



2nd National Catholic Schools Congress 2004

One Vision, One Future, One Voice

Direction Statements

Direction Statement 1

As Catholic Schools, with Christ as our centre, we commit ourselves to continue his mission to build God's Kingdom through:

- Nurturing the holistic development of each person
- Formation of the whole school community in the Catholic ethos
- Pastoral care within the school community and beyond
- Promoting closer collaboration between the school and the Church (diocese and local)
- Welcoming all who are in harmony with our ethos
- Meaningful liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations.

Direction Statement 2

Having been challenged prophetically by the social, economic and political situation in our country, we commit ourselves to:

- Solidarity with the materially poor
- Being present to and supporting the spiritually poor
- Sharing our material, spiritual and human resources
- Recognising the primacy of the poor through implementing empowerment initiatives
- Addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its consequences
- Describing, living, maintaining and evaluating our Catholic ethos on an ongoing basis.

Direction Statement 3

Acknowledging that within our Catholic education network there are schools with abundance of resources and those with limited resources – human and material - we commit ourselves to share our resources and put them at the service of those in need.

Direction Statement 4

Aware of the needs in RE and other curriculum programmes, including activities which reflect the ethos, we urge that:

- Pastoral care programmes, especially services for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and poverty, be developed in all Catholic schools
- Schools commit themselves to appropriate training of Religious Education teachers, and the involvement of the whole school community with regard to curriculum and pastoral care.
- Religious Education not be compromised by the implementation of Life Orientation.
- Religious Education activities and celebrations be relevant to their social context.

Direction Statement 5

Desiring to ensure uniformity, quality assurance and maintenance of standards in the teaching of Religious Education we recommend:

- The implementation of the National Religious Education Policy for Catholic Schools as approved by the SACBC
- The formation of a Professional Society of RE Teachers
- That links be made between all Catechetical structures

Direction Statement 6

Aware of the need for quality teaching and learning in Catholic schools, we urge schools to implement quality management systems with the assistance of CIE and UMALUSI through the provincial education departments where appropriate.

Direction Statement 7

The quality of Catholic schools is dependent on the awareness and internalisation of the Catholic ethos. Mindful of the need for transformation in many of our structures and the ongoing formation of all members of the school community, we recommend effective formation programmes for parents, educators, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), Board of Governors (BOGs) and School Leadership/Management Teams.

Direction Statement 8

Conscious of the importance of a responsible implementation of the Deeds of Agreement for Catholic public schools on private property, we urgently request that owners, education department officials, School Governing Bodies, School Management Teams, educators, trade unions, parents and others involved in our schools, be made aware of the requirements and provisions of the Deeds and the roles and responsibilities of all stake holders

Seeing that some Catholic schools on private property still have PTO (permission to occupy) status, and cannot sign the Deed of Agreement, we propose that affected schools receive assistance from the CIE and CSO's to have PTO status converted to Title Deeds.

Direction Statement 9

Aware that we need to speak with one voice, in order to avoid misunderstanding and confusion, we will:

- clarify the names, functions and responsibilities of all structures in the Catholic education network
- develop appropriate policies regarding ethos, roles and responsibilities and education department requirements
- clarify appropriate levels of accountability for Catholic education structures and schools.

Direction Statement 10

Recognising that State makes funding available for education, we call on the State to review its funding policies and to make provision of State funding to ensure accessibility and sustainability of all Catholic independent and public schools.