schools in South Africa, though, began to admit African students in 1985, although this practice was deemed illegal by the state up to 1990. In October 1990, the Minister of (white) Education in the House of Assembly, Piet Clase, announced the possibility that white state schools might legally admit black pupils. To do this, white school parent communities needed to vote on the issue. Schools were required to achieve an 80% poll, out of which they needed to obtain a 72% majority. Schools were given the option to vote for one of three models – A, B, or C. These became known as the Clase models. (For a summary of these models see Carrim, Mkwanazi & Nkomo, 1993).

Carrim, Mkwanazi and Nkomo describe some of the conditions all the models had to abide by:

- All white schools had to maintain a 51% white majority in their school population.
- The white cultural ethos of the school had to remain intact.
- The management councils of the schools did not necessarily promote the employment of black teachers on the staff of the schools.
- The financing of black pupils at these schools was the responsibility of the black parent.

In April 1992, Minister Clase unilaterally announced that all white schools would be converted to Model C status. In other words, they would become state-aided schools run by a management committee and the principal. A set number of teachers were paid by the state while the rest of the expenses were borne by the parents. The management committee had the power to appoint teachers, decide on admissions policy, deal with curriculum developments and impose fees. The move to Model C was actually an attempt to cut state costs by shifting the financing and control of white schools to parents. The vast majority of black parents were excluded from enrolling their children largely because of the high fees. Many black parents were also turned away after failing selection measures, admissions tests and other so-called meritocratic criteria which actually masked explicit racism.

Although unrestricted formal desegregation by decree only came into being by 1993, there were 60 000 black students at Model C schools and about 40 000 'African' and 'coloured' students at 'Indian' schools. By the end of 1995 the number of 'African' students at 'coloured', 'white' and 'Indian' schools did not exceed 15% (or approximately 200 000) of the total student enrolment at these schools. (See Race Relations Survey, 1994/1995; Naidoo, 1996a.)

## 4.0 The New Constitution and Post-1994 Policies

### 4.1 International Human Rights Law, Equality, Racism, Education and the South African Constitution

The Bill of Rights and the South African Constitution are both compatible with international human rights laws, conventions, covenants and declarations. The clauses pertinent to our study are on occasion more extensively dealt with in international documents and will be discussed.

#### 4.1.1 Bill of Rights: Equality Clause

Equality features prominently in the Constitution. It is listed as the first substantial right in the Bill of Rights. Section 9 subsections (1) and (2) of Chapter 2 in the Constitution provides a mechanism whereby specific denials of equality arising from discrimination may be challenged. It states:

- 9 (1) Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law.
- (2) Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.

In Chapter Two of the Constitution – the Bill of Rights – a number of fundamental social and human rights are set out. Section 29 of the Bill of Rights is particularly relevant to our study since it deals with issues such as the right to education, redressing past discriminatory practices, and language in education. Importantly, section 7(2) of the Constitution, in line with international human rights law, imposes certain duties on the state – the duty to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights.

Section 29 states:

- (1) Everyone has the right –
  - (a) to basic education, including adult basic education; and
  - (b) to further education, which the state must take reasonable measures to make progressively available and accessible.

Internationally, the right to education is recognised as a precondition for the enjoyment of many civil and political rights, such as freedom of information, expression, assembly and association. The right to vote and to be elected, or the right of equal access to public service, depends on at least a minimum level of education. Similarly, many economic, social and cultural rights can be exercised in a meaningful way only after a minimum level of education has been achieved.

Article 13(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976) states that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and should strengthen the sense of dignity, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Article 13(2) of this Covenant and

Article 28(1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) are similar to Section 29(1) of our Constitution except for one important difference. Both the Covenant and the Convention oblige the state to provide free education at the primary level and its progressive introduction at the secondary and higher educational levels:

Primary education shall be compulsory and *available free* to all (emphasis added) (Both Article 13(2)(a) of the Covenant and Article 28(a) of the Convention).

Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, *and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education* (emphasis added) (Article 13(2)(b) of the Covenant).

The Convention, besides calling for the introduction of free education, also insists on the state offering financial assistance in case of need. Finally, the Covenant also calls for higher education to be made equally accessible to all, “on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and *in particular by the progressive introduction of free education*” (emphasis added).

These rights may be limited because of considerations of practicality – such as the absence of financial resources. Such practical considerations must be weighed against the questions of justice, reasonableness, human dignity and equality. This would mean, for instance, that in the context of resource constraints, redistributive measures could be invoked to ensure that the effects of the ‘practical’ constraints do not increase inequalities. It means that the state is obliged to find solutions which specifically do not impose the greatest hardship on those most disadvantaged in our society. The introduction of school fees in public schools and its implication for ‘racial integration’ will be dealt with later in the report.

Of particular relevance to this study is the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice adopted by the United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1978. This declaration recognised that laws proscribing racial discrimination are not sufficient and calls for systematic investigation of instances of racial discrimination and for “broadly based education and research programmes designed to combat racial prejudice and racial discrimination and by programmes of positive political, social, educational and cultural measures calculated to promote genuine mutual respect among groups” (Article 6(3)). The Declaration also states that competent authorities and the entire teaching profession

... have a responsibility to see that the educational resources of all countries are used to combat racism, more especially by ensuring that curricula and textbooks include scientific and ethical considerations concerning human unity and diversity and that no invidious distinctions are made with regard to any people; by training teachers to achieve these ends; by making the resources of the educational system available to all groups of the population without racial restriction or discrimination; and by taking appropriate steps to remedy the handicaps from which certain racial or ethnic groups suffer with regard to their level of education and standard of living and in particular to prevent such handicaps from being passed on to children (Article 5(2)).

## 4.2 Post-1994 Education Policies

Besides the Constitution, the South African Schools Act (SASA) adopted in 1996 has had a pivotal impact on the desegregation of schools.

### 4.2.1 The South African Schools Act

The preamble to the South African Schools Act (1996) states:

WHEREAS the achievement of democracy in South Africa has consigned to history the past system of education which was based on racial inequality and segregation; and WHEREAS this country requires a new national system for schools which will redress the past injustices in educational provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination. ... WHEREAS it is necessary to set uniform norms and standards for the education of learners at schools and throughout the Republic of South Africa (Preamble to South African Schools Act, 1996).

The South African Schools Act repeals all apartheid legislation pertaining to schools, abolishes corporal punishment and admissions tests, codifies compulsory education for children between the ages of 7 and 15 and provides the framework for a unified schooling system. Key features of the Act are:

- Two categories of schools: public schools which comprise 98% of all schools (formerly state and state-aided schools) and independent (formerly private) schools.
- The establishment of governing bodies at all schools. These are composed of parents (the majority group by one), educators, pupils (in secondary schools), non-educator staff, a non-parent member of the community (optional), and owner of the school property or his/her representatives if the property is privately owned (optional).
- The governing body must determine the admissions, language and religious policy of the school within national norms and provincial frameworks. The governing body must also adopt a code of conduct for learners after consulting with learners, parents and educators.
- The levying of compulsory fees determined at an annual meeting of parents of the school and implemented by the governing body.

A range of national policies and norms and standards relevant to the concerns of this report have been recently adopted. These include policies on admissions, religion, and school funding. These policies will be discussed separately in the report.



## 4.2.2 Language Policy

Section 29(2) of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution states:

Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in the public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account –

- (a) equity;
- (b) practicability; and
- (c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory law and practice (Constitution, 1996:14).

This clause of the Constitution was tested early on as a result of a conflict at the Potgietersrus Primary School, where conservative parents sought to exclude black pupils. When their initial attempt to bar black children on grounds of cultural incompatibility was ruled illegal by the courts, some of the more hardline parents resorted to using language rather than ‘race’ as an exclusionary mechanism (Vally & Mokgalane, 1996).

The parents pointed to clause 32(c) of the Interim Constitution which maintained that “Every person shall have the right to establish where practicable, educational institutions based on a common culture, language or religion, provided there shall be no discrimination on the grounds of race.” The Constitutional court easily showed that the school discriminated on the basis of the race, culture, language and religion of the applicant students and denied the black students their fundamental right to education. While in this case the abuse of the clause was crude and transparently discriminatory, the question to be posed is whether or not it could allow sophisticated governing bodies an opening to mask discriminatory practices. Similarly, clause 2 in section 29, which allows for single medium institutions, must also be scrutinised. This clause will be examined more closely under the item ‘language’ later in the report.

South Africa enjoys significant language diversity and a high degree of multilingualism. In the education context specifically and in South African society generally, language issues have been and continue to be intimately linked to questions of power and the pursuit of human rights. South Africa’s rich linguistic heritage could be used as a classroom resource, for cognitive development and as a way to enhance the human potential of learners and of South Africans in general. Yet as this study shows, it is used – more often than not – for divisive and segregationist purposes. Learners who do not conform to or cope with the dominant language are seen to have a language ‘deficiency’ and diversity is seen as a language ‘problem’. A decade ago Alexander (1989) observed:

Racial prejudice and racism are without any doubt reinforced and maintained by language barriers (as well as by group areas, separate schools, separate amenities, etc.). If we want to fight against racial prejudice and racism then we have, amongst other things, to break down the language barriers. How to do this so as to bring about maximum unity among our people is the meaning of a democratic solution to the language question in South Africa.

Constitutional provisions which lay the framework for promoting multilingualism include:

- the 'equal use, status and enjoyment' of all eleven of the official languages;
- the creation of appropriate conditions for the 'development and promotion of their equal use and enjoyment';
- the prevention of 'exploitation, domination or division' exercised through language policies;
- the 'non-diminution of rights relating to language and the status of languages' which existed at the commencement of the Constitution;
- the prevention of unfair discrimination on grounds of language; and
- the right of learners to 'instruction in the language of his or her choice where this is reasonably practicable.

Bodies such as the Language Plan Task Group (Langtag) established by the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology and which reported in August 1996, as well as constitutionally created advisory bodies such as the Pan South African Language Board and Provincial Language Committees have also played important roles in formulating language policy in education.

Besides the Constitution, language policy in schools is derived from the national South African Schools Act and from the National Department of Education's 1997 policy document *Norms and Standards regarding Language Policy in Education*. Provincial schools acts and regulations, as well as governing bodies' policies on language, are bound by these national frameworks and legislation. A clause in the Mpumalanga, Northern Province, Gauteng Schools Education Acts, titled 'Language and Discrimination' is appropriate for this study.

- Language competence testing shall not be used as an admission requirement to a public school.
- Learners at public schools shall be encouraged to make use of the range of official languages.
- No learner at a public school or a private school which receives a subsidy ... shall be punished for expressing himself or herself in a language which is not a language of learning of the school concerned.

Most of the other provinces have brief and minimal language clauses in their acts. (See David Brown, 1997).

The *Norms and Standards* document:

- stipulates that the minimum number of learners deemed to be practical for any official language to be requested as a language of learning is 40 for grades 1-6 and 35 for grades 7-12;
- obliges the governing body to outline how the school will promote multilingualism. This is spelt out as a variety of measures such as offering more than one language of learning and teaching, offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects or the use of special immersion or language maintenance programmes;
- stipulates the minimum number of languages to be learnt as two, and prescribes at which level (e.g. first, second or third level) (Brown, 1998);
- defines educational promotion criteria attached to language: one official language as a first language to grade 9; two languages for grade 10-12, one of which is an official language. Learners can choose one language from an approved list of languages as their second language option throughout their education (Brown, 1998).

### 4.2.3 Curriculum 2005

The need for transforming the old school curriculum and developing a new curriculum which reverses the constricting authoritarian, racist and sexist content and processes of the past, was understood long before the 1994 changes.

Launched in March 1997, the new curriculum framework – called Curriculum 2005 – reconceptualises the nature of learning and teaching through the adoption of an outcomes-based system. In contrast to the traditional ‘content-based’ methods of learning and teaching, Curriculum 2005 attempts to place the emphasis on what the learners should know and should be able to do at the end of a course of learning and teaching. Traditional content-based subjects have been reorganised into eight learning areas: Language, Literacy and Communications; Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences; Human and Social Sciences; Natural Sciences; Technology; Arts and Culture; Economic and Management Sciences; and Life Orientation. These learning areas are aimed at allowing students to acquire an understanding of and ability to function in larger political, social and economic contexts.

The focus of Curriculum 2005 is on clearly defined outcomes of the learning process. There are two kinds of outcomes, the first of which is critical cross-field outcomes. These are general in nature and are generated across different learning areas rather than in any specific area. They include among others: the identification and solution of problems, teamwork, the organisation and analysis of information, effective communication, social and environmental responsibility, understanding of the interrelated nature of the world. The second kind of outcome is specific to each learning area and forms the basis for evaluation of progress and effectiveness of learning programmes. Specific outcomes are evaluated through the use of a continuous assessment model that is meant to be ongoing and formative or developmental in nature.

The importance of Curriculum 2005 for this study relates to whether the list of outcomes encompasses the development of an understanding of structural inequalities along the lines of ‘race’, gender, class, ability and sexual orientation and the need to eradicate these inequalities. Questions we need to ponder include whether the new curriculum promotes human rights and social justice values essential for transforming the education system in particular and society in general. Do the Learning Areas have clear and explicit anti-racist and anti-sexist commitments?

### 4.2.4 Desegregation

The ‘African’ township and ex-homeland schools (catering for the overwhelming majority of learners in South Africa) remain almost wholly racially exclusive and underresourced. The latter is partially a result of the legacy of apartheid but also because of the inability of these communities to significantly supplement state subsidies. In contrast, the previous ‘white’ (House of Assembly), ‘Indian’ (House of Delegates) and ‘coloured’ (House of Representatives) schools continue to undergo a process of desegregation, in some cases to a degree that blurs their previous racial profiles. As Table 1 shows, the 1997 cohort of Grade One ‘African’ pupils in Gauteng, for example, make up 30%, 34% and 54% of the ‘white’, ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ schools respectively. The average percentage for all grades is 27% of ‘black’ learners in former ‘white’ schools, 31% of ‘African’ learners in former ‘coloured’ schools, and 45% of ‘African’ learners in former ‘Indian’ schools (Gauteng Department of Education, 1996/1997:39).

**Table 1 Percentage of Gauteng learners by ‘race’ groups**

Ex-DET ‘African’		Ex-TED ‘white’				Ex-HOR ‘coloured’				Ex-HOD ‘Indian’					
A	W	C	I	A	W	C	I	A	W	C	I	A	W	C	I

Gr 1	100	0	0	0	16	75	2	6	9	0	91	0	61	0	22	17
All Gr	100	0	0	0	22	72	3	2	31	0	67	0	45	0	5	50

Source: Gauteng Department of Education, 1996/1997, Annual School Survey, p.39

Notes: 1997 figures

A = 'African' learners

W = 'white' learners

C = 'coloured' learners

I = 'Indian' learners

**Table 2 Total percentage of Gauteng learners by 'race' groups in public and independent schools**

	All Public Schools				Independent (Subsidised)				Independent (Non-subsidised)				Total Gauteng			
	A	W	C	I	A	W	C	I	A	W	C	I	A	W	C	I
Gr 1	77	16	5	2	55	37	2	6	80	18	2	0	76	17	5	2
All Gr	71	21	5	2	57	35	2	5	86	12	1	0	70	22	5	3

Source: Gauteng Department of Education, 1996/1997, Annual School Survey, p.39

Notes: 1997 figures

A = 'African' learners

W = 'white' learners

C = 'coloured' learners

I = 'Indian' learners

Figures from other provinces,<sup>3</sup> and data from this study indicate there is a steadily increasing number of black learners in former 'white' schools as well as 'African' learners in 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools. In the Northern Cape, the number of 'African' learners in former white schools is 10%, and the number of 'coloured' learners in former white schools is 25% (see Table 3).

**Table 3 Percentage of Northern Cape learners per 'race' group in former education departments**

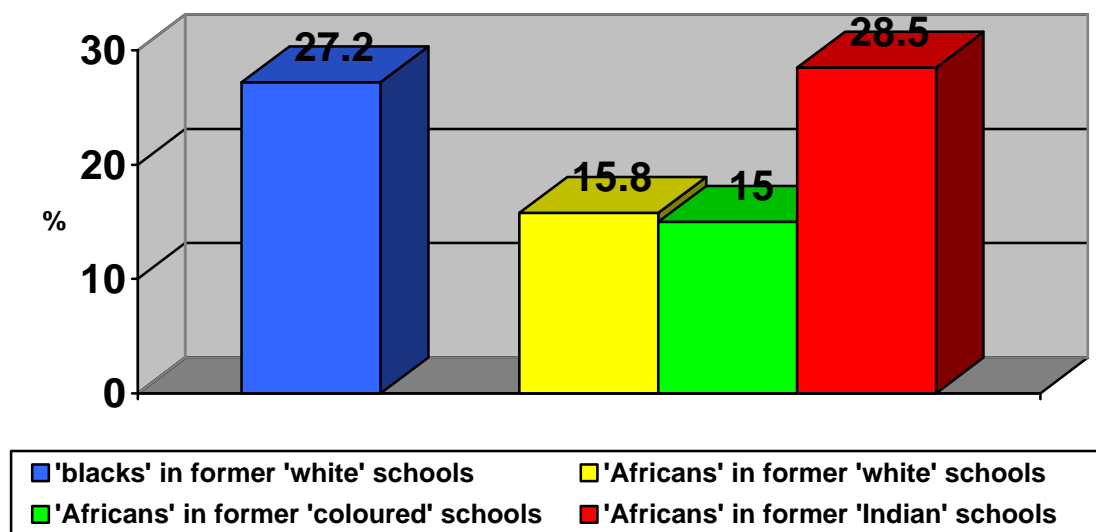
	Ex-DET	Ex-HOA	Ex-HOR
Black	96	10	5
White	0.6	55	0.04
Coloured	3	25	95

Data gathered during the course of this study shows that 27.2% of learners in former 'white' schools are 'black'. 'Africans' represent 15.8% of learners in former 'white' schools, 15.0% of learners in former 'coloured' schools, and 28.5% of learners in former 'Indian' schools (see Figure 3). It must be remembered, though, that the former 'white', 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools number approximately

<sup>3</sup> Besides the data from Gauteng and the Northern Cape, which is presented in this section, the response from other provinces was disappointing. Free State responded with data which merely gave a consolidated racial breakdown without specifying the schools learners are in. The Western Cape responded by saying, "... the vast majority of our schools do not, and in some cases will not, provide the WCED with the racial breakdown of their learners. The WCED has also not seen fit to demand this information of its schools. The WCED does not classify schools as ex-HOR, ex-DET, etc. Our database no longer reflects the origin of a particular school. All schools are now classified as WCED schools." The Northern Province, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, North West and Eastern Cape, despite strenuous attempts by the SAHRC office and ample time, failed to respond.

5000 schools out of a total of 27 864 schools in South Africa.

**Figure 3. Proportion of 'black'/'African' learners in former 'white', 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools**



Although post-1994 educational legislation sets out the policy framework for full integration of public schooling, social, economic and demographic realities practically reduce this vision into a chimera. For example, school fees in most of the former 'white' schools are prohibitive for most 'black' parents, and this is compounded by transport (the effects of 'group areas' and residential segregation remain) and other inhibiting issues. Therefore, while desegregation does not address the material needs of the vast majority of learners nor dramatically change the racialised patterns of schooling, it is nevertheless beginning to influence the long-term implications of educational stratification in South Africa by providing a growing, albeit limited, proportion of urban black learners with access to better-resourced facilities. Yet even the schools that are beginning to desegregate retain a racialised character.

Based on a very illuminating study on school choice by working-class parents, Hoadley (1998) writes:

Schooling is ... delineated largely in terms of class. The dramatic changes in composition of some schools since the opening up of the school system can broadly be described as follows. Middle class black and white students have moved to independent schools and privileged state schools, freeing up spaces in 'boundary schools' (former Model C schools on the borders of historical group areas), which have been taken up largely by middle and lower middle class black, coloured and Indian students.

While this is true in broad terms, this study provides evidence that a number of learners from 'African' working-class backgrounds are in former 'white' schools, but more often in 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools, particularly when the fees are relatively low (R100-R300 per annum). Also, despite their own material constraints and limitations imposed on them in terms of location and cost of schooling (as Hoadley emphasises), many black working-class parents sacrifice much to enrol their children in well-resourced schools which they consider can provide 'good' education.

This study confirms the view of all the analysts who have examined integration over the past few years that while desegregation allows for the presence of learners from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds on the same school premises, they primarily accommodate the values, needs and aspirations of learners from the 'racial' group for which these schools were originally established by the previous apartheid government. Learners from other 'racial' groups are simply expected to assimilate into the prevailing ethos of these schools (Duncan, 1998). The racial values and practices of many communities still remain and are reflected in the various schools.

Quite often these values and practices remain unambiguously chauvinistic and deeply authoritarian. This study has found schools which are contravening not only the letter and spirit of the constitutional provisions and basic human rights, but also numerous education policies, laws and regulations. For example, a school in the Free State in its admissions policy sets out its "character, values, culture, medium of instruction and structure of authority" to which learners are behoven to follow. Those policies are set out under the following sub-headings:

#### **Politics**

**All members of the school community are expected not to associate with, or to participate in, any action of any party-political or extra-parliamentary organisation, mass movement or pressure group. Members of the school community will not be allowed to involve the school or any part of it in political action. Pupils who are involved in stay-away [sic] or mass action without obtaining permission from the Governing Body prior to the action will be regarded as being forthwith dismissed from school.**

#### **Disabilities**

**Physical disabilities which will upset the normal functioning of the school cannot be allowed. No specific provision can be made for this.**

#### **General**

**The tuition medium is Afrikaans or English. If the Governing Body has any doubt, a pupil's proficiency in Afrikaans and/or English may be tested.**

**The Governing Body recognises the Bible as the infallible Word of God and the principles based on it will therefore act as guide for all activities concerning the school.**

**The Governing Body and principal are responsible for the practical implementation of the policy of admission. They can formulate explicit [sic] entry requirements and criteria for their own use to the extent they deem effective.**

#### **Language**

**The language of education of the school has been determined. Provision is made for examination *and general usage only in these languages* [author's italics].**

#### **Changing of Policy for Admission**

**Changing of policy for admission takes place with a 75% majority vote of the parents/guardians entitled to vote at a fully constitutional parent meeting or a 75% joint decision of the Governing Body and teaching staff.**

**(School 201)**<sup>4</sup>

The authors could not resist this lengthy extract from the Admissions Policy of a public school receiving funds from the public purse. It is not the only school with such outrageous policies. In the extract above we have counted at least eight violations of the different state policies reviewed in this section. Astonishingly, the provincial education authorities (which by now, we are led to believe, have received all schools constitutions, mission statements, codes of conduct and ancillary policies) allow these practices to continue.

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<sup>4</sup> School identities have been coded. See discussion of this decision in the Methodology section.

## 5.0 Examining Assimilation, Multiculturalism and Anti-racism

This section examines the ways in which schools have elected or omitted to adopt certain strategies with the ‘opening’ of racially exclusive schools. The strategies will be probed in the light of the different discourses in the debate about desegregation.

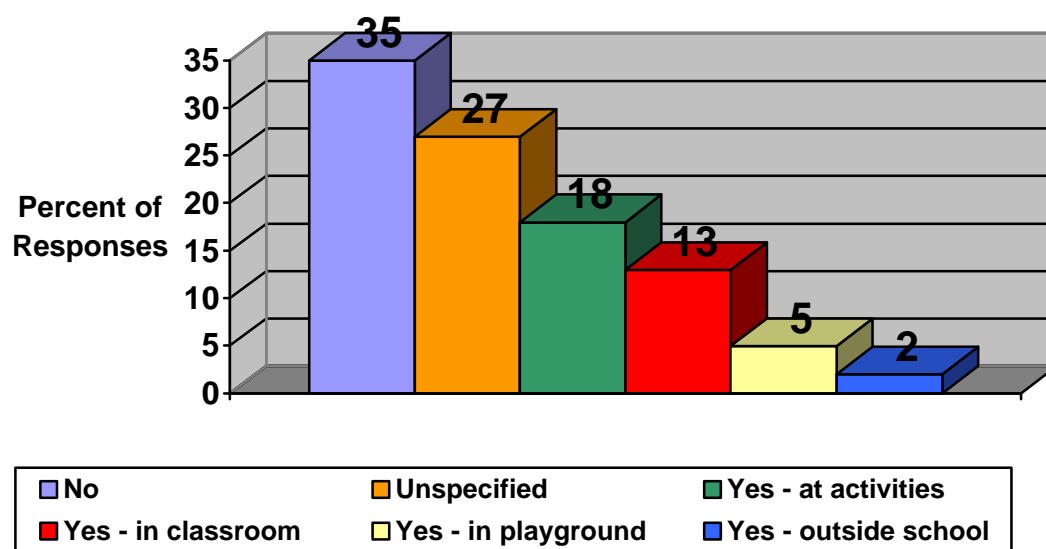
### 5.1 Integration and Desegregation

Frequently, integration and desegregation are seen as synonymous processes. This study, following others (Rist, 1979; Smith *et al.*, 1973), shows the importance of drawing a distinction between the two processes. Many research studies describe desegregation as a mechanical process which involves simply establishing the physical proximity of members of different groups in the same school, without interrogating the quality of the contact. The superficiality of relationships established by different groups in the schools studied is apparent by the following learner’s comment:

**No, we don’t really mix. Sometimes you are asked something but further than that – forget it. It’s almost as if you are there but not there. (*Daar is amper as of jy daar is maar ook nie.*) (learner, school 609)**

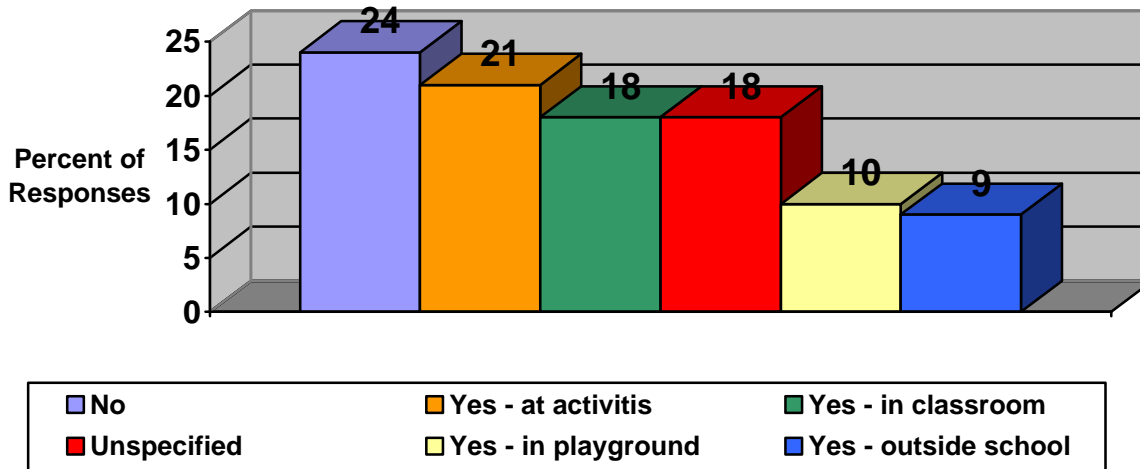
As the latter comment eloquently shows, desegregation for many learners means that the norms which the school upholds require ‘black’ learners in ‘white’ schools to become ‘invisible’. There are overwhelming number of learners who either answered negatively to the question, “Is there racial integration at school?”, or related to other ‘racial’ groups only during the formal activities of school, that is, in classes. (See Figures 4 to 6, and Tables 4.1 to 4.10 in Appendix 3.)

**Figure 4. Is there racial integration at the school? (former 'white' schools)**



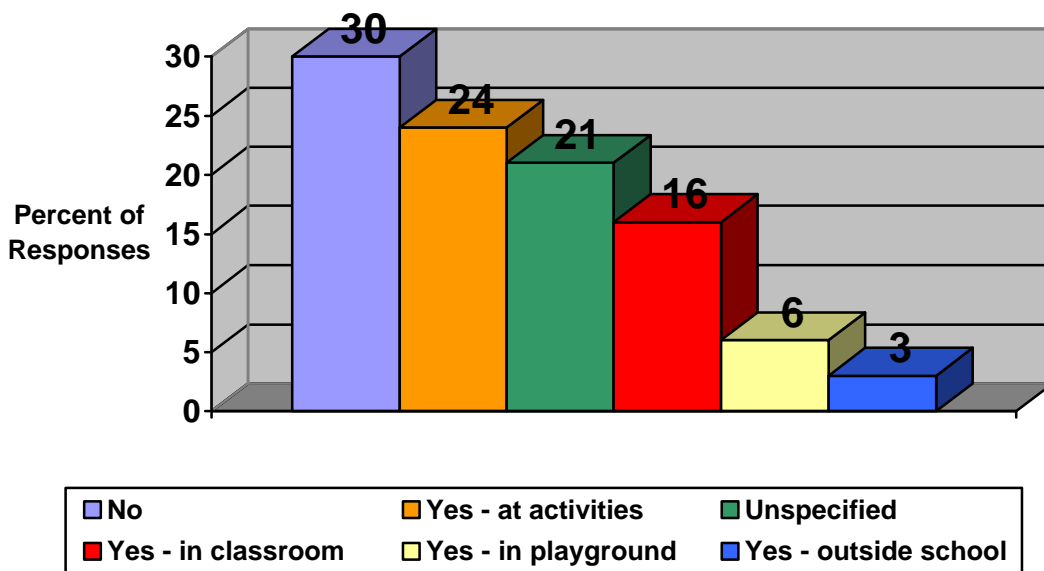


**Figure 5. Is there racial integration at the school?  
(former 'coloured' schools)\***



\* Three former House of Representatives (HOR) or former 'coloured' schools from the Western Cape were part of the sample.

**Figure 6. Is there racial integration at the school?  
(former 'Indian' schools)\*\***



\*\* Ten former House of Delegates (HOD) or former 'Indian' schools – 2 each from Gauteng and Western Cape, 1 school each from Mpumalanga, Northern Province and the North West, and 3 schools from KwaZulu-Natal – took part in the study.

Many learners mentioned a 'racially linked' clique of friends, a host of stereotyped views of each other,

and a lack of a sense of ease in each others' company. One learner opined:

**We mix only in the classes. But outside it's a zebra crossing – only black and white. (school 407)**

Another learner from the same school regretted that:

**In primary school we were all friends. Now that we come to high school, some whites say, no they can't hang around with non-whites, because they are being called 'kaffir-boeties' and 'koelie-boeties'. I have white, African and coloured friends, but for many of us our friendships are not deep.**

If we understand integration to mean fundamental changes not only in the personal attitudes of learners and educators but also in the institutional arrangements, policies and ethos of the school then this is absent from almost all of the schools studied.

## **5.2 Assimilation – 'assuming the ostrich position'**

The predominant trend in school desegregation is the assimilationist approach or as one white student emphasised:

**I feel that if pupils from other races want to come to our school then they must adjust to the culture and norms of the school...**

Pupils of the dominant racial grouping saw 'minority group' pupils as the ones who needed to change, and adapt to the school. Moreover, they did not see the school as having to change in order to adapt to its new school population. A number of principals and teachers interviewed for this project also shared the assimilationist perspective. While 'tolerance' is espoused, little effort is made to accommodate the differences of new learners, nor the issues around discrimination or prejudice. One researcher remarked of a principal after visits to a number of schools in the North West Province:

He seemed to be a well-intentioned man. Like the principals we've met thus far, however, his concept of integration is that the culture of the school remains unchanged and learners of colour assimilate.

One researcher, in a report on his visits to Northern Cape schools during the course of research for this study noted that:

The school managements of former Model C schools articulate their views on integration by emphasising the "naturalness" of the process and they adhere to notions of "filling in, assimilation into, conforming to, and internalising" the ethos and traditions of the schools.

Of one of the schools, the researcher observes:

As in many cases, the principal is 'colour-blind' and prefers to talk about learners that have the potential to be assimilated into the school without placing 'standards' at risk.

The teacher that was interviewed indicated that he is aware that black learners feel lonely

and alienated when they enter the school and that 'coloured' learners have a culture that is so close to that of the white learners. He holds views that can be described as patronising in referring to how pleasantly surprised white parents are when they interact with coloured learners. He mentioned a number of extra-curricular instances where coloured learners "win" over the "feelings" of white pupils to show how close coloured and white are in terms of language, culture and religion.

Contradicting the principal and despite the self-deprecating efforts of black learners described above, a number of white learners at this school exposed the futility of assimilation by expressing sentiments such as :

**We are not accustomed to the New South Africa. I think schools should only enrol same colour groups. Because there will always exist strife (*twis*) between different groups especially in rural areas.**

Although some principals were not explicit about issues such as maintaining standards and the superiority of traditional norms, this seems to be an underlying assumption behind the assimilationist perspective. Writing of British schools, Gillborn (1990) maintains that at least two such assumptions are that ethnic minority learners represent a threat to educational standards because a high concentration of these learners in a school will lower the performance of white learners, and that the host (white) society is culturally and racially superior.

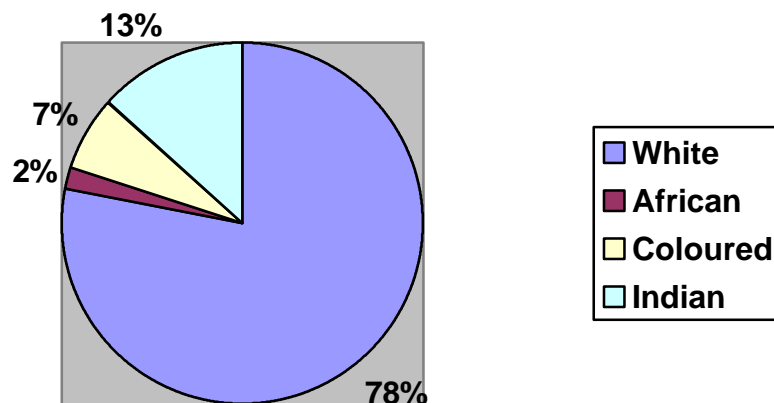
Various devices and subterfuges are used to limit the number of black enrolments. A constant refrain from principals is that integration must be 'natural', 'slow' and 'not forced'. For instance, a school in the Upington region has 9 black learners (3 'African' and 6 'coloured') in a learner population of 938 although the school is situated in an integrated residential area. The principal concedes that the school does not consciously recruit learners from the black communities and that the few black learners at the school "come from affluent families and they 'fit' perfectly into the existing school ethos and tradition. The school has a strong Christian character and children from other cultural groups conform to this, and language is not a barrier". According to the researcher, the principal has expressed the desire to introduce an 'African' language at the school but is hampered by the lack of financial support from the education department. The researcher, though, is not convinced. "What I found strange is that the school appoints teachers for subjects such as catering from its own coffers but it will not do the same to introduce an African language."

A white teacher interviewed at the same school contradicted the principal and was adamant that the school is consciously reinforcing the perception in the community that it is a 'white' school. This teacher warned that covert racial tension at the school will eventually translate into violence as more black learners attempt to gain admittance. He expressed the need for anti-racist educational programmes and a more representative staff (all the educators are white). The teacher expressed disappointment at "the total lack of support from the department and their inability to comprehend the complex nature of integration ... they just hope it will happen." The teacher revealed that conservative parents from Namibia send their children to the school, thus creating an 'island' which hinders the integration process. The researcher points out that since the school sustains its conservative elements, it is attracting learners who are socialised on the basis of prejudice.

In many of the schools that work from the premise of assimilation, only the learner composition has changed. In most cases the staff and School Governing Body (SGB) profiles remain unchanged. The reasons for this will be explored later in the study.

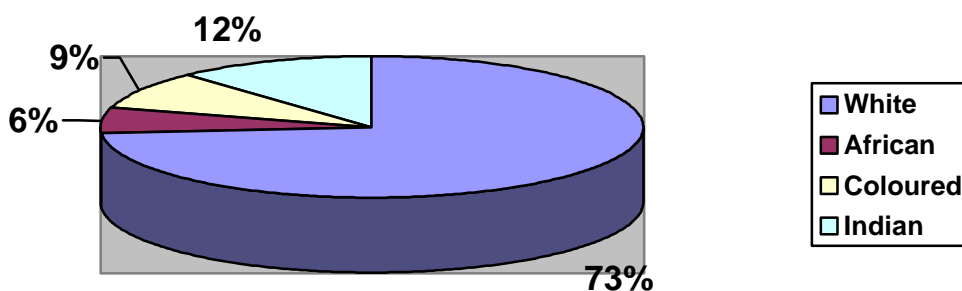
In this study, close to 98% of educator staff in former white schools remain white. (See Figure 7, and Tables 5.1-5.10 in Appendix 3.)

**Figure 7. Educator Staff Profile by Colour**



In some schools an anomalous and absurd situation exists where, although the majority of the learners in the school are black, SGB members are overwhelmingly white. (See Figure 8, and Tables 6.1 to 6.9 in Appendix 3.)

**Figure 8. Profile of School Governing Body Members by Colour**



The argument that as black learners increase in formerly white schools, the number of black SGB members and staff will increase correspondingly, is not borne out by the following statistics. These are just a few of many examples that could be given:

- School 209 has 1329 black learners and 54 white learners, yet 45 of the 50 educators are white; 3 School Governing Body members are black (2 of which are Representative Council of Learners members), and the remaining 13 are white.
- While 54% of learners at school 505 are black, 29 of the 30 teachers are white, as are 11 of the 12 SGB members.
- School 509, almost half the learner body is black, yet all the 29 educators and the 19 SGB members are white.
- At School 603, 40% of the learners are black yet all the staff and SGB members are white. A teacher who was interviewed formally appealed to the SGB to recommend the appointment of a black staff member, but this was not heeded.
- At School 409, 42% of the learners are black; 49 of the 55 staff are white, and 12 of the 13 SGB members are white. Yet, the principal of this school insists the school is faring extremely well with integration.

Many of the traditionally white Afrikaans schools promote symbols which thoroughly alienate black learners. Instances include the display of the old South African flag in the principal's office (school 601), dominant sports codes such as rugby in areas where black people do not play this sport, bas-reliefs of the Great Trek and intimidating portraits of earnest elderly white men adorning school halls. Some of the schools' yearbooks are also instructive for their subliminal representations. In the 75th Anniversary yearbook of a school in the North West Province (6 'coloured' learners in a learner population of 1063), the appellations Mnr. or Mev. are used before the names of both educator and non-educator white staff, but are omitted for the black staff. (See picture.) This is not unusual; another school (school 501) merely states the first names of black workers.

### 5.2.1 Colour-blindness

Allied to the perspective of assimilation are claims of 'colour-blindness' and statements by principals that "no racism" exists in their schools. A number of schools refused to co-operate with the HRC and withheld information. Some of these responses include:

It is school's 403 stated policy to recognise "the potential and dignity of every human being" and we have managed the process of racial integration rather successfully, and with a great deal of pride. We do not, therefore, keep pupils records which use race as a criterion; to do so would be contrary to the ethos we have developed and an insult to our community.

'Success' for this principal is having a school where a third of the learner population is black yet only 2 of the 13 SGB members are black and 52 of the 57 staff members are white. It is also a school where 50 of the 68 prefects and representative council of learners are white. The school has also refused admissions to 115 'African', 15 'coloured' and 93 'Indian' learners as opposed to 46 'whites' for not being in the school feeder area. These statistics, which while comparing favourably with other similar schools, are not quite sufficient to engender pride or to consider racial integration as "successful".

Many other principals presented a front of indignation when asked to fill in the questionnaires. In

response to the question, “Does the school have a policy or programme around racism or racial integration?”, a deputy principal responded:

We try to see learners as learners without any racial connotation and never work along any racial lines except to complete forms like this one. (school 501)

Yet a learner at this school plaintively responded to the question, “Have there been any examples of racism in your school?” as follows:

**Yes, there have been fights between the different cultures. It makes me feel sad and unhappy because I want to go to a school where everybody gets along and can accept each other. (school 501)**

Other learners in the school confirmed the above response, and some black learners pointed specifically to problems such as transport to school activities.

A principal at school 909 believed providing racial statistics was “Verwoerdian in nature” yet according to a researcher this principal “is of the opinion that integration has to be a gradual process. He felt that you have to look after white communities first.”

Interestingly, the responses of many school principals are suffused with references to pride and many see themselves immodestly as magnanimous initiators of change. An example of such ostentation and patronising claims include :

**... our coloured total rose from 1 to 35. We are proud of this.**

This is in a school of 585 white learners!

While the colour-blind perspective might be justified in certain contexts, and one cannot be dismissive of a genuine repugnance by some principals to resort to racial labelling, it is more likely that most principals who were reluctant to co-operate were defensive and did not want their schools to be shown in a bad light. In one instance a principal asked his union, the Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) to intervene after fearing disciplinary action by the education department. More often than not, the colour-blind perspective objectively served to hide institutionalised racism or discriminatory attitudes in desegregated schools.

### **5.3 Segregation – “Go Back To Apartheid”**

Segregated whites-only schools are not yet an anachronism in South African education. At least fifteen of the schools in this sample either had no black learners or merely a token few. Typically these schools have the following characteristics which inhibit integration:

- Afrikaans is the only language of learning and instruction;
- Normally situated in a conservative rural white community;
- The school fees are beyond the reach of local black communities;
- Involved in bussing-in of white learners from peripheral areas to boost the number of white learners and in this way ‘crowding out’ other learners;
- Have hostels which are ‘fully occupied’ by white boarders;
- Has a school ethos including sporting codes, religious activities, extramural practices and initiation

rites which are alien to black learners;

- Has educators and learners who in the classroom and outside are blatantly discriminatory and prejudiced; and
- Local and provincial education department functionaries take a ‘hands-off’ attitude.

A classic example is the school 206 in the Free State. Black learners are absent in the senior phase of this school although the black township is within walking distance. The principal expounded his philosophy of “realistic conservatism” and candidly said that “the white community is satisfied with the present developments and the school has not yet contemplated a parallel or dual medium of instruction”.

In a number of ‘parallel medium’ schools segregationist tendencies are present. One school has gone to the extent of holding separate parents’ meetings ostensibly to facilitate progress and allow for ‘better communication’. A learner at this school questions the practice:

**The absence of racial integration starts from the parents meeting. Why are the meetings of black and white parents separated? We have to combine and communicate the same thing.**

Reflecting the backwardness of the community they come from, a learner insisted:

**There is too much racial mixing. I do not like this. Go back to apartheid. (school 301)**

Almost all the white learners questioned in this school expressed similar sentiments:

**I feel that the non-whites can have everything that we enjoy, but they must have their share and we must have ours. Our cultures differ and conflict will occur if we mix. It’s better if we are kept apart. (school 301)**

School 301 is not an oddity. We noted seven schools where the majority of white learners either reminisced nostalgically for the apartheid days, called for separation on crudely racist grounds, or attempted what was for them a ‘rational’ case for separation on the basis of cultural incompatibility between ‘race’ groups. A selection of these views follows:

**There were incidents of racism when there was talk that other races would be with us in the classroom. I feel that the races should go to different schools and should not mix. (school 105)**

A pupil from the school 803, when asked how he/she felt about racism, answered with a threat:

**I feel good about it and there will be many more incidents of racism because the KAFFERS [sic] must know they don’t belong [hoort] in this school!**

**I feel it [racism in the school] is right because we do not go and sit in black schools. There are schools for non-whites and schools for whites; what do they want in our schools? (school 804)**

Of course there are dissenting voices amongst learners in these schools. A white learner, for example, while accepting the 'us' and 'them' discourse, nevertheless writes:

**It's much better if the racial groups stand together and help each other. (school 804)**

and

**I'm definitely not a racist! We get good people whether they are white or black and if everyone recognises this then the world will be a better place. (school 105)**

Some learners expressed their distaste for gratuitous racist acts but felt the best way to prevent such incidents is by keeping 'racial groups' separate:

**Someone spat chalk in the face of a black girl a year ago. I think this is taking things too far. I don't have anything against black people as long as we don't come close to each other [*ons mekaar op 'n afstand hou*] (school 603)**

**There have been racial incidents in our school. I don't agree with this. The only solution is that each race should stay with their own, in other words don't allow integration. (school 603)**

**Yes, there have been racial incidents – we are not accustomed to the New South Africa. I think schools should only allow certain groups, for example only whites in white schools, because there will always be strife [*twis*] between different groups especially in the rural areas. (school 606)**

Given these threats, bigotry and suspicion, it is not surprising that black learners gravitate toward each other in class and on the playground. Some black learners relate how separation and discrimination manifests itself through different actors and in different aspects of their schooling.

By teachers:

**There is a teacher that only talks to one row of [white] children and we must just listen. In the beginning I complained [*gesqueal*] but later I just resigned myself to it.**

By learners:

**The white learners sit on one side and if you ask them something they are in such a haste to get away from you that you might as well not exist.**

Institutionally:

**At the hostel we have a white block and a block for us others.**

Sport:

**In rugby the white boys do not want to lift our brown locks [*ons bruin slotte oplik*]. (school 601)**



This latter formerly white school in the De Aar region of the Northern Cape is in the throes of a process driven by the provincial education department, of amalgamating with black schools in the area. Despite court actions against the process, the Northern Cape education department views the move as necessary to: use school facilities and human resources in an effective way; to hasten the drive towards integration and provide equal education opportunities and provisioning for all learners; and to take account of the dwindling population numbers in this area. The process of amalgamation at school 601, as in other schools, has resulted in serious tension and uncertainty. In schools that have already amalgamated, most white pupils have left. Compounding the issue is that teachers are also uncertain about holding onto their jobs due to the rationalisation processes.

According to one learner:

**After the amalgamation or integration the majority of whites left the school. They allowed discrimination to take over. We are in a democratic land; why don't they want to live together with us? (school 608)**

A researcher observes that the amalgamation form of integration is “unlike the ‘spontaneous’ migration of black middle- and upper-class learners to former whites-only schools. Instead of integrating, most white parents took their children out of these schools and sent them to neighbouring towns where they are put up in hostels.” Schools in neighbouring towns like Orania absorb these learners in order to saturate the school and their hostels with white learners. The impending amalgamation of school 601 has contributed to a build-up of racial animosity in the broader community. Already last year incidents of physical altercations and stonings occurred. The researcher, through his visits and interviews in the school, is convinced that:

... white educators and white learners are very anxious about the pending amalgamation process and that all white learners will probably leave the school. They have a conscious sense of racial and cultural differences and fear a drop in ‘standards’ if integration is forced upon them. Students walk and sit together along racial lines and though the principal and educators point out their efforts to deal with racial integration, the old flag is still in the office of the principal and the corridors; the staff room and classrooms do not reflect the diversity of the South African reality. I left the school with a depressing feeling that things will get worse as the amalgamation process is implemented.

Further aggravating and clouding the situation is the strained relationship between ‘coloured’ and ‘African’ learners in schools that have already been amalgamated. In school 607 and school 605, “Black learners feel they are discriminated against and said that coloured learners act as if they have had first option to the school. Coloured learners feel that blacks are invading a school which they have shared with white pupils and are generally unhappy with the absence of white learners.” Most educators in this region are clearly neither interested nor capable of tackling racial issues in a structured and conscious manner. The educators themselves require anti-bias education, having expressed through the interviews their stereotypical view of learners and their opposition to desegregation. Despite the fragile situation, it is particularly astounding that the Northern Cape education department has not prioritised an anti-racist education programme for the schools in this area. In fact, a programmatic intervention prior to the amalgamation could possibly have eased the process and mitigated the present conflictual atmosphere.

#### 5.4 Multiculturalism – Of Samoosas, Saris and ... Zulu Dancing<sup>5</sup>

Some schools in the sample, having realised the limitations of the assimilation approach, and fueled by the 'rainbow nation' concept, have begun to espouse a multicultural perspective. The vogue in these schools is to (often clumsily) recognise and celebrate 'cultural' diversity. This conception of multiculturalism aims to teach 'tolerance' and harmony and sees racism largely as a result of ignorance. An essay by the Head of Department of school 409 neatly sums up this view:

We are fortunate to have a rich diversity of cultures in our school. We respect and recognise the different cultures and ethnic groups and promote tolerance and understanding amongst them. In the beginning we had problems, mainly due to preconceived perceptions and judgements amongst different cultures, a general insecurity in the community, bad communication and lack of experience of how to deal with problems.

On the Cultural Committee we have representatives of all cultures. We set a specific day aside for Cultural Day. On that day the different cultural groups display traditional clothing and articles. Each culture gets a turn to tell the whole school something about their culture. They also perform plays to show the other learners how wedding ceremonies take place. Cultures are also represented on stage in categories such as dancing, singing, drama and talks on certain cultural activities... We believe this promotes understanding and tolerance and brings nations together.

A learner from this school says in response to the question, "Are the rights of all individuals respected in the same way?" –

**No, many pupils are different, they come from different cultures. So one will find that some cultures, religions, etc., are constantly looked down upon, solely due to ignorance.**

At a matric farewell meeting the principal of school 703 boasted:

**I wish South Africa could visit us and see how things should be done.... We are a veritable United Nations. You have taught us about your cultures ... we thank you that you have lead [sic] us unscathed into the New South Africa.**

The confusing way in which the smorgasbord of terms such as 'culture', 'ethnic group', 'nation' and 'diversity' are conceptualised is central to the problems associated with this approach to integration. It is clear that the previous 'racial groups' or 'races' are now conflated with the more acceptable concept of discreet 'cultural groups'. Culture is seen as homogenous, static and with unchanging attributes. There is no room for individuals to create identities interwoven with aspects from different sources. More troubling is the fact that cultural differences are seen as natural, an attitude in keeping with the logic of the official apartheid discourse and used to justify racial segregation (Govender, 1996).

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from a sardonic characterisation of multicultural education in the UK as one which superficially emphasises 'saris, samoosas and steelbands' (Rizvi, in Troyna, 1993).

A learner writes:

**The blacks and whites do live in peace with each other, but they don't normally mix. I think that is because of cultural differences. (School 407)**

Instead of challenging stereotypes and caricatures, this approach could even deepen them, and in the mistaken belief of being 'tolerant' could accept unacceptable behaviour. For example, a learner from school 409 writes, "A lot of black boys tend to be rude to white girls in particular, but that seems to be cultural." This statement could also indicate an implicit acceptance of the incompatibility and 'naturalness' of cultures.

Culture is seen superficially as having to do with food, dress codes, weddings and customs. Naidoo (1996b), quoting Carrim, shows how this superficiality caricatures the various backgrounds. Examples are asking an 'African' learner to do a Zulu dance in a previously non-African school, or asking an 'Indian' learner to bring samoosas for a parents' day at a previously white school. This form of multicultural education does not acknowledge that there could be differences within perceived 'racial' or 'cultural' groups, and that the identity and culture of individuals and groups are temporal and changing. According to Kalantjis *et al.*, (1990), "the multicultural approach may delineate ethnic groups iconographically and stereotypically, so contradicting reality. This can increase, rather than reduce racism and social division."

Carrim and Soudien (1999) argue that, "Greek, English, Italian or Afrikaners are still projected as if they are culturally homogenous. Indians, who are constituted of Muslims, Tamils, Hindus and Christians, are still portrayed as if they are culturally all the same. It is only when coloureds, Indians and Africans come into contact with whites that cultural differences are highlighted. Or when African and coloureds come into Indian settings that cultural differences apparently become significant. Or when Africans go into coloured spaces that it is important. This version of multiculturalism resonates frighteningly with the Verwoerdian manipulations of cultural diversity, and racism within them is equally stark. Carrim also points out that people perceived to be culturally different are fixed and stereotyped in those differences. The gender, class, ability, sexual orientation and other characteristics are ignored."

It must be understood, though, that there are disparate views and variants of multiculturalism.<sup>6</sup>

Some multicultural practices are positive and affirming in that they afford some communities individual respect and acknowledgment. Often these practices are contradictory. Note the following statement from school 409:

**One of our learners, Amanda Msindwana, won a national speech contest. She told the country in Afrikaans how proud she is of her heritage and being a Xhosa speaker from Transkei.**

Multiculturalism is also seen as depoliticising culture, and ignores the power and structural dimensions of racism. Most of the learners' responses from these schools saw integration and racial problems solely in interpersonal terms without seeing racism as a systemic problem rooted in both interpersonal and institutional levels. Multiculturalism is based on the premise that racism is a result of prejudice and ignorance which can be eradicated by merely promoting personal contacts, cultural exchange, understanding and provision of information. (For contrasting views on the sources of racial problems and

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<sup>6</sup> A new discourse/practice called critical multiculturalism has recently emerged in the UK. It aims not merely to represent and celebrate cultural diversity, but also attempts to address the power dimensions of racism (May, 1999).

conflicts see Appendix 1.) Rattansi (1992) questions the practices of multiculturalist education when it revolves around teaching about ‘other cultures’.

Little evidence, sceptics argue, has been adduced to support the claim that such teaching has a significant impact in reducing prejudice. The ‘culture contact’ hypothesis as investigated by psychologists has produced poor results (Troyna, 1987a). What evidence there is often exists only in the anecdotal form of teacher accounts or in multicultural handbooks (Burgess, 1986; Nixon, 1985).

Further, while some of the schools officially espouse a multicultural policy, many racist assumptions and practices – if learners are to be believed – continue unabatedly. A number of learners at one such school, school 703, had this to say:

**Recently we had a swimming gala at our school and before it took place, we were told not to cheer and sing because we sounded like a bunch of people from Soweto. This comment was meant for the black students. Which white student sounds like they come from Soweto?**

**Blacks are always blamed for acting like hooligans and being very loud. It is said that they have no telephone manners and there are certain comments which have been passed that really upset most of us.**

**If one has already come to a final warning and is disciplined again, then it depends on the colour of your skin whether they expel you or not.**

**A teacher commented that black scholars look like baboons.**

When questioned whether there is a programme to eliminate racism, a learner responded in bold and large uppercase letters, “NO. NOT AT ALL”.

The principal of this school, who earlier in this section was quoted as saying, “I wish South Africa could visit us and see how things are done...”, is clearly oblivious to what takes place in his school.

Crozier (quoted in Akhurst, 1997) also found a number of unintended consequences when a multicultural education approach is employed:

- Many teachers were reluctant to acknowledge the existence of racism within a school. There was also a tendency to naiveté (e.g. offensive comments not being thought so), and black pupils experienced a lack of support when conflicts with others arose.
- Teachers were defensive and unwilling to acknowledge the discriminatory practices still evident. They were also uninformed with regard to the roots of racism, and could not distinguish between multicultural education and anti-racist education.
- Teachers adopted a different approach because they viewed black pupils as “inadequate”. They perceived a need “to make special provision for promoting ... positive self-concept”. This led to “them/us” perceptions and resulted in further marginalisation of such pupils.
- Merely teaching about other cultures emphasises differences, and may very well reinforce ignorance and fuel disrespect.

The glib references to 'culture' by proponents of multiculturalism interviewed for this study require closer analysis. Moore (1993), in his examination of 'culture' and 'multiculturalism' in South Africa, recorded a disparate range of views on these subjects. Although conducted in 1992, these debates are still relevant because they allow us to see 'culture' not as a neutral concept with which people's identity is closely tied, but rather as a "value-laden and problematic concept whose political uses require critical investigation". In Moore's study, both Lebamang Sebidi and Bongajalo Goba warned that the intimate connection between apartheid and 'cultural difference' meant that 'culture' became a problematic concept, and was used for oppressive purposes. For Goba, "we have to articulate the meaning (of culture) in a way that is positive and does not re-establish apartheid racism... 'culture' divorced from justice is a dangerous concept." Michael Cross, while concurring with the way apartheid education constructed culture for political ends and how it constructs stereotypes, added, "At the same time there now are notions of African culture within which men can abuse their wives. 'Culture gets used to delegitimize other people's 'culture' and to legitimate abusive practices within one's own culture." For Pam Christie the concept 'culture' has sexism deeply embedded in it:

Culture is not only a new name for 'race'. It is also a concept in terms of which a whole string of injustices are justified. This is especially true of sexism. In the name of culture, patriarchy, rape and child abuse are being justified.

In evaluating 'culture' and multicultural education, the different voices alert us to the way 'culture' was used by apartheid as well as its other associated dangers. Neville Alexander, while mindful of the divisive meaning attached to 'culture' because of the legacy of apartheid, feels that a unifying concept of 'culture' could contribute to building a South African nation:

In South Africa we have to attack the Euro-centric notion of culture which sees language, culture and nation as conterminous. It is this notion which was used by apartheid to drive people into separate cultural corners and construct these corners as separate nations. If we are going to create a new South Africa we have to bring people out of these cultural ghettos to see what each has in common with the others and celebrate that... And despite the success of apartheid in manufacturing in some people a sense of belonging to a Zulu nation or Xhosa nation, the overwhelming majority of black people think of themselves as South Africans. Each believes that their heritage has a contribution to make to a common South Africa. That is what I understand by culture. It is not ethnic or linguistic difference. It is a set of core values and meanings which enables a collection of diverse individuals and groups to adhere as a single society or nation. In that core culture everyone participates.

## 5.5 Anti-racism

The handling of desegregation in most of the schools studied is firmly within the assimilationist framework, some follow the multiculturalist model, and a significant minority remain segregated. Not a single school has pursued the anti-racist perspective. For an overview of how anti-racist practice can be fostered in education, see Appendix 1.

This approach gained credibility and momentum as a result of the failure of the assimilationist perspective and the limited nature of multiculturalism's focus on prejudice and attitudes. Anti-racists argue that the existence of racism must be acknowledged and challenged actively. This requires a dismantling of institutionalised practices of racism, changing the curriculum, and bringing about changes in attitudes and behaviour. Anti-racists understand that eliminating racism requires restructuring power

relationships in the economic, political and cultural institutions of the society and creating new conditions for interpersonal interactions. The anti-racism perspective calls for not only confronting and opposing overt attitudes, practices and customs, but also insists on opposing subtle racism, stereotypes and patronising attitudes. Anti-racist education attempts to equip teachers and learners with the analytical tools to examine critically the origins of racist ideas and practices and to understand the implications of 'racial' identity and actions in the promotion of the struggle against racism.

Lately one of the criticisms against anti-racists is their inability to display an awareness of nuances, contradictions, inconsistencies and ambivalence. Rattansi (1992) has also criticised anti-racists for not being able to move "beyond their reductive conceptions of culture and their fear of cultural difference as simply a source of division and weakness in the struggle against racism." He calls for anti-racists to "acknowledge the political significance of questions of national culture and ethnic identity, and to grasp how these intersect with questions of 'race' and 'racism'.

Carrim and Soudien (1999) recognise the relevance of this critique and posit a critical anti-racism. Critical anti-racism incorporates a more complex notion of people's identity and acknowledges 'difference'. This approach distances itself from the more

dogmatic forms of anti-racism which homogenises and caricatures whites as proto-racists and blacks as victims. It implies that the bipolarity inherent in the 'white' versus 'black' construction common to both racist and anti-racist arguments is unhelpful in coming to terms with the complex ways in which racism expresses itself in various settings, particularly in regard to 'intra-black' dynamics.

This perspective is important; as this study shows there are a number of white educators and learners who are supportive of anti-racist practice, while on the other hand it has uncovered some 'Indian' and 'coloured' learners and teachers who clearly are prejudiced toward 'African' learners. Carrim and Soudien recognise the analytical strength of anti-racism which focuses on macro socio-economic and political forces and the ways in which they intersect with and influence people's micro, individual lives. For them, then, critical anti-racism is but a "sophistication and a refinement of anti-racism, not a betrayal or debunking of it".

## 6.0 Methodological Issues

### 6.1 The Data

The Equality Committee of the SAHRC both participated in and supervised the collection of data. This Committee consists of Commissioners and staff from the Research, Education and Legal Departments of the SAHRC.

Initial data collected included previous research reports on integration in schools, and information from the national and provincial departments of education. The Committee decided to focus largely, though not exclusively, on learners and their perceptions of racism and integration. This focus was deemed appropriate partly because of the paucity of studies on the reality of racism in the lives of South African children (Duncan, 1998), and also since almost all complaints to the SAHRC on racism in schools emanated from learners or their parents.

Two questionnaires, one for senior learners and the other for school managements, were drawn up in both English and Afrikaans. The learner questionnaire elicited information on human rights, racism, racial integration and discipline in schools. The management questionnaire revolved around the school profile and included questions on the number of learners by grade, gender and colour; staff and school governing body profiles; the profiles of learners in positions of responsibility; the language and admissions policy of the school; disciplinary measures; and the academic performance of learners disaggregated by colour and grade. The latter questionnaire provided mostly quantitative information. The learner questionnaire garnered the bulk of information required for a qualitative analysis.

Taking its cue from other regional research reports (see for example Naidoo, 1996a), the SAHRC hoped to find answers to the following questions:

- What factors facilitate or inhibit integration?
- Were there any attempts at exclusion on racial grounds?
- Could specific episodes of rejection or acceptance be identified?
- What is the general climate in these schools?
- What is the relative contribution of administrators, teachers and learners to the integration process?
- What is the nature of learner interaction in and out of the classroom?
- What is the nature of learner-educator interaction?
- What influence does the community have on the integration process?
- Are there any patterns in the integration process?
- What are the effects of integration on academic performance?
- Is discipline applied in a 'racially' fair and consistent manner?

Other substantive issues included: children's racialised attitudes towards their own and other groups, the salience of ethnicity in the structure of school-based friendship groups, and the form and incidence of racist harassment by pupils and teachers.

Data obtained from the questionnaires was supplemented with interviews with the school management, teachers and learners. Schools' mission statements, codes of conduct, admissions policies, yearbooks and fee structures were also gathered. Interviews were based on a fixed set of open-ended questions, and interviewers were briefed and guidelines issues prior to school visits. Notice of at least one month was

given to the school managements informing them of the impending visits. Letters were also sent to the MECs/HODs of all the provinces explaining the objectives of the project. Data collection and interviews commenced in August and ended in November. Interviewers were asked to submit composite and individual school reports of their visits, providing contextual information and their own observations.

Ten schools from each province were chosen. (See Appendix 2 for list of schools in the study.) The method of choosing schools could be viewed as simple random sampling. Although all provincial education departments were not able to provide information about the number of desegregated schools, the former education departments these schools belonged to, and the degree of desegregation, the SAHRC nevertheless attempted – because of issues around probability and chance – to select a national sample frame that could reasonably be assumed to have the characteristics of desegregated schools. The sample, therefore, included former English- and Afrikaans-medium Model C schools in both urban and rural areas as well as former ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ schools. The sample included parallel- and dual-medium schools.

Simple random sampling should not be confused with a non-probability sample survey such as convenience sampling which as its name implies is convenient for reasons such as proximity, financing and logistical issues. A case could be made, though, that the sample was purposive, based on the SAHRC’s judgement of the typicality of the schools. In any case, we agree with Bulmer (1984), quoted in Bowser (1995), that

students of race relations need to be reminded that the empirical scientific method that utilises probability theory and statistical techniques to determine whether or not generalisations will be accepted or rejected is not the only scientific method or the only disciplined way to explore human realities systematically.

Although the compilers of this report were not involved in collecting the data, a number of meetings were arranged between us and the data collectors. The SAHRC’s Senior Education and Training Officer was also always available to respond to our numerous queries.

The questionnaires were scrutinised by three analysts independently of each other in order to arrive at the respondents’ meaning. This was found to be necessary for the following reasons: On occasion we found that respondents contradicted themselves by saying, for instance, that there were no racial incidents at their school and later in the questionnaire went on to describe a racial incident which they had witnessed. Once the meaning was reduced to relevant questions these were verified by the researchers, differences in interpretation discussed, and data summarised and clustered into themes, conceptual groupings and categories.

On receiving the data from the SAHRC we also stumbled upon Duncan’s (1998) description of Mostyn’s (1985) Concept Book approach to the analysis of qualitative data. Duncan’s suggestion that as a deductive method of analysis, Mostyn’s approach is particularly suited to research which aims at foregrounding the discourses of research participants rather than the discourses of the researcher, and his summary of Mostyn’s analytical steps<sup>7</sup> stimulated our interest. On further investigation we found this method extremely useful for the completion of our task.

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<sup>7</sup> Mostyn’s relevant steps include: (a) sampling and deciding what will be analysed; (b) associating – i.e. examining past research which dealt with similar research problems as the present study; (c) developing and testing working ‘hypotheses’; (d) the generation of and immersion in the research data; (e) categorising the data; (f) incubation – i.e. setting the research project aside so as to allow for the crystallisation of research hunches; (g) culling – i.e. relinquishing hunches that do not work; and (h) writing up.



## 6.2 Limitations

The study was hampered by several factors. As discussed in the section on 'colour-blindness' (6.3), a few school principals initially objected to supplying statistics based on racial classification or allowing responses to the questionnaires. A combination of entreating, cajoling and mild ultimatums by the Convenor of the Equality Committee and the Chairperson of the SAHRC had the desired effect. Almost all the schools which were reluctant at first eventually supplied the required information. A few schools, though, while not objecting on principled grounds, did not keep clear records and found it difficult to complete key sections of the management questionnaire.

In some provinces researchers felt it prudent to abandon school visits as they began to overlap with examinations. Another constraint was the lack of informational support by provincial education departments. Only two of the nine provinces were able to supply us with the statistics required.

In some schools, principals sought to influence learners' responses, often by their mere presence while learners were completing the questionnaire and on occasion by more blatant means. The following extreme incident highlights the problem:

I accompanied George Masanabo on my second visit to Hartebeesport. We distributed the questionnaires to a group of 35 matrics. The answers that came back were revealing. Some of the completed questionnaires reported a climate of complete racial harmony while others described an environment where black students are pushed against walls and called "kaffirs" and "maids". The DP [Deputy Principal] sat staring at students as they completed the forms. The DP even took the liberty of reading some of the [white] student responses and chuckling [along with the students] at what he had read. When the DP attempted to read a black student's response, the student clutched the paper to his chest. For a few moments, the DP persisted in attempting to read the student's response before finally giving up. (Benjamin DeBerry)

Clearly such intimidation would influence learners' confidence in freely expressing themselves and should be borne in mind when analysing the data and drawing conclusions.

A further factor to consider is the small number of black learners in some of the schools where the questionnaire was administered.<sup>8</sup> Given the nature of racialised accounts by different groups of learners, this will also undoubtedly affect responses to the questions.

If anything, these two circumscriptions have had an adverse effect on the results in a way that reduces the number of learners who would be more likely to indicate examples of racism at school. In other words, the salience of racial incidents would probably be even more stark and the issues inhibiting racial integration more numerous if these inhibiting factors had not played a role. These limitations and restrictions themselves provide useful clues for addressing issues obstructing racial integration. Despite these limitations and restrictions then, and given the ambitious undertaking of the study in a short time frame, we believe that the major aims were fulfilled and the conclusions remain valid.

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<sup>8</sup> A seminal empirical study (Christie, 1990) suggests that a different set of racial dynamics comes into play when the black enrolment of a school exceeds 35%.

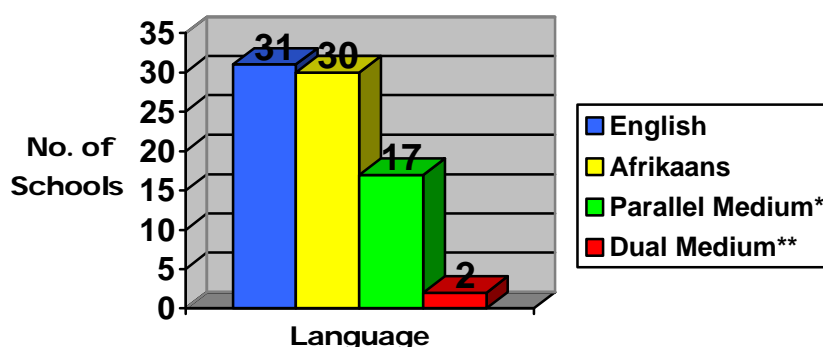
After extensive discussions with the commissioners and SAHRC staff it was agreed that the identity of the schools would be coded. While the SAHRC's legal department, after closely examining the text, felt that issues of litigation were not a concern (all facts are backed up by evidence), ethical issues swayed the decision. Primarily this revolved around the fact that our intention in undertaking this study was not to ostracise schools but to work with them to rectify the situation. The key to the code is in the commissioners' possession.

## 7.0 Interpretation of Issues and Themes

### 7.1 Language

English is the language of instruction and learning of 31 schools and Afrikaans of 30 schools in this sample. In addition, 17 schools are parallel-medium with 6 of these schools dual-medium in the senior grades. Only 2 schools are dual-medium in all the grades – that is, where educators use both languages simultaneously to cater for learners of both languages in one classroom. (See Figure 9.) None of the schools offer an ‘African’ language as a language of instruction and learning. None of the schools in the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape or Mpumalanga offer languages other than English and Afrikaans as subjects. One school in the North West offers Setswana and German. Two schools in KwaZulu-Natal offer French and isiZulu while one school offers only isiZulu. In the Western Cape two schools offer Xhosa. One school in the Northern Province offers Setswana/Sepedi. One school in the Free State has German, and another offers Sesotho after regular hours. In Gauteng only one school offers an ‘African’ language (isiZulu). (See Tables 7.1 to 7.10 in Appendix 3.)

**Figure 9. Language of Instruction**



\* 6 of these 17 schools are dual-medium in the senior grades

\*\* dual-medium in all grades

The parallel- and dual-medium former white schools have the most number of black learners and Afrikaans only schools have the least (except in the Northern Cape where most learners speak Afrikaans). Former ‘Indian’ schools (English-language instruction) have proportionally the most number of ‘African’ learners. In almost all cases except for the Northern Cape, the English component of parallel-medium schools consists of black learners and the Afrikaans component of white learners. Clearly, this separation is not based on sound language and pedagogical reasons. It has more to do with, as many principals conceded, allowing the school community to become ‘gradually’ accustomed to the idea of integration while simultaneously assimilating black learners into the dominant ethos of the school. As one principal candidly confessed, “We endeavour (*poog*) to limit the number of English-speaking pupils” (school 202).

In former white schools there is a tradition of using a single language of learning and instruction. The recent demographic changes in the learner populations of these schools, the admission of learners who are speakers of African languages, and the lack of a corresponding change in the educators has resulted in a mismatch of language knowledge between educators and learners. Most schools are slow in making the required changes to their language policies and are failing to cope. The onus is placed on learners rather than on the school as a whole to adapt.

Schools with a substantial number of black learners (more than 30%) have pointed to language as an important factor in influencing learning and performance:

**Quite a few black pupils fail due to their lack of understanding of the medium of instruction. (principal, school 505)**

**Learners struggle with English and this affects their progress. (principal, school 306)**

**... many pupils do find it difficult when it comes to communication and comprehension. This impacts on the standard of education. The learning process is retarded and teachers have to reduce their pace. (principal, school 306)**

This latter comment and the choice of words provide clues to the way language issues are handled. So is the 'solution' to the 'problem' – the teacher reducing his or her pace or 'speaking slowly'. In the absence of training, support and suitable material, most educators resort to these inappropriate, often patronising, methods. Only a minority of schools use creative methods to deal with language diversity. A significant number of schools offer classes after school hours. Yet, this is a problem for a number of black learners:

**Some of the teachers take afternoon classes and they know that we blacks stay far and we cannot afford to attend these classes. (learner, school 402)**

Recognising this, a principal is sympathetic:

**Extra lessons and assistance in the afternoons are not feasible since pupils travel long distances and cannot afford to make alternative arrangements for transport. (principal, school 306)**

Besides transport problems, learners in many schools are also asked to pay for extra language classes. Ruth Versfeld (1993) asks, could these costs "not be covered by the general fees paid by ... parents? Do parents pay for other after school activities such as team sports?" The constant refrain from schools is that they do not have the resources to employ staff who can teach an African language, that the existing staff's workload prevents them from assisting learners with language support, and that schools do not receive assistance from provincial education authorities.

Most schools are not moving proactively toward multilingualism and do not see language diversity as a school and classroom resource but rather as a deficiency. In a number of schools the home languages of a number of learners are (unconstitutionally) banned:

**There is no freedom of speech and language – i.e. only English is to be spoken or else if you are heard speaking some other language, e.g. Venda, you will be punished [English and Afrikaans are the only languages that can be spoken]. (learner, school 701)**

**Some teachers are respectful but I have a problem with explanations for accounting in the language used. If you use your mother tongue the teacher says that I have nothing to do with that, you are not supposed to be here, you should attend a black school. (learner, school 906)**

**Our school thinks it has a programme to stop racism but it is stupid and not working. Every so often black pupils are called to the lecture room and are spoken to and they are told not to speak Zulu to each other and to go and talk to white pupils, but how can this work if the white pupils who are also part of the problem, not also spoken to? (learner, school 407)**

Based on the various interviews and written responses, there exists little acknowledgement or indication that perhaps educators and learners should learn an African language. Instead many learners are encouraged to see the use of African languages in a suspicious light. A white learner writes:

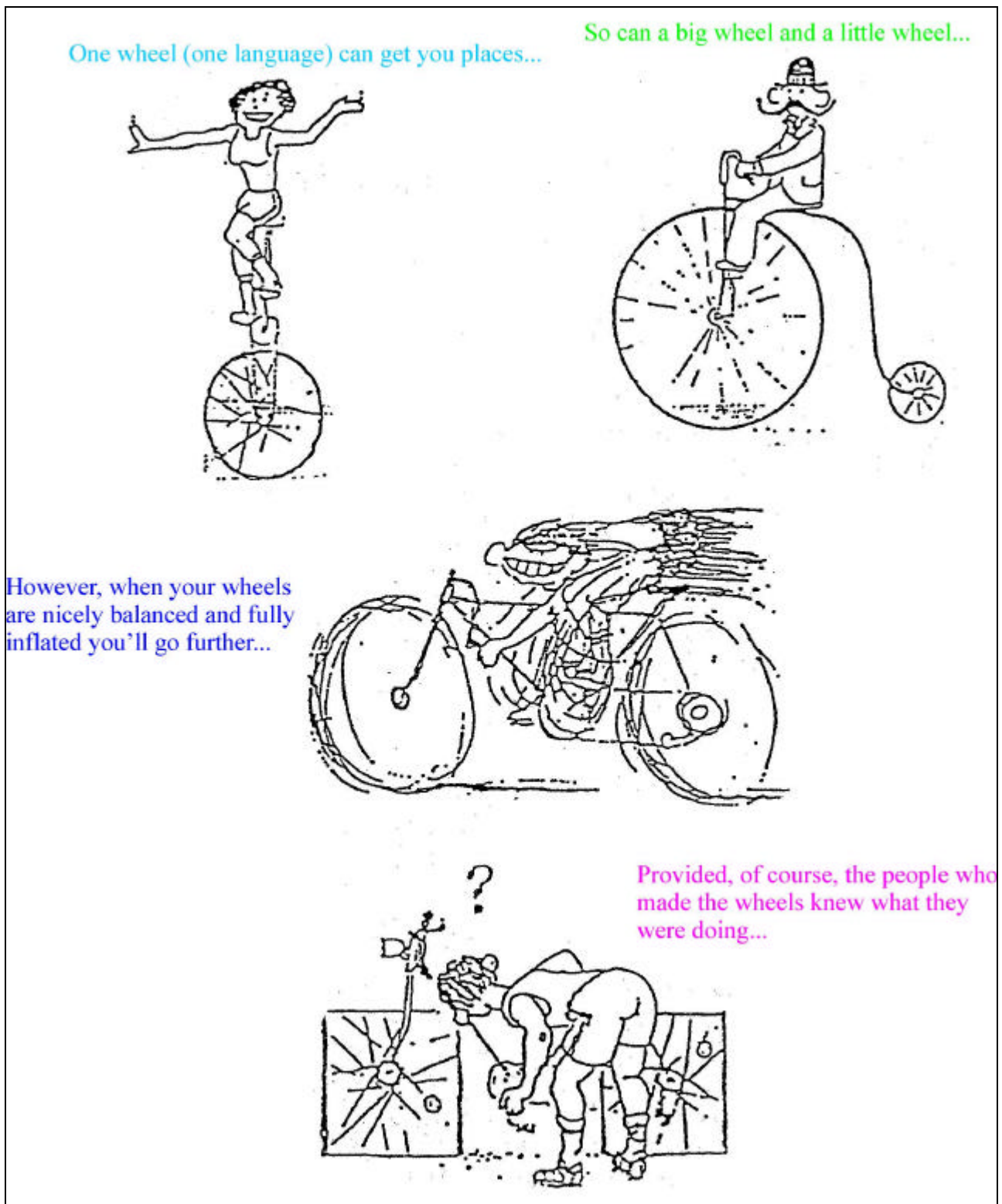
**We are told that this is an English school, you have to speak English, but you will *catch him* sometimes speaking his own language [italics added]. (learner, school 701)**

This study has shown that educators by and large fail to grasp the principles of additive bilingualism that underpin the policy of multilingualism. These principles revolve around recognising the importance of learning new concepts and ideas in one's home language. It accepts that it is essential to be fluent in one's first language in order to learn a second language effectively. Instead, as earlier comments and general practices in the schools show, educators are indulging in subtractive bilingualism. The result of neglecting or undermining the home language of learners is that learners are not able to develop their cognitive and academic skills sufficiently either in their home language or in a second language. Many parents, following the advice of educators, use the school language in communicating with their children, even though they are more comfortable in their home language. According to Jim Cummins (1985),

These educators are quite simply wrong and their advice to parents to use English in the home can lower the quality of communication between parents and children. This in turn can have very detrimental effects on children's development since there is strong evidence that quality and quantity of communication in the home provides children with the basis for performing well in school. In summary, bilingualism is associated with educational difficulties only when children come to school without a good foundation in their heritage [home] language, and when the heritage language is not promoted in school. When parents actively promote the heritage language in the home, children come to school with the necessary foundations for acquiring high levels of reading and writing skills in the school language. Research shows that these children consistently perform better monolingual children in both linguistic and educational tasks. The better the children's home language is developed, the more successfully they acquire high levels of English educational skills.

Jim Cummins provides a useful graphic to illustrate these views (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10. Wheels...**



Apart from linguistic and cognitive issues, many schools continue to use language as an exclusionary device. Interestingly, while inimical to the spirit of the Constitution and language policies in education, this practice is within the letter of the Constitution. Section 29(2) allows for as a 'reasonable' alternative the acceptance of schools where a single language of instruction and learning is allowed. This aspect of the clause – a result of a compromise with largely Afrikaans interest groups – needs to be examined more closely. In the interim, if applied loosely it could justify practices such as the following one revealed by a researcher conducting an interview with a principal:

The principal was more or less hostile. He felt it necessary to inform me that a component of one's human rights was the ability to speak one's own language in schools. He explained that [School 802] is an Afrikaans-medium school and that no provision is presently being made to offer assistance to those students who are not native speakers. He also informed Commissioner Tlakula and myself that no programmes are presently in place that introduce students to non-Afrikaner cultures.

After meeting with the principal, Commissioner Tlakula and I met with the school's guidance counsellor. He reported that the school has experienced no 'racial problems'. The counsellor also mentioned that one of the black students had to leave the school and finish out the term at an English school due to his difficulties with Afrikaans. When asked whether the school had made any efforts to assist the student with Afrikaans, the counsellor reported that they had not.

Another problem is that while the Constitution emphasises the development of 'indigenous' languages (the term used in the Constitution to denote African languages) in the schooling context, it leaves this to the political will and individual patterns of choice amongst parents (Brown, 1998). Many governing bodies – including 'African' parents, sometimes for different reasons – privilege English and Afrikaans over 'African' languages.

## 7.2 Admissions

A majority of schools either did not keep records on the number of learners refused admission or failed to divulge this information. Of the schools that responded, the most frequent reasons given for refusing admission related to learners residing outside the feeder zone of the school and insufficient space in the school. The question "How many learners have been refused admission to the school" in the management questionnaire elicited the following typical response:

Impossible to complete. We have hundreds coming to the door mostly from the townships. We have very few places available and many have been turned away. (school 210)

Some schools did provide figures of the number of learners turned away and reasons for this. Examples are:

School 402 : 300 outside [feeder] area

School 403: 222 black and 46 white learners outside of [feeder] area

School 410: 228 black learners and 7 white learners due to insufficient space

School 203: 450 black learners and 11 white learners outside feeder area and insufficient space

Other reasons for excluding learners include "cannot understand English language" (school 406) and

“*Geen kennis van taal*” (school 205), inappropriate age, and courses selected not offered in the school.

Based on the pupil-teacher ratios established by some provinces, a number of schools are clearly filled to capacity. A few schools, though, are able to enroll more pupils than they currently hold but have chosen to refuse admission. None of the schools studied, except for school 205, conducts now-prohibited admissions or selection tests. One wonders whether this is true for judging language proficiency, as some schools have mentioned this as a factor for excluding learners. A significant minority of schools have not yet formulated an admissions policy and made it available to the Head of the Provincial Department despite this being a requirement of the 1996 South African Schools Act.

As exclusion on the basis of learners residing outside school feeder zones has featured so prominently, an extract from the recent Admissions Policy (October 1998) will be helpful.

### ***School zoning***

A Head of Department, after consultation with representatives of governing bodies, may determine feeder zones for ordinary public schools, in order to control the learner numbers of schools and co-ordinate parental preferences. Such feeder zones need not be geographically adjacent to the school or to each other.

If a feeder zone is created –

- (a) preference must be given to a learner who lives in the feeder zone of a school or who resides with his or her parents at an employer’s home in the feeder zone;
- (b) a learner who lives outside the feeder zone is not precluded from seeking admission at whichever school he or she chooses. However, access to a chosen school cannot be guaranteed;
- (c) a learner who lives within the feeder zone of a school A must be referred to a neighbouring school B, if school A is oversubscribed. If school B is oversubscribed, an alternative school within a reasonable distance must be found by the Head of Department. If that is not possible, school A must admit a learner;
- (d) the preference order of admission is :-
  - (i) learners whose parents live in the feeder zone, in their own domicile or their employer’s domicile;
  - (ii) learners whose parent’s work address is in the feeder area; or
  - (iii) other learners: first come first served.

A school with a specific field of study, e.g. a technical school, must have much larger feeder zones to accommodate learners with specific aptitudes, interests or needs.

While school zoning will prevent in some schools the phenomenon of ‘bussing in’ of white learners from outside the feeder area, it might on balance work against integration. Except for a minority of learners from black middle-class families, most black learners reside in the previous ‘group areas’ and often have to travel great distances to attend school. The way feeder zones are delineated, therefore, becomes crucial. The admissions policy does say that “feeder zones need not be geographically adjacent to the school or each other.” Feeder areas, according to the policy, will be determined by the Head of Department after consultation with representatives of governing bodies. Provincial departments need to be wary because, as the data in this study shows, a huge percentage of governing bodies remain white and some might want to exclude black learners by excluding black residential areas from the feeder zones.



### *School clusters*

Schooling continues to be largely spatially defined. Relatively well-resourced state schools are located in middle-class, predominantly white suburbs. The under-resourced public schools, which constitute the vast majority of schools and serve most black learners, are located in working-class areas or impoverished rural areas.

It is quite clear that unless the principles behind the township-suburb shape of the old apartheid cities and towns are addressed, schooling along racial lines will persist. One way of overcoming this legacy is through the concept of 'school clusters'. This involves clustering schools around a centrally-located hub of shared specialised facilities. Higher urban densities will ensure that pupils from a number of different residential neighbourhoods could be within walking distance of a school cluster. Pertinent to this study is the argument that clustering of schools in accessible locations, rather than their dispersal in residential areas, would contribute to the integration of pupils from different communities and would help reduce inequalities in education standards. Another compelling argument is that this arrangement would enable facilities to be shared between schools and with communities. According to the authors of a book, *Taking South African Education out of the Ghetto – An Urban-Planning Perspective*, this alternative way in which to locate schools is necessary:

As a result of the extreme racial and socio-economic segregation of South African urban areas, the neighbourhood location of schools effectively reinforces polarisation in education by limiting the exposure of pupils to the world beyond their immediate community, and also aggravates inequality in education between rich and poor communities. In addition, the dispersal of schools throughout residential areas means that limited educational resources are very thinly spread, resulting in large numbers of standardised schools of poor quality. The net result is an education system that is inadequate and restrictive (Smit & Hennessy, 1995).

Smit and Hennessy show in great detail how proper urban planning in the context of the post-apartheid city and town could allow schools to become important instruments for integrating society. The potentialities of this idea should be explored seriously by the education authorities and urban planners.

### **7.3 School Fees – 'Race' and Class**

Together with issues around language and other admission criteria, school fees and ancillary costs must be considered a primary exclusionary measure. Fees at schools in this sample ranged from R100 to R5000 per annum, with most schools charging between R1000 and R1500. This does not include costs such as boarding fees, transport, uniforms, school books, stationery, educational excursions and sporting events. The Education leg of the Poverty and Inequality Hearings, held between 31 March and 19 June 1998 – convened by the SAHRC, the South African NGO Coalition and the Commission for Gender Equality – heard numerous testimonies of parents who found the general costs of schooling unaffordable.<sup>9</sup> The Poverty Hearings heard testimony from parents who live in townships, informal settlements and rural areas. These families – the majority of the population of South Africa – are forced to make do with schools which lack basic facilities such as electricity, adequate water and toilets, and invariably have overcrowded classrooms. The fees charged at the better-resourced integrated schools are

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<sup>9</sup> The minutes of these hearings are available from the South African NGO Coalition. See also Vally, 1998a; 1998c; 1998d.

beyond their means.

While the majority of black learners at former white schools do come from middle-class backgrounds, a sizeable number from working-class families also attend these schools. This is accomplished through dint of tremendous sacrifice. An example of such a parent who has two children at a former white school is Jabu Khumalo.<sup>10</sup> Khumalo, a single parent, calculated the costs of schooling per child in the following way:

School fees (per annum)	R1400
Boarding costs (per annum)	3600
Uniforms	400
Education excursions	300
Swimming costs and sports gear	350
Computer classes (R150 per month)	1500
Extra classes (R100 registration fee, R40 per subject per term x 2)	460
Transport costs (learners are not allowed to stay at the hostel over weekends)	600
Textbooks and stationery <sup>11</sup>	800
Pocket money (per annum)	<u>500</u>
	<u>R9910</u>

For Khumalo the cost of schooling for two children amounts to 59% of his net annual earnings! A number of issues are pertinent.

Firstly, school fees are a fraction of the total costs of schooling – 14% in this case. So while Khumalo is partially exempted from paying school fees<sup>12</sup>, this does not make a significant difference.

In any case, even if he could claim a rebate, Khumalo expressed misgivings about requesting this, fearing victimisation of his children. This apprehension is lent credence by the comments of learners later in this section. Thirdly, Khumalo is paying for costs such as books and stationery which should actually be borne by the state. This example is a clear indication of the marketisation of education – education treated as a commodity, an object of consumption to be bought and sold on the ‘free’ market. Particularly in the South African context, this marketisation will surely reproduce segregation and entrench class inequalities. Middle-class and richer parents are more likely to exercise their ‘choice’ in this education marketplace, while the majority of working-class and unemployed parents will not benefit. (See Hoadley, 1998; Pampallis, 1998; Vally, 1998b.)

It is not surprising, then, that one of the major causes of the racial conflagration at the much-publicised Vryburg High School revolved around the increase of school fees. In a survey conducted by the task

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<sup>10</sup> Parent’s name changed. Interviewed on 20.12.98.

<sup>11</sup> Just one textbook for his daughter’s hotel and catering subject cost R200 and his children are regularly asked to fork out money for notes and photocopies.

<sup>12</sup> He would be totally exempted if both children’s fees were combined. The *Norms and Standards for School Funding* allows for a partial fee exemption when the net income of both parents is 30 times or less than the annual school fee or a full exemption of it is 10 times or less than the annual fee. So, for instance, if the school fee is R100 per annum, then a parent whose annual income is R3000 will be eligible for total or partial exemption.

team sent to investigate the problems at this school, 88% of black learners perceived that their parents were unable to afford the increased fees, while 74% of white learners felt that their parents could afford the fees (Absolute CRD, 1998).

Learners have expressed concerns that:

**The headmaster wants to increase the school fees because he does not want black kids to come to this school. (school 701)**

and

**We blacks can't pay our fees sometimes because our mothers are domestic workers who struggle to pay the bill. White learners try to be smart because their parents have money. Black students usually withdraw themselves. (school 609)**

The school fee or user fees model needs to be examined more closely. It effectively extends the basic financial feature of previous Model C schools – the use of fees to supplement state subsidies – throughout the schooling system. Governing bodies implement the majority decision taken at an annual parents' meeting whether to charge or not to charge fees and the level of these fees. Clearly the higher the fees the more resources the school can afford, including educators additional to those paid by the state, based on provincial post provisioning norms. If parents who are not exempted default on school fees they can be sued.

Several critical questions need to be posed in evaluating the fees policy. What are the implications of this option for the goal of quality education for all? Those who need it the most will be least likely to receive it, as they will be able to afford only rudimentary provision. Those who benefited from the system in the past, on the other hand, will continue to have access to superior education (though admittedly they would have to make a larger contribution out of their own pockets).

The fees policy does not provide convincing answers to a number of problems that emerge from its own assumptions. For instance, what will prevent fee-paying parents from moving their children out of schools with a preponderance of non fee-paying parents to more well-endowed schools within the public school system? The corollary to this is that fee-paying parents might wish to use various measures to prevent the enrolment of poorer parents who will be exempt from paying fees, in order to protect the revenue-raising power of their school community and bar 'free riders' from enjoying facilities to which they did not contribute. Most of the schools in this study, for example, insist on registration fees, and admission forms require parents to agree to the fees set.

The questions we need to raise is whether the fees policy, besides contradicting the promises made before 1994, does not inhibit integration as well as contravene the constitutional provision of basic education to all and articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Among black learners themselves, many raise issues of favouritism based on economic status. Often 'African' and 'coloured' learners feel they are discriminated against because of their class background. These learners complain that they are often given less attention in the classroom, are looked down upon by teachers and learners, are punished for incomplete homework assignments, are left out of events and extramural activities, or cannot afford school uniforms.

Examples:

**Some pupils are treated better because they have money – their families are rich. (school 702)**

**Rich kids get better treatment; they can speak in any manner towards a teacher and everything will be fine because his parents sponsor the sports team at school. (school 411)**

**Nothing is fair in this school. If we blacks fight with rich white pupils, we are wrong because that child might leave the school and there won't be money to support the school. (school 201)**

**Some students are treated with respect because they come from rich families, and some because they are of the same race to the teachers. (school 704)**

**White teachers can't understand why black students can't do their homework effectively because of lack of electricity at home. (school 609)**

**Different individuals or groups are treated differently. I say so because there are two different types, e.g. Group A will be high society, and the others not so brilliant ones. Reasons: rich, colour, religion. (school 902)**

**We are treated differently. It is all about who you are and where you come from. It is also about how you look like. If you look like you are from a certain class you will be treated like a person from your class, e.g. if you are from a rich family you will be respected. Money is power and it is respect. (school 704)**

## **7.4 Gender, Sexism and Sexuality**

While none of the questions posed to learners attempted to elicit specific responses to gender or sex-based discrimination, a number of learners and principals commented on this issue:

**In our science department girls are treated as if they are inferior to boys. Remarks are constantly made about females being incapable of doing anything science-oriented. (school 907)**

**If you are a boy you must do technical studies. (school 301)**

**Whites stick with whites, Indians with Indians, and blacks with blacks, but that is only with boys. Black girls, white girls and Indian girls get along very well if I may say so. (school 509)**

A principal provides a possible explanation for the poor academic performance of black females:

**Black females seem to have performed worse than others, possible reason – required to do household work which encroaches on study time. (school 308)**

Quite often racial slurs and sexist language are used together, and racist and sexist practices co-exist. Racial discrimination and sexual harassment are both abuses of power, and tools for preventing particular groups from realising their human rights. Examples are:

**We have two bright black girls in our school who really work hard but the boys don't respect them and call them ugly, hurtful names. (school 602)**

**The odd few white boys make rude and nasty comments to the black girls in my class. I don't like this as I love the black students. They are my friends and should be treated with more respect. (school 509)**

**One of the white boys called some of the black girls kaffir bitches. The staff members didn't do much about it. (school 701)**

**As a [white female] prefect it is often a problem because black men/boys feel a woman has no authority over them. They often feel you are being prejudiced. (school 409)**

The question of sexuality further complicates racialised encounters. Franz Fanon's *Black Skins, White Masks* (1986) offers some fascinating observations on this issue. We did not have the time to thoroughly investigate the complex interrelations between gender, sexuality, masculinity, race and schooling. Suffice to say that this requires more research, judging from the anxieties displayed by numerous learners.

**Today we took photos for the college yearly photo-taking session. I am a black student. Accidentally my arm brushed against a white girl's jersey. She looked devastated and angry. Then she walked away talking about the kaffir touching her. (school 609)**

**I feel the same as those who are involved in [racial] fights. It bothers us when non-whites shout and say, "Hey baby!". It is arrogant [*verwaand*] and improper [*angeskik*]. (school 201)**

**I feel it is wrong to fight but why do the non-white boys always mock [*uitkeggel*] the white girls? (school 301)**

**At this stage everyone mixes. In our school a coloured pupil and a white pupil have a relationship; it doesn't matter except that the white's people are opposed to it. (school 209)**

**We are an Afrikaans class made up of coloureds and whites. A white boy and a coloured girl have a relationship in our school. A white girl in our class is not happy about this. We fought about this in the class. Our 'white' teacher intervened and said it is their choice and no one can or should tell you who to have a relationship with. I felt very badly for the 'coloured girl' as she is my friend and I told her that if she is in love with the boy then she should not listen to the 'white girl'. (school 205)**

**Once a black boy harassed a white girl after which a few white boys were very unhappy and took action. (school 802)**

**I feel we must be friendly with each other but it is not necessary to have relationships. (school 606)**

**I feel the races should mix but should not get married to each other. (school 606)**

**If you only talk to a non-white girl then the non-white boys want to fight with you. (school 703)**

The Gender Equity Task Team's (1997) report sets out the responsibilities managements of educational institutions have in preventing gender and sex-based discrimination and harassment from occurring in educational sites, and for managing these behaviours effectively when they do occur. It provides a framework of accountability in which managers of educational sites are responsible for actively promoting a positive human rights environment in schools.

### **7.5 Sports – 'Blacks can't swim.'**

The choice of sports codes in schools, the composition of school teams, access to facilities and training, as well as sports stereotypes resonate with debates in the broader society focused around the national cricket and rugby teams. School sports are seen by learners as both unifying and divisive factors. A number of white schools traditionally privileged rugby, cricket and swimming. Many black learners perceive these as alien codes, preferring instead soccer, basketball and netball. In some schools, black learners are encouraged to try out for athletics while white learners are pressured to take up swimming. Feeding this stereotype is the fact that many black learners themselves have expressed reservations about swimming because swimming pools have previously not been accessible to them and were not common in their day-to-day lived experience. Cheering and singing at sporting events are also areas of conflict. Black learners often are perceived as over-exuberant, noisy and rude, while white learners are viewed as suspicious and too earnest.

Examples:

**And as we know soccer is a black sport. Here at [school 703] there are no soccer fields. Our league is disrupted now and then in order to accommodate swimming, rugby and cricket.**

**Not many black people take part because of racial tension. They don't take part especially in sports such as rugby, cricket and boys' hockey. (school 407)**

**Black and coloured people have to be good in sports, not good but better than best to make a team in any sport. The white people get into the team because they are favoured by their white teachers. (school 701)**

**I tried to sign up to play soccer. I am a good soccer player, but they want a black soccer team. (school 609)**

**They have the same access to subjects but not to extramural activities. They say it is because blacks live far away and won't have transportation to go home. (school 903)**

**Except for sports there is equal access, just sports like netball and soccer are for the blacks mainly. You don't see whites in the team. (school 507)**

**Our greatest 'method' of racial integration is our extramural activities – sport and culture have brought all the races together to play for the school and not for each individual's race.**

(school 107)

**During athletics meetings pupils are not allowed to sing non-English songs. I believe that if white people sang non-English songs it will bring people of races together. (school 701)**

**When we were at the pool and a teacher commented on black scholars looking like baboons for singing black songs. (school 703)**

## **7.6 Relations between Educators and Learners**

Although most learners referred to racial incidents amongst themselves, a disturbing number wrote of teachers as authoritarian, unprofessional, insensitive and racist. To be fair and as shown in previous sections, most teachers are generally supportive of black learners and do not approve of some of their colleagues' behaviour but feel frustrated by the lack of systemic intervention in the form of anti-racist education and training in schools. Nevertheless, learners report some instances where teachers are insulting and abusive, using unacceptable and highly demotivating and derogatory language. Learners talk of enduring this abuse for fear of victimisation by teachers and the complicity of some principals. Examples include:

**Not all teachers respect us, because some like Mr [X] tells the blacks that they are failures and always will be because they're black and they must go home and have babies. (school 509)**

**Everyone is treated the same at our school. Just sometimes the teachers are very racist towards the coloured children without even noticing they are being racists. (school 907)**

**Some teachers insult us calling us names especially we black students. They say we are black and so are our brains/minds. (school 906)**

**Sometimes teachers discipline children because of their race. They say, "You black kids from townships aren't allowed to ride bikes to school." (school 702)**

**They ['Africans'] are treated differently in some way or another. For example, the Indian kids are somehow favoured above other nationalities but other than that it's a very nice school. Black guys go out with Indians and coloureds. It's all mixed between the pupils. The problem here is with the teachers. (school 508)**

**A teacher made a racist comment while teaching. This made me very angry because some students can't concentrate well in class because of being taught by a racist. (school 409)**

**Teachers are gossiping too much about the learners. Let's say if you're a student and you need advice. You cannot go to a teacher because if you do, the whole school will know your problem. (school 906)**

**No, our rights are not respected. Teachers call black students names like barbarians and baboons. (school 509)**

**We don't hear about human rights here. Teachers argue that you come here to learn, not to be political. At this school you are not 'allowed' to discuss these issues. (school 609)**

**There is racism. A teacher once said to a black girl, she must stand up out of her desk and instead the teacher let a coloured boy sit at her desk. I was very angry. (school 902)**

On a few occasions pupils are racist toward teachers:

**We have one black teacher at the school and a white girl in our class openly called him a kaffir. (school 701)**

Only four schools in the entire sample specifically mentioned racism or derogatory racial terms as an infraction in their codes of conduct. School managements could argue that misdemeanours such as 'bad' language and fighting are listed as general misdemeanours in their codes of conduct and encompass racial incidents. This is really an obfuscation; racism has to be acknowledged in its own terms and confronted. It should not be hidden. Throughout this entire study, not once is anti-racist and/or anti-bias education mentioned in the management reports or other data.

One school (405), though, has initiated a programme in conjunction with a training and research organisation "specialising in developing skills to manage a changing environment". The results of a diagnostic questionnaire conducted by this organisation are instructive. The survey found that both black and white learners felt that racism was the primary cause of conflict in this school, and that 75% of the learners believed that there is "some mixing but not much". (See Appendix 4.)

### ***Principals***

Alarming, principals have also been pointed out by learners as condoning racism. Several learners intimated that when they reported a racist incident, the principal dismissively asked them to "love or just forgive the person" implicated, or "the principal didn't do anything about it", or "the principal gave them a mild warning but didn't do anything". This is revealing given that, by and large, managements overwhelmingly claim that 'race relations' are fine or under control. Critically, if racism filters down from or is ignored by people in responsible positions, then indeed the environment must be nothing short of hostile for most black learners. Most learners cannot begin to think of challenging the governance of schools and very few ever have. There are certainly principals committed to eradicating racism; most, however, either pay lip service to anti-racism or do not see it as a priority.

Examples:

**When we go to the principal with complaints like name-calling he always defends them and say, "Ag, we should just leave it" [*moet dit los*], which is very wrong. (school 301)**

**The principal calls all black people together and lets us say what our problems are, not that anything is ever done about those problems. We feel like aliens being surveyed. (school 407)**

**The headmaster, he's a proper racist and cannot cope with blacks. (school 509)**

**The headmaster is a racist, too, so things can't go well. He just pretends to the parents of black kids. (school 702)**



**I fought with a white boy. When we went to the principal's office, I was told that I was wrong. I feel bad because both the principal and the boy are white. That's what made me so angry. (school 603)**

**The one Afrikaans guy called me a kafer [sic]. I took him to the office. When we went inside the principal's office, the principal said I must go and he will see what he will do. He did nothing. (school 805)**

## **7.7 Discipline**

According to many learners, punishment is integrally part of an unspoken yet persistent racist ethic. Countless learners refer to being unjustly punished or being punished harshly while 'the other' is given a mild talking to or not even reprimanded. Black learners sometimes speak of the ease and speed by which black learners acquire demerits for minor misdemeanours or worse, suspension or expulsion, unlike white learners who commit the same or worse offences. The data shows, though, that the majority of learners feel that disciplinary measures are 'racially fair'.

Corporal punishment, although now illegal, remains pervasive. One of the data collectors reported that while he was interviewing the deputy principal a teacher was caning a learner in the adjacent classroom. When the data collector raised this with the deputy principal he was told that the practice is used as a matter of course and the principal is unwilling to intervene.

Learners' views on unfair disciplinary measures include:

**I was once insulted by an Afrikaaner boy and fought with him. White boys don't respect black girls and they don't really get punished for it. (school 702)**

**If a white kid has done something wrong it comes and goes but if a black kid does it it lasts forever. (school 211)**

**Some learners are warned many times but when it's a black person it is once and the second time they will be heavily punished. (school 901)**

**Learners are not treated the same. Here we are still punished with a switch. (school 604)**

**The teachers are still hitting the learners. (school 209)**

**Black people are given more discipline by some of the teachers. (school 907)**

**Sometimes when we tell them about how we feel about things they punish you for being rude. Therefore it seems like we are not allowed to express our opinions to the teachers. (school 701)**

## **7.8 “It’s kind of normal.” – The Sheer Prevalence and Normalcy of Abuse**

Hundreds of respondents regard racism as part of their everyday experience. It is manifested in rhetoric, name-calling, stereotyping, labels and anxieties in the classroom, corridors, playgrounds and extracurricular events. Often racialisation is expressed when displays of masculinity become associated with the ability to use racially abusive language and where the exclusion of some learners from (for example) certain sports serves to signify masculine and racialised dominance (Rattansi, 1999). Racial incidents are also replete with contradictions and ambivalences. Many learners try to trivialise incidents; others are resigned to them. Frequently, as the data shows, it has horrifying consequences such as stone and bottle throwing, fist and knife fights, the burning of a school (Northern Cape) and the killing of a black person by ex-learners from a newly ‘integrated’ school.

Examples:

**Yes, there is racism. Well, it’s kind of normal. But it usually happens when learners argue amongst themselves. Then they call each other names. I don’t like it at all because my mom is a black and my father is a white, thus I’m coloured. (school 508).**

**There’s quite a few people that call each other names and are quite insulting but yet the people that do that all think it’s a joke. (school 702)**

As if to confirm this, a learner from the same school writes:

**We tease this coloured boy but just joking – other people think we are being racist. He knows we joke and he discriminates against us as well. (school 702)**

**I felt it didn’t affect me because it was nothing violent. It was just being called ugly names and told to go back to our R20 schools in Soweto, to make noise in Soweto. (school 703)**

**We are used to them – it doesn’t really bother us any more. But there are some people in the school who are humiliated by racists. (school 509)**

**Our school tries to stop racism by just writing it in our yearbooks that racism is a big offence and one will get punished for it but never once have I seen a person being punished for it though it occurs all the time. (school 211)**

**Yes, there is a lot of racism between white children and black children. White children throw stones at blacks and teachers don’t say anything about it. (school 301)**

**Some white pupils call blacks ‘kaffir’ all the time and they say we have taken over their school. (school 209)**

**The white people hit us with marulas, throw bricks, sticks and hard soil. They also swear at us and even our parents. We really feel unwanted and outcasted. (school 702)**

**There are a lot of children and teachers who still show racism toward black children by picking on them all the time. (school 211)**

**The white kids treat black kids bad. They say we are filthy and think we don’t belong to the school. (school 301)**

**There will always be racism. It’s not right but there’s nothing anybody can do about it.**

(school 411)

**I feel very bad as an emotional person but life is life. I just accept it and deal with it, also looking at the positive side. I really don't like the racism in the school, it's very bad. (school 702)**

**I try not to get offended and consider it none of my business. (school 805)**

**Pupils do not report racial incidents. Most cases are not serious and go unnoticed. Pupils ignore that the problems are caused by racism, but they say it was for something else. (school 401)**

**There is a lot of conflict in the school between the black and white students but this is often not seen by many people. It is kept very quiet. (school 405)**

**The children don't really like the blacks. It really doesn't bother me. (school 603)**

**I think that people just present that there is no problem but beneath their presentation the problem lies. It's like a cover of a book; it looks nice on the outside but beneath it is bad. (school 508)**

**Yes, there is racism and it makes me feel that apartheid is still in our school (school 702)**

**There is a student in the class who always talks of Kaffirs, Boesmans and Hotnots. (school 609)**

Racism seems to be more evident in some schools than others. We received scores of complaints from school 701. A few of these are:

**Yes, quite often [racism]. It makes me angry but you can't really do anything about it, but most of the time I just ignore it.**

**There has already been physical fights between white and black [girls]. Makes one think that the racism must be bad if girls have fist fights.**

**It seems like the school is not doing anything about it and so we will have to take things into our own hands.**

**We are all mixed together but that doesn't mean that we like each other.**

**There is constant racial tension between certain groups. I try to be a non-participator in racial conflict.**

**The whites seem to always be blamed in a racist fight, although they try to keep it fair.**

## **7.9 “Feeling like a Non-human Being”**

Responses to the questions “Have there been examples of racism recently at your school?” and “How did these make you feel?” encompassed a gamut of negative emotions including rage, dismay, depression, confusion, sadness and hatred. One can only speculate on the impact this has on the learners’ self-esteem, confidence and ability to concentrate on learning. For many black students attending a ‘racially mixed’ school is a traumatic experience.

**Yes, it makes me sometimes feel like a non-human being. (school 608)**

**Yes, there have been. I felt discriminated and neglected. I feel unwanted in this school. (school 301)**

**Racism makes me feel bad like I can take an AK47 and shoot these white boys. (school 702)**

**Not to me personally but in a group. It made me feel uncomfortable, hurt, and most of all angry! (school 907)**

**I felt like a potato that has been cooked in a pot for two weeks. I felt unhappy, sad and it’s not good to do so. (school 211)**

**I feel depressed and feel like at some stage to commit homicide against all the western [white] people. (school 702)**

**Yes, we had a court case where boys killed black men. It made me feel cheap and not proud to have a white skin. (school 602)**

**I don’t like it because it can make you leave school. Some of us don’t like to go to school because of racism. (school 401)**

**Yes, it makes me frightened and heartsore to think about it. (school 905)**

**Yes, I feel it is very unnecessary and hurtful. It did not directly involve me, but it still affects everyone. (school 909)**

**Every morning when they make announcements there has to be something not nice about blacks. E.g. sometimes they say that this is not our school, we must go back to Khutsong. And the white kids always laugh at us. (school 301)**

**Yes, there is and this makes me feel very upset because we are all human beings and not animals. (school 607)**

**Yes, it made me feel like I was not wanted at this school or the neighbourhood. They treated me as if I was from another planet. (school 704)**

**Yes, there is racism recently at this school and it makes me feel uncomfortable, unhappy and I’m not confident in what I’m doing. (school 906)**

**Last term there was some racism. It made me feel bad, scared. I felt scared because I thought they’d attack my friend and me on our way home. (school 407)**

**Yes. At first I felt as an outsider at school. I felt like I don’t belong in [school 906].**

**People are handled differently. Some of us white people [*sommige van ons wit mense*] collar [*kraag*] the black pupils. We threw [*duppe*] at them and hit them. (school 301)**

**During breaks all the other groups sit alone and they do their own things. But if a black girl goes past a group of white boys they do as if she smells and they make sounds which make her feel threatened. (school 407)**

**I see it every day. I really believe that some groups were treated very unhuman and unfair in the past – but is it right that we, the children of the generation who made the mistakes – must be treated as those who did it? (school 603)**

## **7.10 Not Yet Simunye!**

**It [racial incidents] made me feel that there will always be racism in the country and that we're not quite the 'rainbow nation' that we set out to be. (school 901)**

The scale and intensity of gratuitous and explicit expressions of racial prejudice and racism leave no doubt that while many schools are desegregated or 'racially mixed' they are still not deracialised. Learners' accounts reveal a host of stereotyped views of each other, racially-linked cliques of friends, and a lack of ease in each other's company. When 'mixing' does occur it is often of a superficial nature linked to formal school routines such as in the classroom or school-organised events. As Figures 4 to 6 show, less than 10% of learners 'mix' outside of school.

Many reports from researchers who visited schools and interviewed learners speak of learners being alienated and marginalised. The following account of an interview with two black learners by an American intern who joined the SAHRC Commissioners in visiting schools poignantly captures these feelings:

After meeting with the principal the three of us spoke with two coloured girls concerning their experience at the school. The girls were extremely nervous. According to them everything "was fine". I'm not sure what happened but all of a sudden they dropped the façade. They both explained they wanted to leave the school... When asked whether students harassed them, they replied, "Yes." After a series of questions, Commissioner Tlakula and Mr Keet left to administer the questionnaire in a classroom. I was left to administer the questionnaire to them. When they completed the forms, I had a fairly long conversation with both of them. When I asked the girls why they did not tell the teachers or the principal when "fellow" students harassed them, one responded that she was simply not comfortable doing so. I asked her did her discomfort stem from the fact that the principal, the teachers, and the students were all white? It's difficult in writing exactly what I asked verbally, but it went something like this: "Are you uncomfortable because some student makes a racist remark or does something to you ... and then when you go to speak to an authority figure they look just like the student ... they identify with that student ... and appear to be just an older version of that student?" Both girls nodded their heads up and down enthusiastically and one replied, "Exactly." ... I was left with the impression that both these girls are entirely on their own at the school. (school 807)

The same researcher, visiting another school (806) in the same area, writes:

After about 15 to 20 minutes of conversation, the Deputy Principal informed us that

there was an American exchange student who had arrived at the school about five weeks prior. The American student informed us ... "In the hallways they call the black students 'niggers'. When Commissioner Tlakula said, "The term 'kaffir' not 'nigger' is used in South Africa," the American replied, "Yes, they call them that as well."

Examples:

**Yes, it makes me as if I could almost cry, because white people push us against the wall, calling us that other name that I really hate. They call us kaffirs. (school 806)**

**There are a few kaffir boys who want to make trouble [*moelikheid*] with us. (school 806)**

**Most students make fun of people at school, mostly black students. I feel this is totally wrong because I have black friends and I try to stand up for them if they are ill-treated by other students. (school 908)**

**There are some whites who call the blacks kaffirs and so on and I think it's wrong because I don't like it if I'm called koelie. (school 509)**

**There are blacks, coloureds, whites and Indians and also a lot of cultures but we do not necessarily integrate and have strong relationships with each other. Our differences are too visible and noticeable. (school 703)**

**Sometimes when you walk past white children then some say you must walk somewhere else and they call us Boesmans. (school 603)**

**An African teacher accused a coloured child of being intoxicated because he did not agree with the alterations made by the teacher on his answer sheet (on one of the tests). Some Indian teachers favour Indian pupils. Makes me feel cheated. (school 508)**

**Sometimes teachers pass racist remarks towards children, like if they're 'coloured' they assume them to be intoxicated most of the time. If 'black' they are assumed to be unintelligent. The 'Indians' so to speak are the most favoured. (school 508)**

**It happens daily. It makes you less hopeful [*afvallig*] about continuing your studies. Many coloured and black students have complained about racism but the teachers and the principal support the white students. (school 609)**

**Black Standard 9s think they are men and take on us whites to try and overrule us but we retaliate. (school 703)**

**Some blacks refuse to listen to the white prefects, they only listen to black prefects. This makes me feel irritated. (school 507)**

**The English-speaking children [black] bump me on purpose and throw me with chappies, while I only try to be nice, and haven't ever done anything in public to offend them – that's unfair- they say we smell (when it's them). (school 301)**

**There is a lot of racism between white children and black children and the white children really treat the black children unfairly. They throw black children with stones and the teachers don't do anything about it. (school 301)**

**The coloureds stab us with knives. (school 806)**

**The races are always clashing. E.g. blacks are loud but whites find it irritating. I do. I can't handle black people. (school 402)**

**People have no right to treat others this way, e.g. an albino at our school. People are terribly horrible to her. (school 405)**

**When a theft took place at school amongst the matric body we were called in and spoken to. Immediately the white learners looked at the black in a way that suggested that they were involved in the crime. This made me feel angry because they had no right and proof. (school 409)**

**We pay the same amount as they pay but we are in separate classes and the headmaster is doing nothing. I am going to leave this school next year because of apartheid. (school 301)**

**I was so embarrassed when I heard one of the Indian boys in my class calling me a 'kaffir'. I felt like having a fight with him after school but he came back to me and apologised for what he said. (school 408)**

**White boys called a black girl a kaffir. I wanted to take action but since considering what happened in Verwoerdsburg I stopped and the girl went to the principal. (school 701)**

**I think the kaffirs must stop thinking they are so good. (school 301)**

**I think many of the black [*stamme*] races/tribes come to our school because it is dangerous in their schools. Or their schools do not have discipline. (school 407)**

**I say that when the schools were in the old South Africa there were no problems; in the new South Africa things are getting worse. (school 202)**

**The school allows other colours [*ander kleuriges*] so that everyone has equal rights. But what do the *anderkleuriges* want in our school if they have their own schools and communities? We don't go to their schools, so what do they want at ours? (Just a simple, innocent [*eenvoudig en onskuldig*] question.) (school 208)**

Stereotypes are often used by educators as well:

**Failure for [sic] the coloured learners is high because they are not interested in education. (principal, school 804)**

## 8.0 Recommendations

Many recommendations in this section overlap with each other and should be seen as initial thoughts. They will be further developed, amended or rejected at a conference on Racism in Schools to be held from 4-6 March 1999 in Johannesburg. It must be emphasised that all recommendations which require the intervention of outside agencies should be characterised by a participatory democratic process with the constituents of the school community. These interventions should not give the impression of ostracising schools, imposing policies or policing their practices. Often such top-down interventions merely reinforce rather than erode racism.

### **Recommendation 1: Immediate Action in Hotspots**

This study has revealed instances where blatantly racist, segregationist and generally discriminatory practices flourish. Those practices are evidently unconstitutional and in breach of most education policies and legislation. There are also schools and districts where racial tensions are extremely high. It is recommended that the education departments urgently intervene in these areas. The SAHRC will provide information and assistance in this regard. The schools can be readily identified using this study and by consulting with researchers who visited the schools and districts. It is suggested that the requisite intervention should not merely be of a short-term, prophylactic nature but should develop medium- and long-term strategies. Interventions should not only take into account the sensitivities of the present constituents of the school but also the concerns of the community at large, including the communities the school does not presently serve, yet should serve.

### **Recommendation 2: Proposed Structures**

It is useful to examine recommendations made by the Gender Equity Task Team for the mainstreaming of gender equity concerns in education through the creation of a Gender Equity Unit (GEU) located in the Director General's office and corresponding structures at all provincial and district levels. The task team also proposed that gender officers be located in strategically-identified Directorates in the national Department and in each main branch of provincial departments. The tasks of the GEU and the gender officers, together with supportive administrative personnel, include:

- the monitoring of key departmental activities and proactive involvement in all policy formulations and implementation practices;
- the establishment of training programmes for personnel;
- commissioning research to ensure that the activities of the Department are not gender-blind;
- seeking annual reports from all Directorates, including progress toward gender equity; and
- gender analysis of continuing gaps and mismatches between policy and implementation.

It is our view that replicating these structures might not be financially feasible nor necessary. At the same time the SAHRC recognises the vital and important role of the GEU. Yet, the interlocking nature of racism and sexism might arbitrarily fragment the monitoring of discriminatory practices. We suggest that the structures and their functions as proposed by the Gender Equity Task Team be expanded to include



all issues around discrimination in education. It should therefore include sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia and xenophobia. This will probably mean increasing the number of personnel in these structures, retraining the existing staff so that they are more familiar with issues pertaining to racism in education, and of course renaming the Gender Unit and Gender Officers (replacing 'Gender' with either 'Human Rights', 'Redress', 'Transformation' or 'Anti-Discrimination'). In making these changes extreme care should be taken not to undermine the present functions of the unit around gender issues.

We also suggest that the SAHRC co-ordinates the establishment of an independent consultative body consisting of representatives of teacher unions, student organisations, the South African Council of Educators, non-governmental organisations involved in anti-racism and multilingualism in education, and individuals with relevant expertise and knowledge. Such a body should develop a complete strategy to address racism in education. This should include:

- monitoring existing legislation, policies and practices, as well as proposing new policies or amendments to existing policies;
- identifying and recommending ways of rectifying racial imbalances in the staffing and enrolment of schools and the composition of school governing bodies;
- recommending guidelines to address racism in curricula, learning materials and teaching practices; and
- recommendations for anti-racist education and training of learners, educators and personnel in education departments.

The recommendations of such a body should be considered for implementation by the education departments.

### **Recommendation 3: Anti-Discrimination Policy in Each School**

In the same way that schools are obliged to develop a code of conduct, an admissions policy and a mission statement, so must they develop an anti-discrimination policy. The South African Schools Act may need to be amended to ensure that the development of such a policy is the responsibility of, and adhered to by, school governing bodies. This is one way of prompting the school communities to begin examining their practices. It has been found that actual process of constructing a school policy in itself raises important issues about school management and ethos in ways that proved to be value to the overall functioning and learning of pupils. Such a policy must be developed by constituents of the school community. While it should adhere to the national policy, it should also be relevant to the local school context. The National Department of Education must disseminate guidelines to all governing bodies to facilitate the development of such a policy. This should be accomplished in tandem with anti-racist/anti-bias training for all school constituencies.

The guidelines and the policy should address all activities of the school. These include learning, teaching, organisation, management and extra-curricular activities. Ideally, it should encompass:

- staff development: new practices, perspectives, skills and expectations;
- curriculum development: new subject matter, topics, materials, as well as new practical classroom methods and approaches, including the design of lessons to address racism and issues of language;
- organisational and management issues: examining representivity at all levels in the school and in practices, customs and procedures;
- the relationship between the school and the community;

- developing support, mentoring, counseling and advisory services;
- holding regular workshops to address racism;
- proactively increasing the involvement of black parents in school governing bodies and the school's activities by creating a more conducive environment and examining inhibiting factors;
- addressing the issue of language by, for example, encouraging the development of conversational and communication skills in the language spoken by most people in the province in which the school is situated;
- developing sports codes which cater for all groups; and
- shifting from a puritanical, dogmatic and self-righteous ethos and value system which often acts as a smokescreen for authoritarian, patriarchal and racist practices.

The SAHRC also argues for a code of good practice and a compulsory course on human rights to be established in schools.

Gillian Klein (1993) suggests that:

Each school or college will finally determine its policy in the light of its own circumstances. However, certain elements are common to all. There will be:

1. A clear, unambiguous statement of opposition to any form of racism or racist behaviour.
2. A firm expression of all pupils' or students' rights to the best possible education.
3. A clear indication of what is not acceptable and the procedures, including sanctions, to deal with any transgressions.
4. An explanation of the way in which the school or college intends to develop practices which both tackle racism and create educational opportunities which make for a cohesive society and a local school or college community in which diversity can flourish.
5. An outline of the measures by which development will be monitored and evaluated.

Klein (1993) also outlines essential processes to be followed by schools:

1. Placing the issue firmly on the school/ college agenda and making time for discussion and development.
2. Coming to grips with what racism is and its historical context.
3. Considering how racism can and does operate in school/ college's particular circumstances.
4. Analysing both directly conscious racist behaviour ... and "unconscious racism".
5. Analysing both individual behaviour and the policies and practices of the school/ college.
6. Analysing the behaviour and practices of individuals and services that impinge on the life of the school/ college.
7. Drawing upon the advice and experience of others, including other schools/ colleges and those with specialist knowledge and experience.

## **Recommendation 4: Anti-Discrimination Training**

None of the schools in this sample have an anti-racist programme in place. At best, a few schools have embraced what they perceive to be multiculturalism. The form of multiculturalism they espouse merely emphasises ‘tolerance’ of other ‘cultures’ and rarely addresses issues of racism. We recommend prioritising anti-racist training for the following groups:

- district officials,
- governing bodies,
- teachers, and
- learners.

Schools need to be encouraged to initiate their own programmes without detracting from the importance and urgency of a systematic training programme initiated by the provincial education departments. One way of assisting this process is by providing a kit of learning resources including literature and audio-visual material, as well as a list of non-governmental organisations that could provide training, advice and additional resources. This kit should be readily accessible to schools and perhaps be stored in each district office. The independent consultative body described under Recommendation 2 should assist in developing these kits. It must be stressed that these kits should serve as a resource and an aid. They should be used by teachers to develop their own programmes relevant to the context they find themselves in.

This study has shown that some teachers are eager to experiment but struggle to lay their hands on relevant resources. One teacher, for example, resorted to showing the now really outdated film *To Sir With Love* repeatedly to groups of learners. Needless to say, there are many other films and videos which might be more creative and helpful. Three books/manuals which are tremendously useful are:

- *Resisting Racism: A Teacher’s Guide to Equality in Education;*
- *Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to Anti-racist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development;* and
- *Shifting Paradigms: Using an Anti-bias Strategy to challenge Oppression and Assist Transformation in the South African Context.*

These books provide practical guidelines for running anti-racist workshops, a list of useful resources, and sections such as frequently-asked questions about racism. (See Appendices 5 to 7.) These are the resources we have discovered during the process of the study. Undoubtedly, there are many more we are not aware of. An appeal is therefore made to bring to the attention of the SAHRC literature and projects relevant to anti-discrimination in schools.

A few important initiatives need to be noted. The Gauteng Department has initiated an anti-bias training programme as part of its training of district managers and personnel.<sup>13</sup> Presently 60 district officials are undergoing training to challenge various forms of oppression based on gender, colour, class, ability and sexual orientation. While this initiative has begun with district officials the intention is ultimately to involve school managements, governing bodies and educators.

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Ben Richards, Programme Co-ordinator of anti-bias training in Gauteng.

The Western Cape Education Department, through a non-governmental organisation called Edu-Assist, has completed a programme of training for all RCLs (Representative Council of Learners) in the province around anti-racism and transformation. A number of groups such as the Early Learning Resource Unit have also offered anti-bias workshops and training.

### **Recommendation 5: In-service Education and Training (INSET) and Pre-service Education and Training (PRESET) for Teachers**

There is no doubt that anti-racist teaching practices should become a compulsory component of both PRESET training for learner educators and of INSET courses. The Committee for Teacher Education Programmes (COTEP) and the Department of Education have developed norms and standards for teacher education. Positively, the suggestions of COTEP attempt to link INSET and PRESET. COTEP also emphasises that exemplars or models of 'what good teaching is' must be developed through field work and observation on the ground. This marks a useful shift away from using standardised 'outcomes' to determine what kind of teachers schools need, and instead measures 'good teaching' on the basis of responsiveness to environmental needs.

Yet, we believe that insufficient attention has been given to human rights and anti-racist training. This is a glaring gap since skills and knowledge on these issues are crucial for addressing issues around racial integration and racism. The SAHRC in a submission to the Department of Education on Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development argued that:

... the practices of human rights education should be enabled both through a cross-curricular approach and a dedicated learning area. Given our historic context human rights education should not be diluted into soft curriculum options, but rather practiced within a strong enabling framework. The two-pronged approach (cross-curricular and dedicated area), is at the heart of developing such a strong framework. The two approaches reinforced and are complementary to each other and also reduce the possibility of marginalising the field. We might reach a stage in our future where the need for a dedicated area will be obsolete, but for now it is imperative that we maximise the entry points for the practice of human rights education into the formal education and training sector.

The SAHRC also proposed that occupational outcomes under the heading of teaching studies include:

... the teacher as human rights educator. The pedagogical principles (approaches, theories of learning and teaching, methodologies, etc) that are consistent with human rights education must be specified.

## **Recommendation 6: The Need for School Clustering**

Quite clearly, the apartheid heritage of separate group areas has to be addressed if racial integration is to have any meaning. Continuing residential segregation militates against the involvement of black parents in school affairs and prevents 'mixing' of learners after school hours. The school cluster concept also makes possible the sharing of resources. Much more work needs to be done to explore the feasibility, advantages and disadvantages of this idea. Experimental work on clustering might have begun in certain areas and thought should also be given to regional and provincial geographic peculiarities.

A group of urban planners and educationists have studied the possibility of clustering schools. After examining case studies in metropolitan Cape Town and rural Grabouw, they concluded that 'the clustering of schools in accessible locations with shared facilities seems to be a way in which to achieve greater integration of our society, and to achieve optimal and equitable use of scarce resources for education.' (Smit & Hennessy, 1995).

## **Recommendation 7: Critically Review Social Justice Values in Curriculum 2005**

Critical outcomes are meant to underpin learning in all spheres of education and training. As such, they will determine which norms and values are promoted by the curriculum and whether there is a paradigm shift in what counts as knowledge. The critical outcomes do reflect a commitment to pupil-centred learning that is problem-focused rather than content-based. However, they do not encompass skills and abilities that many would consider fundamental to a transformed education system in particular, and South African society in general. For example, while they address the need to work collectively, the outcomes make no reference to the importance of understanding and working to transform unequal power dynamics within groups, or to the need to develop conflict resolution skills. This is related to the concern that the list of critical outcomes does not include the development of an understanding of structural inequalities along lines of 'race', gender, class, sexual orientation and ability in South African society, and the need to eradicate these inequalities.

The outcomes also fail to reflect a critical awareness of debates about the nature of knowledge. For example, the outcomes present the ability to organise and critically evaluate information as an objective skill, and make no reference to the ways in which the conduct of these activities is always ideological and political. Carrim (1998), in an analysis of curriculum development and curriculum materials in promoting human rights, democracy and citizenship education in South Africa, reflects that citizens are simultaneously expected to be co-operative, caring and tolerant of each other, and capitalistically competitive:

The tensions between these are never noted in Curriculum 2005 or the Human and Social Sciences and Life Orientation Programmes. As a consequence the discourses of the global market economy and democratic citizenship are juxtaposed as if they are congruent. Both are accepted as non-negotiable realities, and both are projected as if they can be operative simultaneously in general South African society and particularly in learning and teaching situations.

Carrim therefore queries how a teacher is to deal with learners' questions about why there is such a high unemployment rate in South Africa, why their rights to their own livelihood are not being protected, and

why more people are being retrenched. While this specific point might not be directly relevant to the issues at hand it nonetheless underscores the contradictory discourses articulated in the new curriculum model.

Others have pointed out that at least in the Human and Social Sciences Learning Area one would have expected clear and explicit anti-racist and anti-sexist commitment. Specific Outcome number 3 in this learning area – “Participate actively in promoting a just, democratic and equitable society” – as well as the outcome “appreciating the richness of national and cultural heritages” are considered to be too decontextualised and could be interpreted differently depending on whether one is in Vryburg or in Soweto.

Our suggestion, then, includes evaluating all the learning areas in Curriculum 2005 through the lens of critical anti-racism and anti-discrimination. In an earlier submission to the Department of Education, the SAHRC, while agreeing with the view that democracy and human rights education should be infused in all learning areas, still felt that:

... without explicit outcomes statements and explicit categorisation, democracy and human rights education will always be in danger of marginalisation. It is important, given our historical context, that enabling democracy and human rights education ... should happen on two levels, that is, as an infused part of all learning activities and as a dedicated area with explicit outcomes.

### **Recommendation 8: Critically Examining Education Policies, Legislation and Implementation**

While we have found many gaps and limitations in policies, it is also clear that many schools either ignore or deliberately flout existing policy. It is therefore incumbent on the national and provincial education departments to formulate and implement procedures by which officials:

- identify the disparity between policy and school practice, and
- ensure this disparity is breached by prescribing certain forms of action to be undertaken by officials and the schools.

Areas in policy and legislation which should be tightened, amended or introduced include:

- **The Constitution:** Clause 29(2) which allows for single-medium language schools should be seriously revisited as it militates against racial integration and contradicts the official policy of multilingualism.
- **Language Policy:** Prioritising language courses for educators; encouraging dual-medium or multi-medium classes and schools as opposed to unilingual or parallel-medium schools. The latter has given the impression of two schools existing under one roof, usually divided along colour lines.
- **Admissions Policy:** Revisiting the school feeder zones concept. This often reproduces the legacy of apartheid group areas and provides some schools with a convenient excuse to prevent the admission of black learners.
- **School Fees:** The high level of school fees in some schools acts as a primary exclusionary factor. In

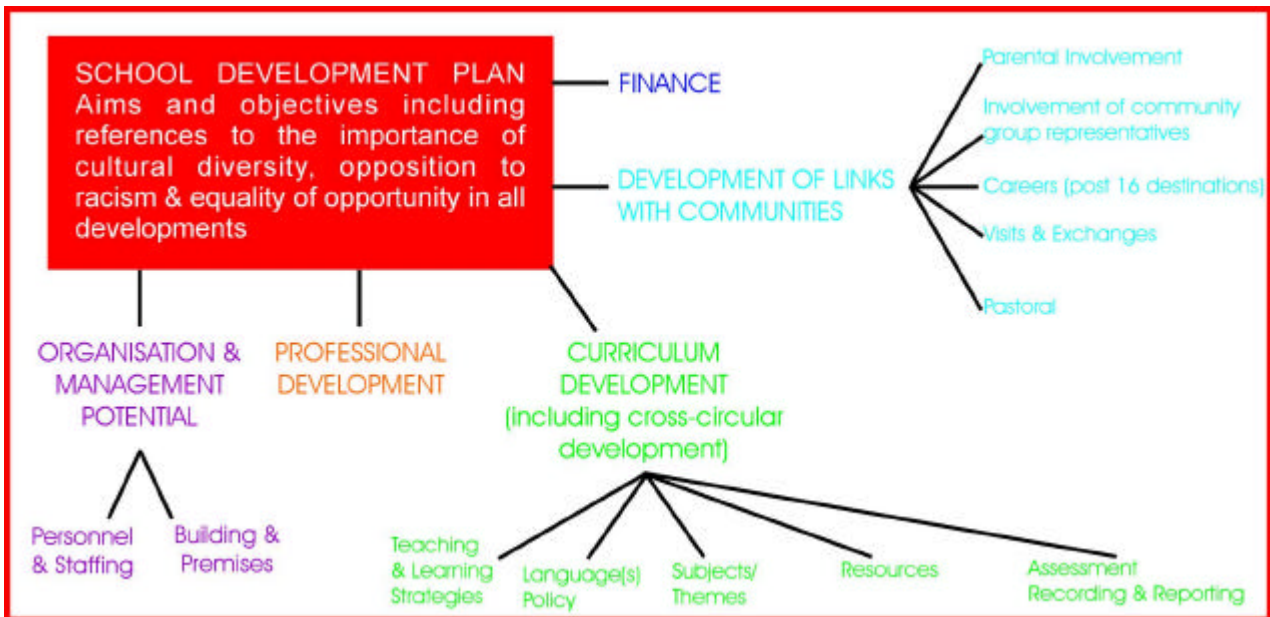
some schools an increase in these fees have contributed to racial tension and conflict. For these and other reasons, the schools fees model must be revisited.

- **Governing Bodies:** Governing Bodies in many schools are not representative of the learner population of the schools. Inhibiting factors that prevent black parent participation – such as the lack of transport, the holding of parent meetings on days and at times which are not suitable, the language used at these meetings, and the general atmosphere of the meetings – must be considered. Affirmative action policies should be considered. Training of governing body members to understand and successfully implement their increasingly complex and intricate tasks should be prioritised.
- **Gender Policy:** Most schools prefer to ignore issues around gender, sexism and sexuality despite the frequent intersection of rampant gender and sex-based discrimination with racial issues. The Gender Equity Task Team’s recommendations for school governing bodies should be made available for discussion and implementation.

### **Recommendation 9: The Need for Whole-School Development**

While anti-racist training for separate constituencies that make up the school community is important, a whole-school approach draws links between the school and the community at large. This is necessary since this study shows that many problems in the school originate from beyond the school gates. A whole-school approach also allows for tailoring programmes to suit each school’s unique circumstances. All aspects of school life are related and the whole-school approach allows for an examination of this and how it impacts on organisational and curriculum development. Anti-discrimination interventions in schools need to be coordinated with other school interventions and should be in conversation with each other in mutually reinforcing ways. The following plan developed for UK schools could be usefully adapted for our own needs:

**Figure 11. Whole-School  
Development Plan Conceptualisation**



Source: Lee and Saini, 1996.

**Recommendation 10:  
Designating a special day to focus on anti-discrimination**

The SAHRC and the departments of education have agreed to declare the week leading up to or including Human Rights Day (March 21<sup>st</sup>) as Human Rights Week in Education on an annual basis. We propose that one of these days in this week during school hours be set aside for an exclusive focus on anti-discrimination.

**Recommendation 11:  
The Role and Importance of Art and Culture.**

Arts and culture, if effectively utilised, have the potential to creatively assist anti-discriminatory initiatives. Through the mediums of dance, painting, sport, drama, music, debate and creative writing many issues could be explored in a non-threatening way. The processes involved in these forms lend themselves to active participation and critical analysis through experiential learning within ‘safe’ spaces. These methods should not be limited to the Arts and Culture Learning Area but should be incorporated in all areas.

This study has forcefully shown the absence of a common South African identity amongst the majority of school goers in this country. While the metaphor of the ‘Rainbow Nation’ is used to foster unity it unfortunately, in an unintended way, fosters the debilitating sense of belonging to discreet groups and puts the spotlight on different ‘races,’ ‘nations’, and ‘cultures’. Instead of this, the metaphor of the Groot Gariep\* to symbolise South African society as constituted by the flowing of different tributaries into the main stream of a broader river is much more useful. The tributaries are cultural practices and beliefs originating from different parts of the world at different points: something peculiar to South



African history. The influences from Africa, Europe, Asia and modern America (in that order) can be discerned in every aspect of the lives of South Africans. These influences have impacted on our religions, languages, music, dancing, sport and even dietary preferences. While some influences might be stronger than others, we need to recognise that in this integrative dynamic there is no dominant mainstream that should assimilate and submerge other influences. The essential point is to use this dynamic to build integration and a sense of nationhood without denying cherished practices and beliefs and without undermining diversity. It should be understood that the mainstream of a common South African culture and nation is in the process of being formed through the convergence of all present and future tributaries.

## **Conclusion**

The strictures of time and deadlines prevented ‘fleshing out’ these recommendations but also hindered (in fact all other sections as well) due attention to editorial protocols and issues around the precision and elegance of language. More importantly, issues, ideas and suggestions expressed in this study should be seen as a tentative attempt to wrestle with the complexities and nuances of racism and racial integration. This study does not claim to be authoritative nor the last word. The problems outlined in this study and its denouement have to be the ongoing responsibility of society as a whole. As the Chairperson of the SAHRC states in the preface of this report: “This report is intended to bring these matters to the public consciousness so that, aware of it, methods of dealing with it can be devised”.

\* We are indebted to Neville Alexander for the use of this metaphor.

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# **APPENDIX 1**

## **Tolerance vs. Transformation**

# Tolerance vs. Transformation

## Assumptions about the sources of racial problems and conflicts

### Tolerance Paradigm

- Racial problems and conflicts exist because of prejudice.
- Prejudice is an individual problem. Some individuals are more inclined to be strongly prejudiced because of their personality type or their particular growing up and life experiences.
- Prejudice appears when there is contact and interaction among people who are racially and culturally different from each other.
- Prejudice, which results from lack of knowledge about each other and from stereotypes that occur 'naturally', is a way to make sense out of unfamiliar and complex situations when there is little knowledge.

### Transformation Paradigm

- Racial problems and conflicts are rooted in racism, a systemic problem that functions at both institutional and interpersonal levels.
- Racism is created as a method for one society or group of people in a society to rule and control another society or groups of people within a society on the basis of racial differences or characteristics. As Asa Hilliard (1992) points out, its source is greed, and its consequences are economic, political and cultural benefits to the group that holds the power and exploitation and physical, emotional, and spiritual degradation of those who are the targets of the racism.
- All individuals born into a society that practises institutional racism get lessons in how to participate in its many forms. Families, schools, and the media play major roles in this socialisation process, and teach all of us to participate – actively by being direct perpetrators and passively by quiet acceptance of benefits and acquiescence to racism directed against one's own group, or even another racial group.

## Assumptions about what needs to change

### Tolerance Paradigm

- Changing individual attitudes and behaviours leads to the elimination of prejudice and discrimination.
- People learn to be non-prejudiced through gaining more facts and information about different cultures and through increased interaction with people different from themselves.

### Transformation Paradigm

- Individual changes in attitudes and behaviour are necessary, but not sufficient to eliminate racism. Knowledge, respect, and appreciation of different cultures are necessary, but also not sufficient.
- Eliminating racism requires restructuring power relationships in the economic, political, and cultural institutions of the society, and creating new conditions for interpersonal interactions. Examining the dynamics of oppression and power and how individuals participate in these dynamics are essential.
- Individuals can learn to be anti-racist activists, developing the skills to work with others to create systemic, institutional changes. Conversely, institutional change will result in greater opportunities to foster the development of more people who strongly support diversity and social, economic and political justice.

## Assumptions about who needs multicultural education

### Tolerance Paradigm

- Children from groups that are the targets of racial prejudice need multicultural education to build up their 'low self-esteem'.
- Children in mixed/integrated settings need multicultural education to learn about each other.
- Children in all-white settings do not usually need multicultural education because problems of prejudice do not arise when children of colour are not present.

### Transformation Paradigm

- *Everyone* needs multicultural, anti-bias education in all educational settings.
- The issues and tasks will vary for children depending on their racial and cultural background as well as their family and life experiences.
- Teachers and parents, as well as children, need to engage in multicultural, anti-oppression education.



## Working with Parents

### Tolerance Paradigm

- Teachers occasionally ask parents to share special cultural activities, such as cook a holiday food, dress in traditional clothing, show pictures of their country of origin.
- Teachers may read about or ask for information about the most visible aspects of each family's cultures, such as foods, music, and favourite objects, but usually do not learn about the underlying aspects, like beliefs and rules about teacher-child interaction and preferred learning styles. Nor, even if known, are these incorporated into daily classroom life.

### Transformation Paradigm

- Parents and family caregivers collaborate in curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.
- Teachers use a variety of strategies that actively and regularly involve parents, including provisions for languages other than English.
- Parents'/family caregivers' knowledge about their home culture is essential information for adapting the curriculum to each child's needs.
- Parents regularly share their daily life experiences at home and work, as well as special holiday events. Parents who are activists in any aspect of social justice work also share these experiences.

## Goals

### Tolerance Paradigm

- Teaching about 'different' cultures, that is cultures of racial and ethnic groups dissimilar to the dominant European American culture.
- Advocating for appreciation, enjoyment, and tolerance of other cultures.

### Transformation Paradigm

- Fostering the development of people of all ages to be activists in the face of injustice directed at them or others.
- Constructing a knowledgeable and confident self-identity.
- Developing empathetic, comfortable, and knowledgeable ways of interacting with people from a range of cultures and backgrounds.
- Learning to be critical thinkers about various forms of discrimination.
- Working with others to create concrete changes at the institutional and interpersonal levels.
- Instilling the idea that multicultural education is a process, rather than an end in itself, and is a life-time journey.

## Methods and Content

### Tolerance Paradigm

- Curriculum usually consists of activities for use with any and all children – a ‘one size fits all’ approach – which is also ‘teacher proof’.
- Content focuses on learning discrete pieces about the cultures of various racial and ethnic groups. The particular cultures selected for study are usually either those that are presented in a curriculum guide or ones a teacher knows about and likes.
- Multicultural activities tend to be add-ons to the curriculum – a special holiday activity, a multicultural bulletin board, a week-long unit, a multicultural education course in a teacher training programme. In essence, students ‘visit’ other cultures from time to time, then return to their existing Euro-American-based curriculum.
- Critics sometimes refer to this approach as ‘tourist’ curriculum. Tourists do not get to see the daily life of the cultures they visit, nor do they delve into the societal practices that may be harmful and unjust. Moreover, tourists may not even like the people they are visiting, but only appreciate their crafts, or music, or food.

### Transformation Paradigm

- All aspects of the curriculum integrate multicultural, critical thinking and justice concepts and practice. As Enid Lee points out, “It’s a point of view that cuts across all subject areas and addresses the histories and experiences of people who have been left out of the curriculum. It’s also a perspective that allows us to get at explanations for why things are the way they are in terms of power relationships, in terms of equality issues” (Lee, 1995).
- Teachers actively incorporate their children’s life experiences and interests and tailor the curriculum to meet the cultural, developmental and individual needs of their children.
- Content includes diversity and justice issues related to gender, class, family forms and disabilities, as well as ethnicity and culture.
- Teachers view children as active learners who learn from each other as well as from adults. They also consider co-operative learning and participation in the governance of their classroom as crucial components of educating for equality.

## Teacher Preparation

### Tolerance Paradigm

- Training content typically consists of information about various cultures and a compilation of multicultural activities to use with children. Training occurs in a separate module or course, rather than being integrated into the ‘regular’ curriculum class.
- Methods tend to emphasise providing information through readings and ‘spokespeople’ from various ethnic groups.
- Training does not require teachers to uncover or change their own biases and discomforts, or to learn about the dynamics and manifestations of institutional racism.

### Transformation Paradigm

- Teacher training challenges students to uncover, face, and change their own biases, discomforts, and misinformation and identify and alter educational practices that collude with racism and other institutionalised discrimination and prejudice.
- Training also enables students to understand their own cultural identity and behaviours, and develop culturally sensitive and relevant ways to interact with people.
- Diversity and equity issues are integrated into all aspects of the teacher-training curriculum.
- Training methods rely on experiential and co-operative peer learning, as well as on information giving and gathering.

## References

Hilliard, A. January, 1992. Racism: Its Origins and How it Works. Paper presented at the meeting of the Mid-West Association for the Education of Young Children, Madison, WI.

Lee, E. 1995. Taking Multicultural, Anti-racist Education Seriously. In *Rethinking Schools: An Agenda for Change*. New York: New Press.

# **APPENDIX 2**

## **List of Schools**

**Province****Ex-Dept****Eastern Cape**

Dale College	CED (HoA)
De Vos Malan Hoerskool	CED
Hoerskool Despatch	CED
Hoerskool Otto Du Plessis	CED
Hoer Volksskool	CED
Marlow Agricultural High School	CED
Queen's College Boys' High School	CED
Willowmore Secondary School	CED
Selbourne College	CED

**Free State**

Afrikaanse Hoerskool Kroonstad	DEC
Afrikaanse Hoerskool Sasolburg	DEC
Brebner High School	DEC
Goudveld Hoerskool	DEC
Hoerskool Kroonstad	DEC
Hoerskool Solomon Senekal	DEC
Hoer Tegniese Skool Sasolburg	DEC
Jim Fouche Sekondere Skool	DEC
Navalsig	DEC
St Andrew's School	Department of Education
Unitas Sekondere Skool	DEC

**Northern Cape**

Hoerskool Carnarvon	CED
Hoerskool Duineveld	CED
Hoerskool Keimoes	CED
Hoerskool Petrusville	CED
Hoerskool Theron	CED
Hoerskool Upington	CED
Philipstown High School	CED
Richmond High School	CED
Upington Kollege	CED

## **Gauteng**

Hoerskool Carletonville	TED
Hoerskool Jan Vijoer	TED
Hoerskool Menlopark	TED
Hoerskool Vereeniging	TED
Hoer Volksskool	TED
Laudium Secondary School	HoD
Lenasia Secondary School	HoD
The Hill High School	TED

## **KwaZulu-Natal**

Crystal Point High School	HoD
Durban Girls' High School	NED (HoA)
Glenwood High School	NED
Hoerskool Suid Natal	NED
Hillcrest High School	NED
John Ross High School	NED
Ladysmith High School	NED
Marburg High School	HoD
Port Shepstone High School	NED
Richards Bay Secondary School	HoD
Vryheid Hoerskool	NED

## **Northern Province**

Capricorn High School	TED
Eric Louw	TED
Settlers Agricultural High School	TED
Taxila High School	HoD

## **North West**

Bloemhof Gekombineerde Skool	TED
Brits Central School	HoD
Christiana Gekombineerde Skool	TED
Hoerskool Brits	TED
Hoerskool Hartebeespoort	TED
Hoer Tegniese Skool	TED
Hoer Volksskool	TED
Ventersdorp Hoerskool	TED

## **Mpumalanga**

Hoerskool Barbeton	TED
Hoerskool Delmas	TED
Hoerskool Patriot	TED
Hoerskool Rob Ferreira	TED
Highveld Park High School	TED
Lowveld High School	TED
Steelcrest High School	TED
Valencia High School	HoD
Witbank High	TED

## **Western Cape**

Cape Town High School	CED
Cravenby Secondary School	HoD
Excelsior Secondary School	HoR
Hoerskool De Ruyter	CED
Hoerskool Montana	CED
Heideveld Senior Secondary School	HoR
Muizenberg High School	CED
Rylands High School	HoD
The Settlers High School	CED
Worcester Sekondere Skool	HoR

# **APPENDIX 3**

## **The Data: Aggregate Tables**





**Table 4.1 Student perceptions of racism – Eastern Cape**

School	Question 1			Question 2						Question 3					
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
101*															
102*	4	2	6	1	1	2				4		6			6
103*															
104*															
105*	3		3			1	1		2	4	1	2			3
105*															
106*		2	2	1	1	2	1			5		3			3
107*	2	1	3									2	1		3
108*	1	4	5	1		1				2	5				5
Total	10	9	19	3	2	6	2		2	15	6	13	1		20
% of total	52.6	47.3		20.0	13.3	40.0	13.3		13.3		30.0	65.0	5.0		

- Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?  
Y = yes; N = no
- Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?  
1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified
- Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?  
N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure  
\* denotes former white school

**Table 4.2 Student perceptions of racism – Free State**

School	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
201*	35	2	37	5	2	9		6	4	26	7	21	2	5	35
202*	38	5	43		1		1	2	14	18	8	28	14		50
203*															
204*	4	27	31	20		9		4	2	35	11	18	2		31
205*	33	8	41	17	7	12		4	10	50	18	28	1	2	49
206*															
207*	7	10	17	2	2	2	2	5	7	20	7	7	1	2	17
208*	6	21	27	1	2	3	2	12	6	26	18	10	5		33
209*	15	10	25	3	2	6	1	2	9	23	12	7	3	1	23
210*															
211*															
Total	138	83	221	48	16	41	6	35	52	198	81	119	28	10	207
% of total	62.4	37.6		24.2	8.1	20.7	3.0	17.7	26.3		34.0	50.0	11.8	4.2	

- Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?  
Y = yes; N = no
- Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?  
1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified
- Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?  
N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school

**Table 4.3 Student perceptions of racism – Gauteng**

School	Question 1			Question 2						Question 3					
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
301*	89	20	109	20	2	5		5	22	54	44	36	22	4	106
302*	2	2	4	4		4				8	1	3			4
303*	3	1	4			3		3		6	2	2			4
304*	1	2	3	3		2		5		10	1	2			3
305*	11	14	25			3			9	12	5	10		1	16
306†															
307†	3	1	4	3	1			3	1	8	4				4
308*															
Total	109	40	149	30	3	17		16	32	98	57	53	22	5	137
% of total															

Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?

Y = yes; N = no

**Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?

1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified

**Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?

N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 4.4 Student perceptions of racism – KwaZulu-Natal**

School	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
401†	15	16	31	3	4	1			11	19	24	6			30
402*	13	7	20	6	2	1	3	1	8	21	9	2		6	17
403*															
404*	14	16	30	2	1	4		4	8	19	18	9		2	29
405*	22	13	35	4		3	1	5	10	23	27	4	1	1	33
406*	16	10	26	6	1	5		6	7	25	15	9	2		26
407*	16	51	67	7	1	6		3	16	33	24	25	12	2	43
408†	11	19	30	6		4	2	1	5	18	25	5			30
409*	26	15	41	5	3	7	2	5	18	40	18	8	3	5	34
410†	12	18	30	3		2		2	9	16	22	6	1		29
411*	10	22	32	5	4	2	3	6	9	29	23	6	1	3	33
Total	155	187	342	47	16	35	11	33	101	243	205	80	20	19	304
% of total	45.3	54.7		19.3	6.6	14.4	4.5	13.6	41.6		63.3	24.7	6.2	5.8	

- Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?  
Y = yes; N = no
- Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?  
1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified
- Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?  
N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school

**Table 4.5 Student perceptions of racism – Mpumalanga**

School	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
501*	11	3	14					4	6	10	11	1	1	1	14
502*															
503*															
504*															
505*															
506*															
507*	7	14	21					16	6	22	6	10	3	2	18
508†	11	8	19					8	9	17	9	3	3	1	16
509*	23	2	25					7	11	18	13	2		2	20
Total	52	27	79					35	32	67	39	16	7	6	68
% of total	65.8	34.2						52.2	47.8		57.4	23.5	10.3	8.8	

Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?

Y = yes; N = no

**Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?

1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified

**Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?

N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 4.6 Student perceptions of racism – Northern Cape**

School	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
601*	14	6	20	2		2		2	4	10	7	7	2	1	17
602*	12	9	21	2				4	5	11	10	6	3	1	20
603*	28	3	31	2	2		3	8	5	20	16	7	3	1	27
604*	9	30	39	1		10		8	23	42	9	29	2		40
605*	11	5	16			1		2		3	9	5	1		15
606*	18	2	20	4		1		1	11	17	3	10	1		14
607*	8	2	10			1			4	5					
608*									3	3	9	17	3		29
609*	19	4	23						13	13	16	2	3		21
Total	119	61	180	11	2	15	3	25	68	124	79	83	18	3	183
% of total	66.1	33.9		8.9	1.6	12.1	2.4	20.2	54.8		43.2	45.4	9.8	1.6	

Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?

Y = yes; N = no

**Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?

1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified

**Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?

N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school

**Table 4.7 Student perceptions of racism – Northern Province**

School	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
701*	26	23	49	2		8		11	20	41	24	5	9	6	44
702*	22	3	25	1	6		3	16	7	33	20	3	7	4	34
703*	43	24	67					20	31	51	40	6	10	2	58
704†	27	33	60	7		39		11	30	87	38	18	16	8	80
Total	176	83	201	10	6	47	3	58	88	212	122	32	42	20	216
% of total	58.7	41.3		4.7	2.8	22.2	1.4	27.4	41.5		56.5	14.8	19.4	9.3	

- Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?  
Y = yes; N = no
- Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?  
1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified
- Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?  
N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 4.8 Student perceptions of racism – North West**

School	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
801*	31	12	43			31		31	7	69	6	33	2		41
802†	33	16	49	16	6	8		12	9	51	22	17	7	4	50
803*	6	12	18	1	2	12		15		30	4		1		12
804*												7			
805*	14	15	29		1	23		24	8	56	15	11		3	29
806*	16	2	18												
807*	5	20	25	3	4	1				8	13	10	1	1	25
808*	52	2	54		1	5		6	46	58	13	20	19		52
Total	157	79	236	20	14	80		88	70	272	73	98	30	8	209
% of total	66.5	33.5		7.4	5.1	29.4		32.4	25.7		34.9	46.9	14.4	3.8	

- Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?  
Y = yes; N = no
- Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?  
1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified
- Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?  
N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school



**Table 4.9 Student perceptions of racism – Western Cape**

School	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
901*	20	17	37			2		9	5	16	26	6	1	4	37
902†	16	34	50	10	3	5	4	20	7	49	42	5		2	49
903‡	10	3	13	2		1		1	3	7	7		1	2	10
904*	26	5	31	1			1	5		7	11	12	3	1	27
905*	21	16	37	4	2	9	2	8	10	35	25	5			30
906‡	40	15	55	10	7	13	6	11	13	60	34	14	2	3	53
907*	7	15	22					10	7	17	14	1	1	1	17
908†	7	26	33		5	12	2	5	10	34	28	2	2		32
909*	12	12	24	7	4	4	1	16	3	35	15	5		2	22
910‡															
Total	159	143	302	34	21	46	16	85	58	260	202	50	10	15	277
% of total	52.6	47.4		13.1	8.1	17.7	6.2	32.7	22.3		72.9	18.1	3.6	5.4	

- Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?  
Y = yes; N = no
- Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?  
1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified
- Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?  
N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

\* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school

‡ denotes former coloured school

**Table 4.10 Student perceptions of racism – National**

Province	Question 1			Question 2							Question 3				
	Y	N	Total	Yes					No	Total	N	YS	YU	Un	Total
				1	2	3	4	5							
Eastern Cape	10	9	19	3	2	6	2		2	15	6	13	1		20
Free State	138	83	221	48	16	41	6	35	52	198	81	119	28	10	238
Gauteng	109	40	149	30	3	17		16	32	98	57	53	22	5	137
KwaZul-Natal	155	187	342	47	16	35	11	33	101	243	205	80	20	19	324
Mpumalanga	52	27	79					35	32	67	39	16	7	6	68
Northern Cape	119	61	180	11	2	15	3	25	68	124	79	83	18	3	183
Northern Province	118	83	201	10	6	47	3	58	88	212	122	32	42	20	216
North West	157	79	236	20	14	80		88	70	272	73	98	30	8	209
Western Cape	159	143	302	34	21	46	16	85	58	260	202	50	10	15	277
Total	1017	712	1729	203	80	287	41	375	503	1489	864	544	178	86	1672
% of national total	58.8	41.2		13.6	5.4	19.3	2.8	25.2	33.7		51.7	32.5	10.6	5.2	

- Notes: **Question 1** Have there been racial incidents at the school?  
Y = yes; N = no
- Question 2** Is there racial integration at the school?  
1 = in the classroom; 2 = in the playground at break; 3 = at sporting/extramural/cultural activities; 4 = outside school; 5 = unspecified
- Question 3** Does the school have a policy/programme to eliminate racism?  
N = no; YS = yes and successful; YU = yes and unsuccessful; Un = unsure

**Table 5.1 Staff Profile by Colour: Eastern Cape**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
101*						
102*	33					33
103*	33					33
104*	35					35
105*	16					16
106*	12					12
107*	25	1				26
108*						
109*	37	1				38
Total	191	2	0	0	0	193
% of provincial total	99.0	1.0				

Note: \* denotes former white school

**Table 5.2 Staff Profile by Colour: Free State**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
201*	25					25
202*	26					26
203*	21	5	1			27
204*	31					31
205*	57					57
206*	23					23
207*	32					32
208*	32					32
209*	45	4		1		50
210*						
211*						
Total	292	9	1	1	0	303
% of provincial total	96.4	3.0	0.3	0.3		

Note: \* denotes former white school

**Table 5.3 Staff Profile by Colour: Gauteng**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
301*	35					35
302*	46					46
303*	43					43
304*	40					40
305*	34					34
306†				36		36
307†	6			39		45
308*	44	1	1	2		48
Total	248	1	1	77	0	327
% of provincial total	75.8	0.3	0.3	23.5		

Note: \* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 5.4 Staff Profile by Colour: KwaZulu-Natal**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
401†		1		36		37
402*	60	1		7		68
403*	52	1		4		57
404*	25					25
405*	29					29
406*	36		1	3		40
407*	43					43
408†				43		43
409*	49	2	2	2		55
410†	2			35		37
411*	37					37
Total	333	5	3	130	0	471
% of provincial total	70.7	1.1	0.6	27.6		

Note: \* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 5.5 Staff Profile by Colour: Mpumalanga**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
501*	24					24
502*	25					25
503*	20					20
504*	37					37
505*	29			1		30
506*	51					51
507*						
508†						
509*	29					29
Total	215	0	0	1	0	216
% of provincial total	99.5			0.5		

Note: \* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 5.6 Staff Profile by Colour: Northern Cape**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
601*	9		1			10
602*	37					37
603*	14					14
604*		6	5			11
605*	3	7	4			14
606*	25					25
607*		5	5			10
608*	5	4	4			13
609*	16		1			17
Total	109	22	20	0	0	151
% of provincial total	72.2	14.6	13.2			

Note: \* denotes former white school

**Table 5.7 Staff Profile by Colour: Northern Province**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
701*	35	1				36
702*						
703*	19			2		21
704†	7	2		24		33
Total	61	3	0	26	0	90
% of provincial total	67.8	3.3		28.9		

Note: \* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 5.8 Staff Profile by Colour: North West**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
801*	18					18
802†	6	3		18		27
803*	26					26
804*	42					42
805*	44					44
806*	48					48
807*	42					42
808*	6					6
Total	232	3	0	18	0	253
% of provincial total	91.7	1.2		7.1		

Note: \* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school

**Table 5.9 Staff Profile by Colour: Western Cape**

School	White	African	Col.	Indian	Other	Total
901*						
902†			5	25		30
903‡		2	30			32
904*	15					15
905*	16					16
906‡		1	34			35
907*	16		3			19
908†			8	22		30
909*	40		3			43
910‡			44			44
Total	87	3	127	47	0	264
% of provincial total	33.0	1.1	48.1	17.8		

Notes: \* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school  
‡ denotes former coloured school

**Table 5.10 Staff Profile by Colour: National**

<b>Province</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>African</b>	<b>Col.</b>	<b>Indian</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Eastern Cape	191	2	0	0		193
Free State	292	9	1	1		303
Gauteng	248	1	1	77		327
KwaZulu-Natal	333	5	3	130		471
Mpumalanga	215	0	0	1		216
Northern Cape	109	22	20	0		151
Northern Province	61	3	0	26		90
North West	232	3	0	18		253
Western Cape	87	3	127	47		264
<b>Total</b>	<b>1768</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2268</b>
% of national total	78.0	2.1	6.7	13.2		

**Table 6.1 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – Eastern Cape**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
101*											
102*	16					16					
103*	16					16					
104*	17					17	100				
105*	15		1			16	100				
106*	12					12	100				
107*	17					17	100				
108*							100				
109*	19					19	66.7	33.3			
							100				
Total	112	0	1	0	0	113					
% of provincial total	99.1		0.9								

Note: \* denotes former white school



**Table 6.2 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – Free State**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
201*	13					13	100				
202*	16					16	100				
203*	9	5				14	100				
204*	13					13	100				
205*	25	1				26	100				
206*	13					13	100				
207*	11	1				12	100				
208*	17					17	100				
209*	13	2	1			16	100				
210*											
211*											
Total	130	9	1	0	0	140					
% of provincial total	92.9	6.4	0.7								

Note: \* denotes former white school

**Table 6.3 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – Gauteng**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Bl	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Bl	Col	Ind	Other
301*	16					16	100				
302*	17		1			18	100				
303*	16					16	100				
304*	15	1				16	100				
305*	17					17	100				
306†				17		17				100	
307†		1		15		16				100	
308*	17	1		1		19	100				
Total	98	3	1	33	0	135					
% of provincial total	72.6	2.2	0.7	24.4							

Note: \* denotes former white school  
 † denotes former Indian school

**Table 6.4 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – KwaZulu-Natal**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
401†		1		11		12					
402*	13	1		2		16					
403*	13	2				15					
404*	12			1		13					
405*	14	1	1			16					
406*	10	1				11					
407*	13					13					
408†		3		12		15					
409*	12			1		13					
410†				14		14					
411*	14					14					
Total	101	9	1	41	0	152					
% of provincial total	66.4	5.9	0.7	27.0							

Note: \* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school

**Table 6.5 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – Mpumalanga**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
501*	15	1	1	1		18	100				
502*	15					15	100				
503*	13					13	100				
504*	17					17	100				
505*	11	1				12	100				
506*	17					17					
507*											
508†											
509*	19					19	100				
Total	107	2	1	1	0	111					
% of provincial total	96.4	1.8	0.9	0.9							

Note: \* denotes former white school  
 † denotes former Indian school

**Table 6.6 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – Northern Cape**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
601*	13		1			14	75			25	
602*	17					17	100				
603*	13					13	100				
604*		7	12			19		50	50		
605*			15			15			100		
606*	11		2			13	100				
607*		7	6			13		33	67		
608*	1	7	6			14	33	33	33		
609*											
Total	55	21	42	0	0	118					
% of provincial total	46.6	17.8	35.6								

Note: \* denotes former white school

**Table 6.7 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – Northern Province**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
701*	22	4				26	85	15			
702*											
703*	11	3		1		15	67	33			
704†		2		16		18					
Total	33	9	0	17	0	59					
% of provincial total	55.9	15.3		28.8							

Note: \* denotes former white school  
 † denotes former Indian school

**Table 6.8 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – North West**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
801*	13					13	100				
802†	2	4	1	13		20	25			75	
803*	19					19	100				
804*	19					19	100				
805*	17		1	1		19	100				
806*	20	1				21	100				
807*	19					19	100				
808*	3					3	100				
Total	112	5	2	14	0	133					
% of provincial total	84.2	3.8	1.5	10.5							

Note: \* denotes former white school  
 † denotes former Indian school

**Table 6.9 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – Western Cape**

<i>School</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
901*											
902†				12		12					
903‡		4	9			13					
904*	13		3			16					
905*											
906‡		1	12			13					
907*	9		4			13					
908†				8	4	12					
909*	10		3			13					
910‡			12			12					
Total	32	5	43	20	4	104					
% of provincial total	30.8	4.8	41.3	19.2	3.8						

Note: \* denotes former white school  
 † denotes former Indian school  
 ‡ denotes former coloured school



**Table 6.10 Members by colour (n) and office bearers by colour (%) – National**

<i>Province</i>	SGB Members (n)						SGB Office Bearers (%)				
	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other	Total	Wh	Af	Col	Ind	Other
Eastern Cape	112	0	1	0	0	113					
Free State	130	9	1	0	0	140					
Gauteng	98	3	1	33	0	135					
KwaZulu-Natal	101	9	1	41	0	152					
Mpumalanga	107	2	1	1	0	111					
Northern Cape	55	21	42	0	0	118					
Northern Province	33	9	0	17	0	59					
North West	112	5	2	14	0	133					
Western Cape	32	5	43	20	4	104					
Total	780	63	92	126	4	1065					
% of national total	73.2	5.9	8.6	11.8	0.4						

**Table 7.1 Management response regarding language policy – Eastern Cape**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
101*	1												
102*		1											
103*		1			1								
104*		1			1				1				
105*		1			1								
106*		1			1								
107*	1					1					1		
108*	1				1								
109*	1					1			1	1			

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and multilingual classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school

**Table 7.2 Management response regarding language policy – Free State**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
201*			1	1	1					1			German
202*			1				1		1				
203*	1					1				1			
204*		1			1					1			
205*			1	1		1				1			
206*		1											
207*			1				1		1		1	computers	
208*		1			1			1		1			
209*				1	1					1			
210*	1				1				1	1			
211*			1		1								Sotho**

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and dual-medium classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school  
\*\* language offered after school hours

**Table 7.3 Management response regarding language policy – Gauteng**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
301*			1	1	1								
302*		1			1								
303*		1			1			1			1	remedial	
304*		1			1					1			
305*		1			1					1			
306†	1						1		1				
307†	1					1				1			
308*	1						1		1	1			Zulu

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and multilingual classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school

**Table 7.4 Management response regarding language policy – KwaZulu-Natal**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
401 †	1						1	1					computer
402*	1						1		1	1			
403*	1				1				1				
404*		1			1			1					
405*	1				1			1		1			
406*	1				1				1	1	1		
407*			1		1								
408 †	1					1		1		1			
409*	1				1					1			
410 †	1				1				1				
411*			1		1				1				

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and multilingual classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school

**Table 7.5 Management response regarding language policy – Mpumalanga**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
501*			1	1			1				1	Old exam papers	
502*		1			1			1					
503*		1			1			1					
504*		1											
505*	1						1				1	Remedial classes	
506*	1				1			1					
507*	1												
508†	1												
509*	1				1						1	Extra Gr 8 classes	

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and multilingual classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 7.6 Management response regarding language policy – Northern Cape**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
601*		1			1			1					
602*		1			1			1					
603*		1			1			1					
604*			1			1		1					
605*		1			1				1				
606*		1			1			1					
607*			1			1		1					
608*			1			1				1	1	Computer	
609*		1		1	1			1					

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and multilingual classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school

**Table 7.7 Management response regarding language policy – Northern Province**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support					Other Language Subjects
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other	Specify 'Other'	
701*	1												
702*		1											
703*	1				1						1	Bridging classes, computers	Setswana/Sepedi
704†	1												

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and multilingual classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school  
† denotes former Indian school



**Table 7.8 Management response regarding language policy – North West**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
801*			1		1			1					German, Tswana
802†	1						1			1			
803*		1					1			1			
804*		1			1			1					
805*			1		1			1					
806*			1	1		1				1			
807*		1			1			1					
808*		1			1				1				

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked, the school uses parallel medium for Grades 8-9 and multilingual classrooms for Grades 10-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school

† denotes former Indian school

**Table 7.9 Management response regarding language policy – Western Cape**

School	Language of Instruction				Impact			Type of Support				Other Language Subjects	
	E	A	P	M	0	1	2	0	C	XM	Other		Specify 'Other'
901*	1						1				1	Computer	Xhosa
902†	1		1			1			1				
903‡			1*	1*		1							
904*		1			1	1		1					
905*			1					1		1			
906‡	1				1		1			1	1	Peer groups	Xhosa
907*	1					1			1				
908†	1				1					1			
909*		1					1			1			
910‡													

Notes: Language of Instruction E = English  
A = Afrikaans  
P = parallel medium  
M = multilingual  
Where both P and M are marked (1\*), the school uses parallel medium for Grades 9-10 and dual-medium classrooms for Grades 11-12.

Impact of Language 0 = no impact  
1 = minor impact  
2 = substantial impact

Type of Support 0 = no support  
C = teachers provide academic support during class time  
XM = teachers provide academic support as extramural

\* denotes former white school † denotes former Indian school ‡ denotes former coloured school

**CONFERENCE ON  
RACIAL INTEGRATION  
IN SCHOOLS**

**4 – 6 MARCH 1999**

**RANDBURG, GAUTENG  
SOUTH AFRICA**

**Report  
by the**

**South African Human Rights Commission  
(SAHRC)**

**October 1999**

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# I. Introduction

The Conference on Racial Integration in Schools was convened as a part of Phase I of the South African Human Rights Commission's (SAHRC) project on racial integration in public secondary schools. This project was initiated in response to the large number of complaints lodged with the SAHRC dealing with racial tensions and discrimination in the schooling sector. The first phase of the project, started in June 1998, consisted of a study of 79 schools across the country eliciting quantitative and qualitative data from school management, educators and learners in order to:

- a) Ascertain the level of racial integration in public high schools;
- b) Determine the various ways in which racial prejudice manifests itself in the schooling sector;
- c) Identify the problems and causes that inhibit racial integration;
- d) Determine what schools are doing to implement racial integration and how they respond to learner diversity; and
- e) Develop guidelines and recommendations for promoting racial integration.

The data gathered was put together in a report by the Wits Education Policy Unit and released by the SAHRC. It offered a number of recommendations and was put up for discussion in its totality at the conference that this report documents. The SAHRC is now planning the second phase of the project, which will, to a large extent, be based on the deliberations at the conference. SAHRC representatives and facilitators of the conference presented the report and related papers at a workshop on racism in schools that was held by the National Department of Education in late March.

The conference was attended by one hundred and sixty participants from the National Education Department, Provincial Education Departments, the organised teaching profession, school governing body formations, learner organisations, statutory bodies, human rights groups and community organisations. The SAHRC enjoyed support from the schools as well as the national and provincial departments of education, indicating a general commitment from the education sector to tackle the problems of discrimination in schools.

## II. Objectives of the Conference

The objectives of the conference were to:

- a) Launch the report of the SAHRC study;
- b) Generate discussion on the findings of the SAHRC study;
- c) Discuss recommendations and their possible implementation in the form of an action plan for confronting discrimination and promoting racial integration in schools; and
- d) Initiate a campaign to educate and sensitise communities on racism.

## III. Conference Programme and Participation

The report on the study by the SAHRC, *Racism, 'Racial Integration' and Desegregation in South African Public Secondary Schools*, was completed in February 1999 and sent to the Minister of Education, the Director-General of the National Department of Education, MECs of Education and Heads of Provincial Education Departments. The SAHRC also submitted the report to the various education authorities before making it available to the general public. It was embargoed until the 4th of March to coincide with the beginning of the conference and to give departments of education enough time to work through the report before the conference.

The conference was officially opened at 18h00 on Thursday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, with a welcome address from the Deputy-Chairperson of the SAHRC, Shirley Mabusela, calling upon delegates and participants to find ways to transform all schools “into cradles of excellence”. The Minister of Education, Prof SME Bengu, delivered a critical opening address balancing the progress that has been made with the challenges that lie ahead. While highlighting numerous problems, he also mentioned schools that have made progress on the road to racial integration.

The second day of the conference was set aside for two addresses, the presentation of the report and groupwork. The Chairperson of the SAHRC, Dr N Barney Pitso, provided the conference with a perspective and overview from the SAHRC on *Racism and Racial Integration in Schools*. He highlighted the need of all South Africans to “acknowledge the reality of racism in society” as a first step to challenging it. Dr Franklin Sonn, well-known educator, businessman and former ambassador to the United States, delivered the keynote address emphasising the responsibilities of educators and challenging education role-players to make use of the report as an “enormous advantage of knowledge and insight” that exposes the complexities of our diverse society and provides a basis from which we can proceed.

The *Racism, 'Racial Integration' and Desegregation in South African Public Secondary Schools* report was presented by Salim Vally and Yolisa Dalamba. After discussing it, the delegates broke into working group sessions that reported back on the last day of the conference. These discussions generated very lively and interesting debates that are reflected in the following section of this report. The Conference came to an end at 13h00 on the 6<sup>th</sup> with the adoption of the Randburg Declaration.

## IV. Working Groups: Themes and Reports

The analysis and findings of the report determined the themes for the working groups, centred around the guiding theme: *Towards an Anti-Racist Programme at all Levels of Education*. The working groups addressed the following:

- Gaps and mismatches in policy, legislation and implementation;
- Structures and Support - National, Provincial, Local, School, Teachers organisations, Student organisations;
- Curriculum issues;
- Training and Development:
  - Educators
  - Parents (School Governing Bodies - SGBs)
  - Learners (Representative Council of Learners - RCLs);
- Culture, Language, Religion, Sport and the Arts;
- Transport, School Fees and Admissions; and
- Identity/Difference; Desegregation/De-racialisation; Assimilation/ Multiculturalism/ Anti-Racism.

Many groups were frustrated by time constraints and felt that given the enormous importance of the topics being discussed more time could have been well used. As it is, however, the reports from each working group are summarized below:

### A. Gaps and Mismatches in Policy, Legislation and Implementation

#### 1. Areas of concern

Good policy to transform schools abounds but often does not take the form of action when brought down to the school level. The continuing use of corporal punishment in many schools highlights this problem. The gap between the creation of new curricula and the lingering use of old curricula serves as a further example to this problem. Furthermore, the values and principles that underlie the new curriculum are not being internalised by all the educators.

Not enough resources are set aside for implementation and capacity building programmes. Similarly, the monitoring of compliance is not adequate enough to ensure that the rulings and procedures practised by School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and schools comply with national policies, legislation or with the Constitution.

The fact that policy is generated centrally and then delegated to the provinces and institutions for implementation often dilutes its impact. The cascading model of training often fails to have an impact at the institutional level for the same reasons; as it is, no national anti-discrimination policy exist.

## **2. Recommendations**

### **a) Education and Training**

The SAHRC should collaborate with education departments to provide interim human rights training in schools, with pilot projects being implemented immediately in “hotspots.” Anti-discrimination training is needed at all levels, with special attention paid to the training of SGB members and educators that addresses their own prejudices.

### **b) School-Based Policy**

Anti-discrimination policies in line with national anti-discrimination policy, the Constitution, and the upcoming equality legislation must be generated at school-level. These policies must address all forms of discrimination, poverty and socio-economic problems as well as inequalities related to power, class and gender. Learner-support programmes could be expanded to give individual support to learners in specific cases of discrimination.

### **c) Effective Monitoring Mechanisms**

Monitoring could take place through further collaboration between the SAHRC and the education department. Community based monitoring initiatives, such as learner-based monitoring, should be supported to meet the urgent need that exists to assess whether policies are being implemented at the school level. Further studies to keep track of developments on the ground and forums to discuss and debate issues are also necessary.

### **d) Policy**

A structured dialogue between the SAHRC and the organs of state should take place to develop initial ideas and to help convey a full understanding of subsequent policies to all role-players. Policy-makers must then be involved in the implementation process.

### **e) Role of School Governing Bodies**

The role of SGBs must be clarified and their members trained in terms of their obligations with regard to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the education legislation and policy framework. A possible amendment to the South African Schools Act (SASA) could also be made to address the issue of parent representation on SGBs.

### **f) Advocacy**

A general advocacy project must seek to develop a culture of non-racism in the country as a whole. Communities should be empowered to demand that schools focus on all facets of the right to education as described in the Constitution.

### **g) Language**

The working group could not agree on section 29 (2) of the Constitution which governs the current parameters for language policy.

### **h) School Fees**

The SAHRC must investigate cases where school fees are used to exclude learners, as this is contrary to the legislation.



## **B. Structures and Support: National; Provincial; Local; School; Teacher Organisations; and Student Organisations**

### ***1. Issues***

Successful anti-racist education requires the commitment of all stakeholders who should publicise declarations of intent in this regard. Adequate funding that includes human resource development and appropriate support structures should be provided to allow all stakeholders to develop and implement multiple strategies to combat school-based discrimination. Representative anti-discrimination units should be established in all schools to monitor and eliminate discriminatory practices through proactive initiatives. Clear channels of communication need to be developed to facilitate the effective flow of information. Finally, it is also vital to report success and change in order to foster a positive atmosphere.

### ***2. Recommendations***

#### ***a) Establishing anti-discrimination units in schools***

The working group proposes that we commit our schools and ourselves to establishing anti-discriminatory units in all schools, clusters, districts, and provinces as well as nationally (to deal with discrimination on the basis of disability, gender and other categories). Priority should be given to anti-racist education.

#### ***b) Purpose of units***

Anti-discrimination units should monitor discriminatory practices and evaluate progress being made towards achieving anti-racist education objectives, educate and counsel both educators and learners, build an anti-racist environment in schools, and report on progress being made.

#### ***c) Constituting Anti-discrimination Units***

An independent consultative body will define the roles, policy and responsibilities of the units.

#### ***d) Funding of units***

Units should attempt to access sponsorship support to fund the expected cost of human resources training and training materials.

#### ***e) Risk factors***

The lack of commitment from the stakeholders to the objectives of anti-discrimination education was defined as the greatest threat to the success of this project.

#### ***f) Key performance indicators***

The ultimate test of performance will be the existence of discrimination-free, integrated schools. Media reports indicating a decrease in the number of racial incidents at schools will also mark progress. Educators should also be evaluated through performance agreements and appraisals that assess their work in achieving the objectives of anti-discrimination education.

## **C. Curriculum Issues**

### ***1. Issues***

Different kinds of curricula exist that influence intervention:

- The 'official curriculum' refers to what is prescribed in text or documents; the 'unofficial curriculum' refers to what is recommended.
- The 'curriculum in use' refers to how curricula implementation is influenced by forces that impact on the way the curriculum is put into use - such as material factors like the level of resources and the level of teacher preparedness.
- The 'hidden curriculum' refers to socialisation processes and how values and attitudes are transmitted - for instance in the way educators speak to learners of different population groups.
- The 'experienced curriculum' refers to how learners and educators experience the curriculum in the classroom; that is the way learners interact and are influenced by the people who get to play out the curriculum in the classroom.

It was theorised that there are two different means by which people tend to view curricula:

- A 'narrow' approach sees it as a document whose guidelines are absolute and incontestable. This leads to authoritarian teaching methods and regurgitation-based learning styles.
- A 'broad' view, as reflected in the principles of curriculum 2005, goes beyond simply the letter of the text and includes looking at teaching assessments, teacher preparedness and resources. It views knowledge as contestable and debatable and leads to critical thinking and interactive teaching styles.

Problems with curricula most often occur in the discrepancies found between policy and implementation, contradictions within the curricula itself, and the inconsistent delivery of the curriculum across the grades.

### ***2. Recommendations***

- a) Teacher training and development is necessary to combat the lack of understanding amongst teachers on what Curriculum 2005 means and how to translate the curriculum into classroom action. Curriculum 2005 should include a provision for learning programmes that can counter racism and other forms of discrimination.
- b) Quality assurance and mechanisms that can monitor the experiences in the classroom must be put in place. Teachers need to be empowered to analyse classroom practices and observe how learners react to experiencing these practices. Indicators of anti-racism include numbers and ratios, incidents of racism or sexism, interrelations between learners, out of school behaviour and the degree to which learners manifest self-awareness.
- c) Education needs to be more reflective of the African experience and an African epistemology is needed that gives voice to issues such as gender, sex, sexual orientation and disability.
- d) Parents and communities should be empowered to play a more important role as the watchdogs of schools.
- e) Teachers, principals and all other educators must be trained and allowed full access to curriculum materials.
- f) Both hidden and open discrimination are transmitted through social relations in the classroom. Teachers must transmit values and attitudes which are consistent with curriculum 2005.

- g) National intervention in future curricula development work should involve principals and subject advisors.
- h) The environment of learners must be addressed, including facilitating the ability of educators to reach parents.
- i) Guidelines are needed to include anti-racism as part of anti-discrimination programmes.
- j) A major advocacy campaign should be undertaken to enable an awareness of anti-discrimination education.
- k) To address discrimination within the formal or official curriculum, guidelines that include all forms of discrimination should be fleshed out in a democratic, participatory process. To address discrimination in the unofficial curriculum, texts with alternative voices should be provided as well as material, resources, proper training and support for teachers.

## **D. Training and Development (Educators, Parents and Learners)**

### ***1. Issues***

- ❑ There is a need to enhance the importance of education in the eyes of our communities and to build appreciation for the role our educators play.
- ❑ Education should generally be geared towards developing a sense of respect and dignity in relation to educators, parents and learners.
- ❑ Training and policy development should occur simultaneously to empower teachers to act as role-models in the field of human rights and democratic practices in the classroom.
- ❑ Inadequate INSET (in-service educator training) nationally has generally neglected the need to develop anti-discriminatory practices.

### ***2. Recommendations***

#### *a) Educators*

- Human rights and democracy education should be incorporated into all the capacity-building programmes for educators such as those on curriculum, management, etc. These programmes must be co-ordinated to facilitate easier understanding and application of all the change initiatives that are relevant to the schooling sector.
- The re-deployment of teachers should be used to assist with the integration of educators in schools. The National Department of Education, teacher unions and organisations as well as the SAHRC should investigate these possibilities.
- The issue of racism has to be addressed within the context of discrimination and prejudice at all levels, from policy-making to the classroom and all stakeholders should embark upon a public information campaign.
- The South African Council for Educators (SACE) and organised teacher organisations should focus on developing educator capacity with regard to human rights and democracy and the general education legislation and policy framework. All educators should be compelled to participate in regular courses on multiculturalism, human rights and democracy as a pre-requisite for the renewal of their SACE licence.
- The Departments of Education must acknowledge the key role that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) play in the delivery of programmes.
- The 'twinning' and 'clustering' of schools should be used to create forums to facilitate a healthy debate on racism and human rights issues.
- Human rights, democracy and anti-bias core outcomes in pre-service and in-service educator training programmes should be given more prominence.

#### *b) School Governing Bodies (SGBs)*

- SGBs need to be trained in implementing correct procedures when dealing with human rights issues. A national structure of SGBs should be created to support and enhance the capacity of all SGBs.
- Schools admission policies must be in line with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and all SGB training should include human rights and democracy issues.
- Creative ways must be devised to get maximum parental involvement and to empower and inform parents of their roles, rights and responsibilities with regard to SGBs. These could include the right of parents to use the language they feel most comfortable using (and provided with an interpreter if needed), flexible and accommodating meeting times, and simple-text communiqués or alternative communication methods between parents and the school.
- Representation on SGBs should reflect the principles of equity and redress.

## **E. Culture, Language, Sport, Arts and Religion**

Culture, Language, the Arts, Religion and Sport are all intricately linked and as extra-curricular activities they are sometimes used as vehicles to support discriminatory practices.

### ***1. Cultural Issues***

The reality of our diverse society and the need for integration to foster the elements of our common identity must be accepted as crucial to our endeavour of developing a human rights culture in society.

An individual's and group's right to practice their culture is protected by the Constitution to the extent that it does not conflict with any other right and that it is promoted with the understanding that no one culture holds more validity than another.

A core culture needs to be fostered in which everyone participates. Learning about other people's culture is a necessary step towards tolerance and understanding, and tolerance is the first step towards respect. Parents and educators should consult broadly on what needs to be taught about other cultures, recognising that culture and ethnicity are closely linked.

### ***Recommendations***

#### ***a) Long term***

In broad consultation with parents and institutions, schools must make provisions for learning about other cultures and developing an understanding and respect for them; non-judgemental value systems should become part of school curricula.

#### ***b) Medium term***

The SAHRC should facilitate discussions between roleplayers and the education departments with the aim of finding ways through which educators and parents can be sensitised on cultural issues.

#### ***c) Short Term***

- Provinces should be informed of these long-term decisions and regional dialogue must begin as soon as possible between the SAHRC and the various constituencies (including school principals). All departments must use the Bill of Rights as a programme of action.
- The SABC and the print media should be approached to start discussions on culture on radio – particularly community radio, TV and the print media.
- Policy statements should be generated.

### ***2. Language Issues***

- Parents must decide on the language medium of instruction where reasonably practicable and after being made aware of well-researched findings as to the benefits and limitations of mother-tongue education versus instruction using a *lingua franca*.
- The resource implications of parallel versus dual medium education must be considered given the

government's constitutional obligation to provide education in all languages.

- Learners must be entitled to use their mother tongue outside of the classroom.

### ***Recommendations***

#### ***a) Long Term***

Promote multi-lingualism while training teachers.

#### ***b) Medium Term***

Education departments should work towards fostering a multi-lingual society.

## **3. Religion**

#### ***a) Key theme***

No learner should be discriminated against on the grounds of religion or religious practices.

### ***Recommendations***

#### ***a) Long Term***

Educators should be made aware of the constitutional obligation to allow for freedom of religion, belief and opinion.

#### ***b) Short Term***

- The SAHRC should look into the implications of decisions regarding religion and teaching that are presently being considered by the Minister of Education.
- Monitoring mechanism on the practice of human rights (including the freedom of religion, belief and opinion) in schools should be put in place.
- Parents should be encouraged to attend parents' meetings so that they make informed decisions regarding religious education.

## **4. Sports Issues**

The lack of sports facilities and the shortage of coaches and trainers in many schools necessitates the sharing of sports facilities in geographical areas. Learners should also be allowed to affiliate with regional sports bodies regardless of racial dominance in an area. The question of who pays for sports training and developing skills remains contentious.

## ***Recommendations***

### ***a) Long Term***

A link between educational institutions and national sports bodies must be set up in order to develop integrated sports policies for all.

### ***b) Medium Term***

- The national teams should be encouraged to include members of all races in national teams to encourage sponsors to assist in developing sporting talents in all areas.
- Parental involvement in sports development should be encouraged.

### ***c) Short Term***

- Sports facilities in geographical areas should be shared and an alliance between the Departments of Arts and Culture, Sport and Education and the National Sports Committee must work out the detail of how schools can be assisted.

## ***5. Arts Issues***

Theatre, especially community theatre, holds great potential, if used sensitively, as an avenue to communicate the importance of integration and the pain of discrimination. This potential to reach people's hearts, and thus contribute to the healing of society, makes art one of our schools greatest assets; tragically, it is too often overlooked in the educational community.

## ***Recommendations***

### ***a) Long Term***

The arts should be used as a vehicle for reconciliation and integration.

### ***b) Medium Term***

- National, provincial and regional endeavours in the theatrical, musical and decorative arts should be co-ordinated with schools in ways that promote the sharing of expertise.

### ***c) Short Term***

- Schools should be encouraged to share material and human resources on arts as well as exploring ways in which NGOs, government departments and the community can become involved in arts education.
- Music should be brought back into school curricula.



## **F. Transport, School Fees and Admission**

The poor attendance in this working group could be an indication that the conference participants did not consider these issues as important as others. The discussions centred on only one piece of a larger puzzle: doing away with school fees does not solve the issues addressed. Since the the founding block of racism is inequality, the government must allocate resources to address the growing poverty in the country and provide essential services.

### ***1. Transport Issues***

In many instances, black and white learners arrive at the same school using separate transport. The bussing of white learners, while their black peers arrive on foot, is a fact that continues to lead to the re-segregation of schools.

Different experiences in various provinces point to the complexity of this issue. In the Free State, the education department was responsible for “bussing in” 600 learners from Jacobsdal. This transport contract has now been terminated leaving no alternative in place and the learners stranded. More successfully, the Gauteng Department of Education is running a well co-ordinated project in conjunction with Small Micro Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) through which learners are bussed from rural communities to nearby schools. Despite the success, deeply rural areas, without assistance from SMMEs, are inaccessible by road and cannot afford the public liability insurance needed to extend the programme.

### ***Recommendations***

As the bussing-in of learners from selected rural areas may be the only feasible way to provide basic education to isolated learners (particularly at primary school level) the National Department of Education and/or the Provincial Education Departments need to make money available to subsidise the transport of learners who are most disadvantaged.

### ***2. School Fees Issues***

Any discussion of an anti-racist project must address the socio-economic factors found in society at large that have an impact on schooling, such as poverty, crime, vandalism of school property and unemployment. All of these elements act as exclusionary mechanisms.

The issue of school fees is a major cause of racial conflict in the school community largely because a few parents on SGBs make decisions about school fees for the majority of parents and thus help to perpetuate a system where the sense of ownership of a school becomes an issue and a ‘us and them’ mentality develops. Fee-paying parents take issue with non-fee payers, often perceiving the division in racial terms.

School fees are also used to reinforce the divisions in the public schooling system between the rich and poor and place an unnecessary burden on already disadvantaged communities, contributing to the

poverty cycle and impacting on family life. Many parents who qualify for exemptions do not actually apply for them, but attempt to pay the fees. Schools too often have to resort to “strong arm” tactics like withholding reports to get outstanding fees; at times they even resort to calling in debt collectors. Exasperating the situation further are rising utility bills that force schools to increase their fees.

### ***Recommendations***

- Policy and legislation regarding school fees should be reviewed, with the intention of ensuring free education at the primary school level at least and exploring the placing of limits on school fees levied at public schools.
- Schools should call for applications well in the previous academic year and set clear closure dates for applications.
- To prevent the migration of learners, the government needs to start a substantial programme to aid poorer schools in the townships.
- The legal exemption in the norms and standards for school funding for parents who cannot afford fees should be made clear to parents.
- The new school funding programme must be implemented with urgency.

### ***3. Admissions Issues***

Many schools do not have transparent and well-communicated admission policies. Schools use the general subject packages and the medium of instruction as exclusionary mechanisms. The new admission policy helps to remedy this and may improve the access of disadvantaged learner to better-resourced schools.

### ***Recommendations***

- Regional Managers in provincial education departments should co-ordinate the delineation of the feeder zones in a manner that overturns the group-areas design.
- Despite the cost, and management complications which sharing resources brings with it, school clusters should be adopted as they are the key to breaking down racial stereotypes. Provincial departments need to conduct a feasibility study to determine costs attached to clustering and the movement of learners and teachers and then engage urban planners. It is important to integrate teachers into these clusters.
- Principals and circuit managers should co-ordinate the “twinning” of schools, while at the same time avoiding paternalism.

## **G. Identity/Difference; Desegregation/De-racialisation; Assimilation/ Multiculturalism/Anti-racism**

### ***1. Identity/ Difference Issues***

The curriculum promotes narrow concepts of identity, relying on Euro-centric textbook material. A lack of an integrated approach and formal structure to diversity training leaves educators unable to make the paradigm shift necessary to be able to deal with the conflict that inevitably will have to be faced. On the issue of language, because the Constitution does not define an absolute standard for language usage in schools, different interpretations and practice abound.

### ***Recommendations***

#### ***a) Syllabi***

Syllabi should be firmly context-based by, for example, using problems and issues that the learner can relate to. Materials that are representative of realities that learners come from should be used. In addition, however, learners should also be exposed to different experiences than those that they are familiar with. Syllabi should be structured to ensure that they are more African-centred than Euro-centred where possible and oral history should be promoted in the classroom. In general, a constructivist approach to knowledge should be adopted.

#### ***b) Teacher training***

Resources and commitment must be provided for a co-ordinated, cohesive and macro-national approach to teacher education which emphasises generic skills as much as discipline-based skills. INSET programmes should be used to help teachers see diversity as a resource, not something that has to be “coped with.” PRESET programmes that do not use “models” of the past must be developed. Departments of Education need to force the attendance of all educators at teacher training workshops. Progressive teachers should be identified and used in training, while collaboration between teachers in different disciplines should be encouraged.

Strategies to deal with discipline problems constructively should be sought to diffuse the mishandling of discipline issues which could lead to allegations of racism.

#### ***c) Teaching***

Different teaching and learning strategies that use a variety of ways of developing knowledge and skills through varied mediums - like arts and not just texts - should be developed. Bi-lingualism and multi-lingualism should lead to cultural validation and should be used to empower learners and educators wherever possible.

#### ***d) General***

Programmes should be developed to help participants make “mind shifts” to look for innovative ways to promote anti-racism in a constructive and non-threatening way. Parents should be encouraged to support their children, not merely by assisting with their homework, but by asking questions that encourage them to think broadly. Educators, as well as others, should ask questions on pressing social issues such as racism.

## ***2. Desegregation/De-racialization Issues***

Many educators do not want to change their way of thinking and often support a racist school community in abusing knowledge for selfish interests. Knowledge is too often presented in ways that may be unintelligible to certain groups. The use of language, both as a medium of instruction and discourse, can also perpetuate segregation.

### ***Recommendations***

To establish equity, educators must allow room for contextualising knowledge alongside universal knowledge and creating awareness and a critical understanding of the ways in which knowledge is structured to result in certain power relations. Resources must be made available for research and documentation and educator development and training (including NGOs already conducting such training). The awareness of the rights of children must be raised. More cultural activities and programmes that allow learners to engage with each other should be developed. Finally, mother-tongue instruction should take place at early grades.

## ***3. Assimilation/Multi-culturalism/Anti-racism Issues***

Improper communication between learners and educators often leads to misinterpretation and a lack of understanding, with a lack of proficiency in English mistaken for stupidity. The difference in perspectives and power relations between educators and learners must be taken into account at all times.

### ***Recommendations***

Racism in schools should be reversed by running workshops with educators that debunk the myths around white supremacy and insist that educators take time to get to know their learners' backgrounds.

## V. General Issues

The conference participants accepted and endorsed all the recommendations in the report but felt that these could be enhanced by the following ideas:

- The role of independent schools in promoting or inhibiting racial integration should be examined.
- Discrimination is not limited to the schools that were studied but occurs even in what seem to be culturally homogenous schools. For example, Twana learners are discriminated against in predominantly Xhosa speaking schools. There is a need to research the complexities of this phenomenon.
- Integration should be understood in the context of the immense inequality that currently plagues South Africa. The fact that extremely under-resourced, racially homogenous schools exist, highlights the racism that is an integral part of the education system.
- There is a particular need to empower school governing bodies to deal with and promote racial integration.
- Civil society should take up the responsibility of initiating a movement against discrimination.
- To advance racial integration in schools will require a working relationship between different governmental departments and ministries and between different directorates in those departments.
- Different policies, such as religious practices in schools, should be assessed in terms of the possibilities or problems they present to the issue of racial integration.
- Racism must be linked to issues of gender, class, ability, poverty, sexual orientation and the other categories mentioned in Section 9 of the Constitution (as well as other categories) to facilitate a broader understanding of discrimination.
- Racial integration also points to a conflict over resources; the allocation of resources should aim at promoting racial integration.
- It is important not to rely (even by default) on market forces to bring about change and transformation.
- Anti-racism should be understood as going beyond simply “tolerating” difference in order to transform power relations and structures.

## VI. Post-Conference Developments

### *a) Enquiries and Media Coverage*

The Commission received numerous enquiries from individuals and organisations about the conference and the report both locally and internationally. Apart from extensive local media coverage, the report featured in the printed and electronic media in Britain, France, Italy, the USA and Brazil. Although the Commission received complaints about the “negative” tone being reflected in the media, it is important to point out that the media plays a crucial role in bringing this important issue into the public domain by alerting stakeholders to the challenges that exist. Follow up enquiries from the media also indicated a willingness to report on good practices and to reflect on positive developments in the schooling sector. Offers of assistance and support were also received.

### *b) Engaging Schools and Departments of Education*

Through its own initiatives and on request, the Commission has had preliminary talks with the national and some provincial departments of education and schools.

### *c) Current Research*

A number of research initiatives have been brought to the attention of the Commission that reflect an understanding of the urgency to deal appropriately with racial integration in schools and to develop sound educational interventions to deal with an increasingly diverse learning population in schools.

### *d) Comments and Suggestions*

Some schools objected on the grounds that the report relied heavily on student perceptions and that the school management was not given the opportunity to respond to the findings of the report.

The need to identify good practices has been a recurring theme throughout the conference as well as in submissions. The Commission concurs with these sentiments. Positive developments have been noted despite the overall inability of schools to deal with racial integration appropriately. “Good practices” would have been reported had they been revealed. The SAHRC is also aware of schools that were not part of the research sample that use more constructive practices to promote racial integration.

Calls have been made to develop a supporting and non-accusatory environment for educators. The SAHRC did not finger-point nor condemn and has approached the study from a positive stance. It is hoped that this project has contributed to an uncovering of a particular problem and that the report is used as a resource to assist educators and education authorities.

Suggestions were put forward that the SAHRC should develop guidelines on practical steps to challenge racism and racial prejudice and to promote racial integration in schools. The SAHRC does assist and advice schools within the limits of its resources and believes that departments of education should take primary responsibility for supporting all schools. The SAHRC has, without exception, offered its assistance to departments of education and awaits requests from these departments to take the process forward in a more structured and organised manner.

For instance, the SAHRC has been responding to three requests from provincial departments of education. In addition, the Commission is developing training materials on anti-discrimination and will provide training on request.

In terms of Curriculum 2005 and the recommendation to review social values in the curriculum, the working group on curriculum issues felt that the principles and specific outcomes of Curriculum 2005 provided the basis for developing learning programmes that include sections on anti-discrimination education.

*e) Criticism*

The SAHRC received written criticism about the scope, nature and methodology of the research project and chose not to respond to it in this report. We are dealing with it individually.

## VII. Concluding Remarks

The process of transforming a segregated and inherently discriminatory educational system into one that can promote and protect fundamental rights and freedoms is an extremely difficult task.

Obligated by its constitutional mandate, the SAHRC will certainly do its best within the limits of its resources to address the problem jointly with the education departments and other government structures and civil society. The conference has placed immeasurable expectations on the SAHRC since participants view the SAHRC as a major role-player in initiatives aimed at challenging discriminatory practices in the schooling sector.

The SAHRC is of the view that the National and Provincial Departments of Education should take primary responsibility for initiating programmes to challenge discrimination by tapping into the resources and expertise of teacher, learner and parent formations, academia, civil society, agencies, statutory bodies and community-based organisations in a structured and planned way so as to give effect to the recommendations in the report.

The SAHRC has already embarked on a programme based on the findings of the report and the deliberations of the conference. It has engaged a number of provincial education departments and individuals and organisations in the field and has identified “equality” as one of its focus areas. Initiatives related to this focus area will, in one way or another, be linked to the recommendations in the report.

By facilitating discussion on the report through the conference, the Commission has gained from the insights and expertise of the participants. It has been an enriching experience and we will certainly continue to base our work and interventions on the recommendations of the report and the discussions at the conference. We also appeal to participants and delegates to take the process forward and we will persevere with our efforts to keep discrimination in the education sector on the national agenda. It is our sense that the establishment of a co-ordinating structure (Recommendation 2) is being viewed as a logical starting point. Nevertheless, the Commission is also proceeding in a piecemeal fashion by providing advice and support to schools, teacher formations and departments of education.

As the report clearly demonstrates, the participants worked hard to come up with constructive ideas and suggestions for which we are grateful. We will be in continual dialogue with the various sectors of society to effectively carry out our constitutional mandate.

In conclusion, we have to remind ourselves of the policy framework set out in the White Paper on Education and Training (March, 1995) which put forward the idea of an **Action Plan for Human Rights in Education**. The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) provides the international impetus for developing a human rights culture through education. Both the Action Plan for Human Rights in Education and the UN Decade for Human Rights Education reflect the principle that the promotion and protection of human rights are essentially matters of education and training.



# **Annexure A**

## **WELCOMING SPEECH**

### **Deputy Chairperson of the SAHRC Shirley Mabusela**

In welcoming you all to this conference, I wish to assure you that this conference is not meant to be a finger pointing exercise. It is meant to bring us all face to face with the stark realities and challenges of racism and racial integration in some of our schools.

Firstly, we shall be guided, in our discourse for the next two days, by a report on a study conducted by the SAHRC on racial integration in schools, which is to be launched today.

The report, which you have in your possession, will be presented in more details at conference tomorrow.

Secondly, our deliberations will be guided by the provisions of international instruments viz: the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 1990 World Summit for Children, and the 1990 World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien (Thailand).

Finally we shall be guided by the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and the policies, legislation and administrative procedures that have been put in place to achieve equality and ensure transformation in our schooling system.

Friends and colleagues, as we go through deliberations at this Conference, we must focus on finding ways and means of ensuring that our schools cease to be sites of racial struggles for our children. Schools must become transformed cradles of excellence upon which the success of country can be nurtured.

We value our children too much to allow them to continue struggles which our Constitutional Democracy won for all of us. We are therefore challenged to be honest, open, rigorous and constructive as we consider this report which places the discourse on Racial Integration in School in the public domain.

You are all very warmly welcomed.

## **Annexure B**

### **OPENING ADDRESS**

**MP, Minister of Education  
Prof. SME Bengu,**

Last week one of my advisers received a call from a gentleman in Kempton Park. The said gentleman, who has recently relocated from Germiston to Kempton Park, was complaining about not finding a place for his child in two schools in Kempton Park. That, in itself is a harmless and legitimate concern. However, the gentleman was spitting fire because, according to him, the schools are infested with black learners from the neighbouring township of Tembisa. On being told that the black learners' rights to attend those schools were equal to their white counterparts', he bellowed that the system responsible for that was, and I reluctantly quote, "a fuck up". Mind you, it is not as if he had applied during the normal admission period. He was, in fact, making a special request for a very late admission.

On 17 February a black learner at Vryburg High School stabbed a white fellow learner with a pair of scissors. He knows why he did that. His white colleague probably knows it, too. We do not know. There is a court case coming. Perhaps it will shed light on the matter. I am sure that all of us here regret and condemn the alleged stabbing and are happy that it did not result in a fatality.

The two incidents, each in its unique way, illustrate the dichotomies of a country in the throes of a rebirth from rabid racism to total integration. It is not an easy transition, not least because it involves that most complex and almost inscrutable of creatures, the human being. In each of the cases highlighted above what were merely sad and unfortunate events that could have been professionally managed were invested with racist overtones to a point where human relations broke down completely, perhaps irretrievably.

We are gathered here today to interact on and with the South African Human Rights Commission's report on racism in South African Public Secondary Schools. If any among us here think we are winning the war against racism in our schools and society, they must read the report. It is a damning indictment of the parents and the supposedly well-educated functionaries of education departments in the country, from district officials to the educators. A clear lesson from the report is that parents are making little bigots out of their children and the officials and educators are doing nothing to enforce the school anti-racist legislation that is in place. Quite often, in fact, as the report shows, they encourage and abet racism in their schools. The report avers that in fact our legislation may be insufficient to eradicate racism in our schools.

Before creating the impression that the report is one-sided may I, without in any way purporting to be its interlocutor, indicate that it does acknowledge a certain amount of movement in the direction of integration, even though no school has been found to be there yet. Intentions of integration are confirmed, though the methods thereto are critiqued. I wish, however, to argue that while we still have some way to go towards total integration, there are encouraging signs and cases from which we must

derive hope. More about this a little later.

On the anti-integration side, we note that language, the physical situation of the school, fees, bussing in of white learners from other areas, school ethos, religion, extramural activities, among, many other crude and subtle tools, are used to perpetuate white domination in former Model C schools. This is done in spite of legislation whose spirit is clear. It may be necessary, as some of the report's recommendations suggest, not only to enforce the existing legislation, but also to reinforce it by closing whatever loopholes there are.

An unforeseen result of our extension of democracy to all in this country is the use of that democracy by some among us to limit and even stifle the rights of others. Our school governing bodies are a good case in point.

Most use the governing rights we have extended to them to actually frustrate the integration process they should be facilitating.

I have a message for them, namely that integration is not negotiable. It is an inalienable right of all the children of South Africa that they be accommodated in the country's public schools and that without regard to their skin colours. The right goes beyond accommodation and extends to the learners' lives at the schools. The responsibilities of the governing bodies therefore extend to ensuring that the school culture, in the holistic sense of that term, pays no attention to the physical differences of the learners. Note that we are talking in terms of both race and gender.

We expect the school governing bodies to ensure full compliance from the principals and the teachers. Failure to do so will henceforth have to be treated as what it really is - illegal behaviour and disrespect for the Constitution. After four years of democracy, recipients thereof must be made to understand that no one deserves less equality than them. It may be that in our good faith to create a nation at peace with itself we have created space for racists to flourish. How else do you explain court cases which are clearly meant to roll back the gains of democracy and equality? Consider the Grove Primary School case. We have not forgotten the saga of President Mandela being hauled before courts for daring to question rugby warlords, neither are we blind to the true intentions of refusing bar coded identity documents.

Director of Ceremonies, I submit that the racism that is being entrenched in our schools is, like the cases I have cited above, nothing but a blatant abuse of our noble democracy. Now that the report has, through research, exposed the bad faith exhibited by the governing bodies we have entrusted with the responsibility of bridging the divisions of our society, we have to ensure that culprits are dealt with to the full extent of the law. Our provincial education authorities who, according to the report, do not scrutinise school governing bodies' policies and monitor racism, will have to be more involved with the goings-on in any school with more than one racial group. He who teaches the young to be racist is a pervert who has no role to play in our education system. He who condones this, by commission or omission, is no better.

How can we explain a situation where 62% learners, black and white, from 60 schools, say there have been racial incidents or examples of racism in their schools? How do we justify a 98% white staff complement in former white schools? Clearly there is no integration going on there. What there is, as the report shows, is assimilation and more desegregation.

Education remains the one reliable means to integrate our society, and we must use it as such, and not abuse it to distance ourselves even more from one another.

The report makes valuable recommendations, some of which are part of our ongoing anti-racism programme. We are grateful for these, and look forward to an even closer interaction between our officials and the Human Rights Commission with particular regard to racism in our schools. A process of interrogating and unpacking the report should result in a better grasp of the problem and better-managed remedial programmes.

I would be failing those schools genuinely grappling with the challenges of integration if I did not highlight their positive efforts. Allow me then to tell you, as one example among many I have come across in some of my travels as Minister, of a February 1995 visit to a school in the Free State. We were welcomed by a group of prefects, the head girl of whom was a black learner. My initial suspicion was, despite her assurances to the contrary, that she might not have been elected on merit.

As we toured the school as a whole, though, I found that there was interaction as good as any that one could wish for among learners of different racial backgrounds. I noticed then a point strongly suggested by the Human Rights Commission's report, namely that the role of the school principals and teachers is critical in the process of integration in schools. What I saw in that school was a teaching staff and management uncompromisingly committed to the rights of all the learners to be treated as equal members of the school. It was that enabling environment which had made it possible for the black learner to be accorded the responsibility of presiding over her peers, including the white majority.

I am glad to say that, subsequent to that visit, I found that that particular case was representative of some of the schools in the country. That is why, despite the relatively concerned tone of the report, I remain upbeat. I say that less to underplay the report and more to emphasise a hope I think we all share for eventual and complete integration in South African schools.

To turn to the overall transition of South African schools to integration, let me remind this audience that in the United States it took the army to enforce integration. Who does not know the case of the army having to ensure a safe passage for one black learner to a school in Little Rock, Arkansas? Because of our negotiated legislation, necessarily based on unavoidable compromise, we have a situation that is gradually gelling into an ideal one. A report such as the one which has brought us here is a great help in our negotiation of the path towards complete integration.

To understand the considered compromises we have had to make, take our language policy for example. We have had to develop a policy which allows for single language schools as long as there are no set numbers of learners of other language groups. The potentially exclusionist aspect of that policy is, however, counterbalanced by admission norms which make it virtually impossible to block other language groups from access to particular language group schools. Built into our legislation is therefore an inexorable thrust towards integration. The point I am making is that, through our legislation, we have made integration ultimately inevitable.

On that note, Director of Ceremonies, do I wish to conclude, not forgetting to again salute the Human Rights Commission for centering this crucial matter of racism and the transformation of our schools.

I thank you all.

## **Annexure C**

### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**Prof. FA Sonn**

### **Educationist, Businessman and Former Ambassador to the United States**

It stands to the credit of our intellectual community that through the harsh period of abject oppression we struggled to get our minds around the rudiments of a system capable of so much arrogance and so much downright foolishness.

We had a choice either to fall into self-destructive hatred and self-pity on the one hand or, on the other hand, to tax apartheid for what it truly was. We had to choose to understand its fallacious constructs and in the end to conclude that a system so puerile in its assumption, so out of touch with world trends, must finally fail.

We all furthermore deserve the commendation, as educators under apartheid, that under those circumstances, we all did not neglect our students' right to learn even under those extremely harsh conditions. Probably the worse challenge of our time was to realise and know that Verwoerdian education was designed to ghettoise education for blacks and that our response should be to turn this against itself and to subvert evil while at the same time replacing it with good.

We remember the rigours we faced, confounding apartheid school inspectors who often were veritable ideological agents, sometimes police functionaries. Their task was primarily to ensure that the dogma of white supremacy was taught. Our leaders steered our teachers and students calculatedly in the opposite direction. This was an achievement which was perilous yet exciting because it was founded to be sure on the principle of what is right. Educational leaders were threatened, jailed and banned. This caused many to acquiesce but many more to find different ways of using apartheid education against itself. Our leaders remained professionals of the highest ilk and their charges came first at all times.

If that was the measure of our success under such horrible conditions then the challenge of reconstructing and deracialising education should for us not be too difficult. I firmly believe that we have more than it takes to achieve this task. We would accordingly be forgiven for wondering why it appears that educational excellence today remains so elusive and why our parents are often in doubt about our commitment to the children.

It is in this context that one is invariably filled with pride at the high quality of research and professionalism that mark your report. It leads us to be reminded of those good elements of our past. Our teachers and leaders who were the most political were at the same time the most professional. The system could not fault them on their dedication to high education standards. We have a heroic tradition. Reports like this one will surely help us to recapture the basics of our proud tradition via a culture of teaching for excellence despite the worse constraints.

This report as well as the heroic sacrifice of our educational struggle can and must never be met by

mediocrity.

This report is a document of which not only the authors have good reason to be pleased but the SAHRC equally deserve commendation. Our people and mainly our intellectuals developed a superior understanding of what constitutes racism, in any guise. We now, largely through all our efforts, have in place a democratic government of our choosing. We must not only afford this government the right, but we must demand of it to use the democratic structure in order to determine educational philosophy and theory.

The right to govern is sacrosanct and the obligation to teach compelling. The search for causes and solutions is critical, but none more important than teaching. The racial or cultural make up of our children is important but never more important than to give them our very best.

The fact that the educational rebellion of 1976, 1980 and 1985 happened in our schools of apartheid surprised few among the oppressed. That the oppressors were very surprised is equally understandable. Our children were taught to pass their examinations but were also taught to think. Under apartheid we not only had to understand what we were against, but we had to define the social paradigms which had to underpin education theory and policy for the future. It had to be an educational vision that was both revolutionary as well as capable of forming the fundamentals for a society that will find lasting peace and will support excellence. The multi-national paradigm was wholly dismissed and an awareness created that we were all South Africans.

It is almost bizarre to imagine that re-claiming our South African identity could have been construed as subversive, yet so it was. The reference to "culture" was perceived as reactionary. "Culture" was a euphemism for race. Your report quite correctly redefines "culture" as a vital element in a social reconstruction. I would venture to say that one of the reasons why the South African society was able to move reasonably smoothly towards a more non-racial destination is because of the preparation for this process given by our schools and our teachers. I am heartened by our continued search for understanding the existential complexity of our society as reflected in our schools. We must, however, not become so overly embued by this complexity of our diverse society that it pre-occupies us entirely.

We must now move on. Education must produce success for South Africa and deliver progress. We must build productive and good and better citizens.

South Africa is inexorably on the way to oneness. The schools will lead the process, but only if teachers will it to be so. Teachers can lead black and white students to the fulfillment of success; to experience the fulfilment. Our classrooms and staff rooms will increasingly reflect our society. This process is unstoppable.

What is not assured is what exactly this education will produce. This can only be a result of a conscious and deliberate decision by every teacher. I strongly support our Deputy President in his contention that the teacher who takes up his/her position before his class must in every way reflect the quality of our democracy. He or she must be the symbol of the South African citizen every child emulates. He or she must represent quality in commitment to character and subject material. He or she must represent the best our society hopes to be. An overt consciousness of his or her rights at the expense of the rights of the child and the legitimate expectations of society is a miscarriage of freedom and an obsessive selfishness that constitutes probably the most serious threat to our new democracy. Teachers have rights of course. But the rights of our children are paramount.

I remember a principal in the ghetto where I lived constantly saying that his school must be so good that

even the affluent want to enrol their children there. He succeeded. I remember the injunction, "beware what you desire, you may just get it".

We the teachers and our integrated schools are the creators and custodians of democracy.

There is only one way to democracy: education. In a democracy, there is only one essential task for this education: teaching liberty based on responsibility. The fundamental assumption of democratic life is not that we are all automatically capable of living both freely and responsibly, but that we are all potentially susceptible to education for freedom and responsibility. Freedom is under threat and democracy fatally in danger when freedom is confused with licence. Licence is manifested in an over awareness of entitlements for self rather than the freedom to give all and more to develop and grow students to experience and secure our hard won democracy.

In a democracy education is the indispensable concomitant of citizenship. Citizenship implies community and for a democrat duty to community is sacrosanct. When we fought so hard for liberty we never compromised excellence and offered and took no excuses. Liberty was not a claim for self at the expense of the child or the community.

Liberty was and is a bridge between the individual and his/her community rather than a fence of separation. This is what Rousseau meant when he described freedom as an obedience to the law of conscience. This reminds us of the intimacy of rights and responsibilities, of freedoms and limits of liberation and government of self. Every teacher demanding good governance must continually answer the question as to how good a government he/she is of self. We as teachers must represent in our own lives what we teach to our young.

To obey laws of the conscience we give to ourselves a very persuasive definition of the pure form of democracy earned through accepting more and more obligations for good citizenship. There should be no tension between democracy and excellence. They are in their essence compatible. Education is the broker between them. Education makes citizens and only citizens can forge freedom. Education teaches citizens in a democracy to govern themselves.

What I think the point of Deputy President Mbeki's appeal to teachers was the uplifting call to them to have the courage to govern themselves. It was his terse reminder that our democracy is dependent on their willingness, ability and nobility as well as courage to take charge of discipline and be disciplined ourselves.

Our democracy is meant to be a life in common and not a common life of mediocrity. Citizens are the aristocrats of the polity and in a democracy everyone is a citizen and our schools the places where both the norms are set for citizenship and where citizens are created.

I get a numbness in the pit of my stomach when I hear communities call for greater regimentation of teachers. I understand that this is inevitable if we as teachers fail to rededicate ourselves to excellence and to eschew mediocrity.

The challenge in a democracy is to transform every child into an apt student and to give every student the real opportunity to become an autonomous self-disciplined, thinking and discerning deliberative citizen - a citizen who sees, emulates, desires and experiences excellence. Advocates of democratic education often argue against excellence as elitism. They tend to argue against having to teach some excellently and some badly and are inclined to succumb to teaching everyone badly.

It is a fallacy to perceive a disjuncture between democracy and excellence. Education is essentially

intended to be the equaliser. Not every learner can master quantum physics but every person can become a free and self-governing adult and every child can be led to self-fulfilment and contentment. There must be a chance for everyone according to his or her ability.

Having said all this leads me to a couple of conclusions. Namely that it is proper and correct that our esteemed South African Human Rights Commission should be the one to institute an enquiry into the integration of schools. Education is after all, as I tried to argue, a matter of rights. Rights of children, parents and teachers - in that order. Education and open education is not only a human right but it imposes obligations on the state to provide resources and opportunity. The compulsion is on the teacher to deliver, to protect and propagate democracy by sacrificial example. This will return the nobility to a profession that is essential for our survival as a democracy. Secondly we have seen in South Africa that when our political leaders showed us the capacity and the reality of democracy in front of our eyes we became imbued and excited by the promise. This led us to want to take hands and move forward together. Questions of integration or not became of secondary importance in the face of the possibility to build our democracy together in the interest of all of us; a democracy reflective of all our children, not marked by colour but by quality of character.

Increasingly those citizens who wish to emphasise differences when commonality is a possibility became marginalised. The move is inexorably towards unity in diversity. Democracy and freedom are hard task-masters and compelling agents against bigotry and self-indulgence.

The report gives us the enormous advantage of knowledge and insight. It is a hard and real challenge; after this report we will never again be able to say that we did not know. The recognition of diversity is persuasive but an opportunity to build. In the end it is important to recognise differences but it is as Alexander reminds us, more powerful "... to bring people out of cultural ghetto's to see what each has in common with others and celebrate that..."

I plead that we all show a willingness to move to the high ground - away from obsessiveness with what divides us but with an excitement about what binds us. But above all - in Apartheid days we boldly spoke of sacrifices for our liberty. That was hard. Now the call is for a greater sacrifice - a sacrifice to give up indolence, conceit, self-indulgence and opinionatedness should these be present. The sacrifice to give all we have to our children and give more to the least of them. Let us in celebrating this wonderful report devote ourselves to the goal of the township principal who told his school every Monday morning that that school may be in the township but despite that it shall be excellent. The beauty of it was that that township school did become excellent.

If that becomes the motivating force in the new millennium we will still witness the day that school integration does not only mean blacks at previously white schools. We will indeed see the day that whites go to black schools in search of excellence. I think that is indeed possible and that will also be the mark that non-racialism has arrived and that democracy for excellence has become real.

Congratulations on an excellent report. The authors and the SAHRC deserve our heartfelt thanks.



## **Annexure D**

### **INTRODUCTION, PERSPECTIVES AND OVERVIEW**

#### **Dr. N Barney Pitso Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission**

Two days ago, the President announced the date for the second general elections under a democratic and internationally recognised system. This is only a reminder that we are a mere five years since the removal of the apartheid system with its legislated entrenchment of racial differentiation and privilege. A system that grounded the education system and informed its philosophical underpinnings. In other words, it is nearly five years since a major project of educational reform was started in this country.

Central to that programme of reform has been the need to ensure that the educational system reflected the values of our Constitution and the universally accepted educational norms. And yet the educational system has to be rooted in the social, political and historical reality of our country. The cultural, linguistic and other divergences of the people of South Africa had to be considered even as we constantly affirmed that “South Africa was one sovereign and democratic state...”. The most noble aspirations of the people of South Africa and the future of her children had to be borne in mind. I am proud to confirm that all these principles are reflected in the education policies developed since 1994. The building blocks of a reformed education system are now in place. But there remains unfinished business.

In developing our policies and in the transformation of the educational system, we may not have taken enough account of the long history of privilege, exclusion, differentiation and ingrained prejudice that was entrenched in the consciousness of South Africans by successive education systems. We may not have realised what all this had done, the damage committed in the psyche of South Africans, black and white. We may have underestimated the threats and the opportunities posed by our different histories and experiences. It appears that the different expectations from the educational system were shaped by our political experiences and this divergence gets played out in the role expected of the schools. More seriously, we had not planned on how to deal with the deep-seated racial prejudices and resistance to change associated with the schooling system. Today, we must address those crosscurrents which, if left untouched, have the potential to undermine the gains of our democratic revolution. Central to these threats to our democracy is demonstrably racism.

The educational system in our country is still divided according to race from top to bottom. Too many schools continue to be racially specific. Part of this is inevitable and understandable because residential segregation remains a fact of life. Because social and economic inequality continues to be pervasive in South African society, schools reflect that social inequality. Our Constitution lends itself to both reform and resistance to reform. Those who claim rights to language and culture use the Constitution as justification for insisting on language arrangements that exclude others. Those who believe that the Constitution calls for non-racialism insist that schools have to be open. Inequality can be evidenced in the

poor provision of school facilities and infra-structure so graphically captured in the Report, *Schools Register of Needs Survey (1997)*. Many schools have taken the step of admitting learners from another race group. Generally, African learners are being admitted in growing numbers in formerly white, Coloured and Indian schools. Admission requirements and fee structures have, at times, been used to limit admissions. The environment, culture and ethos of the schools have neither taken account of nor do they seek to accommodate the growing number of 'others' who have joined the school. The result is alienation and indifference.

The Commission has received many complaints of human rights violations in schools. These range from disciplinary problems, caused in part by a lack of understanding of culture, to allegations of racial discrimination in teaching, supervision and results; racially abusive language and insults and racial violence. We have intervened as mediators or sought conciliation; we have undertaken investigations; we have advised about the application of the Schools Act, 1995, and alternative methods of enforcing discipline and authority. Oftentimes, our interventions have been unobtrusive but we have had, in at least one case, to conduct a public enquiry. In another case, we have had to make public statements. Our approach, generally, has been to deal directly with the school to resolve the problem and to be of assistance.

It has been our experience that too many schools deny that the perception and effect of the actions they take reflects an attitude of racism or that they are practising racial discrimination. Explanations are advanced which are intended to deny any allusion to racism. We have often been told that there was no racism at the school and that everyone was treated as equal. The experience of black learners, however, was usually different. This is the mode of denial. Another form of denial is to deny the experience of the learner or to fail to understand the circumstances or the home environment or the culture of the learners. These are too easily dismissed as excuses and no effort is made to understand where the learners come from. There is also the ostrich mentality. School authorities very often pretend that they do not know what they have not seen. And so they cast a blind eye to misdemeanours which cause racial offence or they accuse learners who complain of being over-sensitive. When racial conflict erupts into violence, school authorities often have no means of dealing with it. The power relations in many of these schools are also unequal. Black parents are not assertive and generally do not participate in the school governance systems. Black parents are given the impression that they are being done a favour and black learners that they are tolerated. The result is that alternative forms of pressure are mounted against the school as we have seen in Vryburg.

South Africa is a state party to international human rights treaties which render racism and any discrimination based on race a violation of human rights. Section 9 of the Constitution renders any discrimination based on race as unfair. The Constitution defines equality as including the "full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms" provided by the Constitution. Once a *prima facie* case of discrimination is established, the onus of proof that such discrimination was not unconstitutional shifts to the person against whom the complaint is made. The international instruments have given comprehensive definitions of racism and racial discrimination. South Africa has ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965). As a member of UNESCO, we are also honour bound not to tolerate practices that are at variance with the Declarations we are committed to. Among these is the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (1978) and the UNESCO Declaration of Principles of Tolerance (1995). The Convention defines racial discrimination as follows:

*Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms....*

Ghanaian philosopher, Anthony Kwame Appiah characterises racial discrimination as posing cognitive problems but otherwise it has no moral challenge. It is a means of differentiation on the basis of putative characteristics, which in themselves have no epistemological value. The point, of course: these theories become the basis on which racism is built.

The UNESCO Declaration (1978) takes a more comprehensive approach. It says:

*Racism includes racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behaviour, structural arrangements and institutionalised practices resulting in racial inequality as well as the fallacious notion that discriminatory relations between groups are morally and scientifically justifiable; it is reflected in discriminatory provisions in legislation or regulations and discriminatory practices as well as anti-social beliefs and acts; it hinders the development of its victims, perverts those who practice it, divides nations internally, impedes international cooperation and gives rise to political tensions between peoples; it is contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and, consequently, seriously disturbs international peace and security.*

The essence of racist belief is that it presumes a moral differentiation and places moral value on the basis of physical characteristics. This definition is based not only on intentional acts or practices but on any belief or behaviour that has the effect of prejudice. What has often disturbed us in schools is this failure to consider the effect or consequences of discrimination on the learners, black and white, negatively affected by prejudice. In the face of that, denial and defensiveness are not adequate responses.

What should be done? The starting point must be that South Africans, black and white, must be freed to acknowledge. They need to acknowledge the feelings of prejudice, inadequacy or superiority that they have. They need to have the freedom to explore their inner feelings and fears in a nonthreatening environment where they can be assured of being listened to and heard, where they may be challenged to justify their beliefs and opinions and encouraged to critically review their history and bases of their opinions. Dialogue is essential for the development of healthy race relations. Intrinsic racists, however, are never changed by rational argument. The institution needs to set ground rules for acceptable behaviour. Deviant behaviour needs to be punished. Unless the schools take the responsibility for establishing an environment and a culture of mutual respect and recognition of difference, then racist practice will become the norm. Educators and learners must be assisted to be sensitive to racially suggestive language and behaviour and must create awareness about the effects and consequences of such behaviour. Conscious of the danger of entrenched attitudes and prejudices, UNESCO has produced a Declaration of Principles of Tolerance in order to assist states in dealing with prejudice and intolerance which invariably leads to conflict. It states that:

*Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty. It is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace*

In 1996, the Commission presented to government a set of proposals as to how South Africa could

meaningfully respond to the call by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for appropriate ways of marking the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1993-2003). Most of our proposals have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. For example, legislation has been passed which virtually proscribes racial discrimination, the Convention has been ratified. What are missing, are the mechanisms for monitoring the incidence of racism and racial discrimination in private and public institutions. We had hoped to establish a racism barometer which would be a vehicle to such monitoring. More seriously, however, is the absence of an informed public debate and understanding of racism.

This conference, we hope, will initiate a process of acknowledgement of the reality of racism in society, at large, and in our schools, in particular. Second, we hope that such awareness will lead to a recognition that racism is a cancer, a blight on our constitutional, economic and social development, it is a threat to peace and stability in society. Racism is prejudicial to learning. Third, South Africans should together determine the contours of the kind of society they aspire to be and how the vision of the Constitution can be realised. We seek a healthy and reconciled society. Anti-racism behaviour and practice does not just happen like Topsy. It is learnt and cultivated. Schools should be the places where tolerance is learnt, prejudice challenged and better human relationships constructed. Our hope is that this conference will open or initiate avenues for openness to learning and the creation of a movement to build a society free of racism in our country.

N Barney Pityana  
Randburg, 4 March 1999.

## Annexure E

### RANDBURG STATEMENT

#### Adopted by Conference Delegates on 6 March 1999

1. The National Conference on *Racial Integration and Racism in Schools*, hosted by the South African Human Rights Commission, was held in Randburg, Gauteng on 4-6 March 1999. The conference was called to consider the report, *Racism, Racial Integration and Desegregation in South African Public Secondary Schools* published by the Commission in March 1999. Conference was invited to reflect on the report and to make recommendations that would ensure the protection of the right to basic education in an environment where “human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms” were secured.
2. 186 participants attended the Conference. They were education officials, academics, and representatives of the organised teaching profession, school governing bodies and learner organisations. The conference was officially opened by the Minister of Education, Prof S M E Bengu, MP. Dr N Barney Pitso, Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission and Dr F A Sonn, businessman, educationist and former diplomat, gave addresses.

#### Conference, therefore

3. notes that five years after the first universally accepted democratic elections in South Africa and the passage of a new Constitution which entrenches fundamental human rights and freedoms, learners in many schools continued to suffer racial discrimination and racism; that the reality of rampant racism was not acknowledged, in fact its existence was denied with the consequence that society has not come to grips with the nature and extent of racist practices and the destructive consequences thereof and that failure to understand the complex manifestations of racism has resulted in the absence of a systematic programme of transformation of the learning and teaching spaces and the elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination.
4. affirms the values enshrined in the Constitution and is encouraged by the policies and legislation set in place since 1994. Conference believes that the transformation intended by the education policy can only be achieved in an environment where the worth and dignity of each learner is affirmed regardless of race, colour, gender or ability, where teachers work with devotion as professional educators and where parents and the community are acknowledged as having a vital role in the development and sustenance of a learning community;
5. endorses the obligations that South Africa has in international law by reason of being state party to international human rights treaties like the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Economic Rights (1966). South Africa has ratified these treaties and deposited the instruments of accession at the United Nations on 10 December 1998; and
6. further notes that 1998 was the year in which the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights was commemorated and, for South Africa, a National Action Plan for the promotion and protection of Human Rights was adopted. Conference is mindful of and inspired in its resolve by the knowledge that 1993-2002 has been designated the 3<sup>rd</sup> United Nations Decade for the Elimination of All Forms of Racism and Racial Discrimination. At the midpoint of the Decade the Secretary General of the United Nations invited member states to declare what plans and programmes were in place to advance the Decade. The South African Human Rights Commission submitted a set of proposals to government for consideration as appropriate means whereby South Africa could mark the Decade. Landmark legislation to promote equality and eliminate discrimination will be presented to parliament before the end of 1999.

### **Conference, further, resolves to affirm**

7. That racism in schools is not only a violation of the rights to equality, human dignity and to basic education, it is an affront to the values enshrined in our Constitution. It will hamper economic development by undermining human resource development necessary for the technological and scientific development of our country. Racism contributes to absenteeism and dropping out of schools. Racism bears direct responsibility for the prevalence of societal ills like crime, poverty and illiteracy.
8. That schools are national institutions best placed to end the historical cycle of intolerance and racial prejudice and can inculcate the virtues of tolerance<sup>14</sup>, mutual respect and human dignity.
9. That the struggle for the elimination of and for combating all forms of racism and racial discrimination is essential in order to ensure the coherence and integrity of society and the realisation of the national vision enshrined in our Constitution.

### **and adopts the following Plan of Action:**

10. Promote programmes for the elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination in schools by developing a culture of human rights in schools, encouraging tolerance and recognition of difference and by encouraging dialogue and debate as a way of resolving differences.
11. Support all efforts aimed at ensuring that the culture of freedom of religion, belief and opinion prevails in schools and that policies aimed at ensuring an effective and realistic language policy is applied in a manner that ensures that all competing rights and interests are taken into account.
12. Ensure that existing laws, regulations and policies designed to eliminate discrimination are respected and that mechanisms, the effect of which is to perpetuate discrimination and exclusion like the admissions and language policies as well as fee structures, be established in such a manner as to ensure respect for the established rights in terms of the Bill of Rights.
13. Empower educators, learners and school governing bodies and administrators by organising training and information workshops, thereby, to ensure that a system of monitoring and implementation of anti-discrimination policies and practices is in place.
14. Disseminate the Report widely in schools and among education officials with a view to promoting a

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<sup>14</sup> Tolerance is here understood as defined in the Declaration on the Principles of Tolerance, adopted by UNESCO General Assembly on 16 November 1995.

culture of education, learning, teaching and service in schools. The Report will also further public debate in society at large about the founding values of society, the role of schools and the imperatives of transformation. Such a debate will help South Africans draw closer together and to be of a common mind about the obligation to work together to eliminate the scourge of racism in society.

**Finally, Conference, accordingly:**

15. Calls for a national resolve to place all resources at the disposal of a campaign to eliminate racism especially in schools, to set in place measures to discipline all those, whether educators or learners, who inflict racism, racial prejudice and racist attitudes on others, to devise programmes to raise awareness and to train educators and administrators in sensitivity to racism as well as to devise strategies to combat racism.

**and further**

16. Calls upon the South African Human Rights Commission to co-ordinate the activities set out in this Statement by information, monitoring, training and awareness raising about racism in society.

***Randburg, Gauteng, South Africa, 6 March 1999***