



## **NAPTOSA STATEMENT: 14 JANUARY 2019**

Opening week of school has already seen education front and centre in the news.

The Schweizer-Reneke incident was most unfortunate and again highlighted the need for teachers to be alive to the demands and values of our democratic dispensation. NAPTOSA trusts that the Education Department in North West will deal with the matter in a sensitive and responsible manner and that the SGB and school will be fully committed to the diversity programs intended for the school. We call on all parties involved not to use the situation for political expediency, but to ensure that, whilst the matter is being dealt with, schooling resumes without any further disruptions.

We commend the Eastern Cape Department of Education for the approach adopted in a similar case in Matatiele. There has been no knee-jerk reaction, but a calm and sensible approach of first launching an investigation before any decision or action is taken.

Overcrowding in schools remains a major phenomenon as was evidenced in the Western Cape where it was reported that a class had to accommodate more than 70 learners. This is obviously not an isolated case, but is experienced by many schools across economic pressure point areas. NAPTOSA again calls on Education Departments to relook and modify their planning models so as to prevent this type of situation.

The past weekend also saw the launch of the ruling party's election manifesto. As far as education is concerned, the intention to consolidate all ECD under the auspices of the Department of Basic Education must be welcomed, because the current fragmented approach, whereby the Department of Social Development is responsible for certain areas of the ECD sphere, is only complicating matters.

Focus to be placed on the enhancement of the skills and competencies of teachers as well as the replacement of inappropriate school infrastructure are all positive signals from the manifesto. It is expected that other political parties in South Africa will also adopt these aspects as a critical part of their respective manifestos.

We are also pleased to see the manifesto speaking to the implementation of the National Integrated Assessment Framework for Grade 3, 6 and 9 pupils, as a replacement of the ANA's. NAPTOSA played a prominent role in the development of the Framework. A keen eye will nevertheless be kept on this matter to ensure that, other than the area of summative assessment that NAPTOSA is in agreement with, no other assessments are snuck in via the Framework.

**B.L. MANUEL**  
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