



NELSON MANDELA BAY CHURCH LEADER NETWORK

The NMB Church Leader Network

Pastor Daan Botha: Harvest Christian Church

Dr Jimmy Crompton: Word of Faith Christian Centre

Rev Dr Eddie Daniels: Anglican Bishop of SA (PE Diocese)

Bishop Jacob Freemantle: Methodist Church of SA (Grahamstown Synod) **(Chair)**

jbfreeze@iafrica.com

082 878 9965

Reverend Andile George: Moderator Presbyterian Church (Central & Southern Cape)

Apostle Neville Goldman: Ebenezer International

Bishop Mvusi Gwam: Bishop Kingdom Embassy Episcopal Church

Reverend Howard Hans: Chairperson Metro SACC

Dr Bukelwa Hans: Provincial Vice President of the SACC

Pastor Mary-Rose Jacobs: Secretary NMB Religious Leaders Desk

Senior Pastor Lingelihle Jadezwi: RUCC-PE

Bishop Mlungiseleli Koliti: Ethiopian Episcopal Church

Bishop Glenn Lyons: Presiding Bishop of Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of SA

Reverend Themba Mahuwa: Branch Secretary SACC: NMB Metro Branch

Reverend Danie Mouton: Director Synod Eastern Cape DRC

Dr Dave Pedersen: National Director Vineyard Churches SA

Pastor Richard Preston: New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI)

Pastor Russell Viljoen: Ebenezer North

Pastor Johannes Welskit: Regional Leader EC AFM

Bishop Vincent Zungu: Catholic Diocese PE

Church speaks out on sex education curriculum to be rolled out in 2020

Church leaders in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro have responded to the proposed new sex education curriculum for South African schools by issuing the following statement:

The Nelson Mandela Bay Church Leaders Network agrees that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has a responsibility to develop and teach curriculum containing sex education, because of the concerning numbers of teenage pregnancies, HIV/STD infections and sexual violence experienced by learners. Many learners also come from child-headed households or families with limited parental involvement.

However, unlike mathematics where $1 + 1$ will always = 2, teaching on sex is never “value neutral” and the impressions made on young people at a highly sensitive age of physical and psychological development are likely to have a lifetime impact.

It is therefore very concerning that, despite promises of “African solutions for African problems” and of consultation with key stakeholders (particularly parents, School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and teachers), the DBE has comprehensively revised its Life Orientation and Life Skills curricula to teach Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) content and integrated it with UNESCO’s Integrated Technical Guidelines for Sexuality Education (ITGSE).

This ITGSE has been widely criticised for its value-neutral ideology, which conflicts with sound values and places an emphasis on the sexual rights of children rather than their sexual health.

Nevertheless, Scripted Lesson Plans (SLPs) and Educator Guides have been completed and signed off by the Minister for Grades 4 – 12 and the CSE Scale-up report envisions that these lessons will be compulsory for the 12 million learners in the Public School system. The DBE told the Basic Education Parliamentary Portfolio Committee that it wants to introduce this revised CSE curriculum from January 2020. Disappointingly, the Chairperson of the ANC-led Basic Education Parliamentary Portfolio Committee has also closed ranks and declared that they will not re-open this matter, despite the fact that they have not seen any of the actual CSE materials.

The Church Leaderships condemns this irresponsible action, which fails our children.

Our primary concerns are summarised as follows:



NELSON MANDELA BAY CHURCH LEADER NETWORK

Lack of consultation:

Neither parents nor teachers, as the primary stakeholders, have been adequately consulted. Furthermore, other role-players in the field of moral formation were not consulted as well.

Lack of recognition of parents' legal rights:

Binding international law declares that parents are primarily responsible for, and entitled to, educate their children according to their own values and beliefs. These rights are confirmed and reinforced in the South African Department of Education's *White Paper on Education and Training* (Chapter 4, item 3). The Department must, therefore, respect parents' rights to decide what is (or is not) appropriate when teaching their children about sex and sexuality;

Lack of transparency:

In order for proper evaluation, parents must be given sight of the CSE materials *before* these lessons are taught to their children.

Lack of "opt-out":

Parents who are unhappy with the CSE materials must be allowed to withdraw their children from CSE classes without sanction and/or be taught an alternative curriculum. Their decision in this matter must be respected.

Lack of response to research:

Independent, international research shows that the implementation of the UNESCO CSE curriculum in public schools results in increased harm to children, particularly in the African context. The DBE's own Midline Report on its CSE "pilot scheme" identified significant resistance from both parents and teachers, which it described as parental "prejudices" and "cultural taboos". The DBE must therefore fully review the content to ensure that what is included will be in the best interests of children.

The Nelson Mandela Bay Church Leaders Network therefore encourages parents (and other affected parties) who may be unhappy with the current state of affairs to take **URGENT** action to ensure their concerns are both heard and heeded. Parents are advised to contact the SGB of their local school and to insist that the Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools (FEDSAS) in turn raise strong objections when they meet with the DBE in Gauteng on Wednesday, 27th November. Teachers would be well advised to contact their relevant union to raise their concerns.

Signed on behalf of the NMB Church Leader Network

Pastor Daan Botha: Harvest Christian Church

Bishop Eddie Daniels: Anglican Church of SA (Port Elizabeth Diocese)

Dr Jimmy Crompton: Word of Faith Christian Centre

Bishop Jacob Freemantle: Methodist Church of SA (Grahamstown Synod)

Reverend Andile George: Moderator Presbyterian Church (Central & Southern Cape)

Apostle Neville Goldman: Ebenezer International

Bishop Mvusi Gwam: Bishop Kingdom Embassy Episcopal Church

Reverend Howard Hans: Chairperson Metro SACC



NELSON MANDELA BAY CHURCH LEADER NETWORK

Dr Bukelwa Hans: Provincial Vice President of the SACC

Pastor Mary-Rose Jacobs: Secretary NMB Religious Leaders Desk

Senior Pastor Lingelihle Jadezweni: RUCC-PE

Bishop Mlungiseleli Koliti: Ethiopian Episcopal Church

Bishop Glenn Lyons: Presiding Bishop of Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of SA

Reverend Themba Mahuwa: Branch Secretary SACC: NMB Metro Branch

Reverend Danie Mouton: Director Synod Eastern Cape DRC

Dr Dave Pedersen: National Director Vineyard Churches SA

Pastor Richard Preston: New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI)

Pastor Russell Viljoen: Ebenezer North

Pastor Johannes Welskit: Regional Leader EC AFM

Bishop Vincent Zungu: Catholic Diocese PE