

Press

Release

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South African Institute of Race Relations

The power of ideas

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New report offers practical, easily implementable solutions to SA's education failures – IRR

The latest report from the Institute of Race Relations (IRR), [Freeing Education](#), offers practical and easily implementable policy solutions to the failures in the South African education system.

In light of the publication of the IRR's [Thrown Under The School Bus](#) report last week – detailing the failures and likely future failures of the education policies of the African National Congress – all concerned parties must turn their attention to solutions that will place higher, quality education standards and parental freedom at the core of the education discussion.

To this end, the IRR proposes the following policy solutions:

- **School vouchers:**

South Africa should introduce a comprehensive system of education vouchers to level the educational playing field. The vouchers – to be spent solely on education – would be tantamount to a universal bursary system.

The current amount of almost R250 billion that the state spends each year on paying teachers and running schools should be redirected to parents in the form of vouchers worth some R12 000 per pupil a year.

- **Give principals disciplinary power:**

Ensure that all schools are headed by principals able and empowered to enforce discipline.

- **Ensure an adequate supply of suitably qualified teachers:**

Allow the schools themselves great discretion in hiring and firing of teachers.

- **Strengthen School Governing Bodies (SGBs):**

Allow for more power in decision making by SGBs.

- **The “no fee” policy:**

This could be done by earmarking part of the child support grant of R350 per month per child up to the age of 18 for school fees.

- **Be wary of overriding decisions by SGBs:**

Education departments should be extremely wary of overriding the recommendations of SGBs and imposing unwanted principals or other staff on them or on parents in general.

- **Shout it from the rooftops: celebrate the successes of no-fee public schools in poor communities:**

Education departments should find ways to celebrate and publicise the success of no-fee public schools serving poor communities, giving full credit to their principals and their teachers.

“The Class of 2020, and all the subsequent classes of children in South Africa, deserve bright futures. These proposed policy solutions can help ensure that this becomes a reality,” says Hermann Pretorius, IRR Campaigns Manager.

- The report can be accessed on the IRR website at:

<https://irr.org.za/reports/occasional-reports/freeing-education-the-future-of-the-class-of-2020-how-to-build-a-bright-education-future>

Ends