

# WCED EDUCATION AMENDMENT BILL

## Comment from Equal Education

### Summary

Proposed amendments include the introduction of collaboration and donor-funded schools, the Western Cape Schools Evaluation Authority and intervention facilities. It also allows for alcohol sales at schools.

EE believes the proposed amendments are Constitutionally suspect, contrary to the spirit of democracy, and unlikely to improve educational outcomes.

## 1 Collaboration schools

**EE is not dogmatically opposed to developing and testing new models of education, but it is not clear that the radical governance restructuring introduced by these amendments, is the key to achieve the education outcomes envisioned by the project.**

So-called 'collaboration' and 'donor-funded' schools are – in effect – privately run public schools.

'School operating partners' and 'donors' will be entitled to major representation on school governing bodies (SGBs).

This contradicts the South African Schools Act (SASA). SASA determines that parents should be the majority on SGBs and only parents, school staff and learners vote on SGB matters.

The MEC will be able to compel schools to become collaboration schools without the agreement of SGBs or parents.

No criteria is introduced to indicate how they will be vetted and regulated, or whether for-profit enterprises can participate.

It is also unclear whether these schools will be allowed to levy fees or implement selective admissions policies.

The overall effects of this kind of school model internationally are decidedly mixed.



### Useful links:

EE's full submission: <https://equaleducation.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/EE-SUBMISSION-ON-DRAFT-WC-PROVINCIAL-SCHOOL-EDUCATION-AMENDMENT-BILL.pdf>

Full WCED Amendment Bill: [https://www.westerncape.gov.za/text/2016/August/prov-gazette-extra\\_7666-extra-school-education-bill.pdf](https://www.westerncape.gov.za/text/2016/August/prov-gazette-extra_7666-extra-school-education-bill.pdf)

## 2 Evaluation authority

The Western Cape Schools Evaluation Authority would have vague and far-reaching powers.

It will be able to visit any classroom at two days' notice, and report on any matter the MEC wishes.

There is already a national school monitoring policy – the Whole Schools Evaluation Framework – which works through the districts. This does not fit into that structure and possibly duplicates layers of bureaucracy.

Focusing on monitoring without providing support is a strategy known to have little effect on school outcomes.

It is striking that the amendments are silent on how schools will be supported.

If anything, it is districts and the provincial department that lack accountability.



## 3 Intervention facilities

The amendments further allow for the creation of 'intervention facilities' for learners found guilty of serious misconduct.

Given the history of reform schools under apartheid, and prolonged attempts to transform and finally close these, this amendment seems regressive.

Instead of stigmatising and isolating learners – a strategy that has been proved ineffective – resources should rather be focused on introducing proper support for all learners and making therapy available within schools.



### Unfair treatment

The amendment will unfairly submit Western Cape learners to prolonged disciplinary interventions that their peers in the rest of the country do not have to face.

## 4 Alcohol sales at schools

SGBs will be allowed full discretion to permit the use and sale of alcohol at schools for ANY purpose.

There are no restrictions relating to the time of day that alcohol is sold or used, or any other criteria.

Given the widely known impact of alcohol in the Western Cape it is shocking that the WCED sees it fit to introduce the sale of alcohol in schools, especially under such vague regulations.

