



Appendix 11 of Annexure W of the UDM Constitution

UDM Education Policy Proposals

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1. Introduction

This policy seeks to bridge the gap created by past imbalances in Education, in line with the Constitution that recognises the right of every child and citizen to be educated.

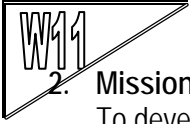
In this regard the UDM supports free public education from primary school until Grade 12, as well as more Government assistance for students studying in select tertiary and professional subjects, such as Engineering, that will contribute to the overall economic and social development of the country. The financing for this initiative is proposed in UDM Economic Policy, which states that the projected decrease in income tax be put on hold and a ½ percent of this be specifically earmarked for a Skills Creation programme. This exclusive budget item will be separately reported on, and will be stringently monitored by Parliament. It is proposed that this funding can enhance Sectoral Education and Training, skills orientated school curricula as well as literacy and numeracy programmes. In addition, specific pilot schemes will be launched aimed at current school-leavers to ensure that they enter the labour market with relevant skills.

It is necessary to recognise that a lot of work still needs to be done in Education, especially in terms of infrastructure, human resources, curriculum development and performance management.

The high levels of functional illiteracy and innumeracy, and the uncoordinated attempts at skills development, together constitute a great obstacle to the development of South Africa into a flourishing, world-class nation. Foreign investors shy away from South Africa largely because of the low levels of education and skills of its workforce as a whole. An education system that would elevate the skills of the South African workforce is vitally needed. The UDM will consult widely in shaping an education system that will unlock the inherent intellectual capacity of the people and the resourcefulness and ingenuity of the South African mind.

Recognising that we live in a world undergoing continuous change, the UDM acknowledges the need for Education Policy to be continuously updated and customised to changing circumstances. Education transformation has been occurring since 1994, therefore UDM policy will seek to retain those areas where there is general consensus between students, teachers and parents. This is a subtle process that should not sacrifice consistency and stability, but ensure that South Africans are at the forefront of education and skills in the world.

In light of these complex challenges, the UDM supports an increased Education Budget, as well as greater resources being dedicated towards the development and maintenance of educational infrastructure.



2. Mission statement

To develop and maintain an Education system that produces school-leavers and graduates that are equipped with balanced job-related and life-skills to enter the job-market, economy and greater society and be productive and responsible citizens. The values of an educated citizen will be underpinned by a patriotic sense of duty towards democracy and the responsibilities that it entails, and embody a commitment to develop the country in all spheres of society towards sustainable development.

3. Educational infrastructure

It is unreasonable that all young people are expected to become achievers when in too many schools they still suffer a lack of basic requirements like potable water, sanitation, electricity as well as adequate and accessible school accommodation. In addition, human resources, physical infrastructure such as laboratories, as well as teaching materials are inadequate.

The UDM is committed to reconstruct educational infrastructure by focussing on the following:

3.1. Human Resources

3.1.1. Teacher training

Recognising that Apartheid Education policy produced two sets of teachers, there is still a need to improve the skills of current teachers, in order for them to implement new Education Policy in line with the Constitution. It will therefore be necessary to ensure that teachers are properly equipped to implement the new syllabus, through intensified in-service training and workshops.

It is vital to recognise the central role of teachers in improving the quality of education in the country. A UDM Government will ensure that they are fully equipped and supported to fulfil this important role.

3.1.2. Management

Systems will be implemented to ensure that governing bodies and stakeholders can monitor and measure the performance of teachers, lecturers, principals and senior management in the Department. This monitoring system will take into account indicators of access, equity, efficiency, management delivery.

3.2. Physical infrastructure

The spending on the development and maintenance of school buildings, water, sanitation and electricity will be increased.

It is in conflict with our Constitution that the lack of potable water and adequate sanitation at schools remain reprehensibly common while about one-third of the capital budget for investment in school infrastructure goes unspent. This clearly points to a lack of capacity or commitment at Senior Management level in the present system.

In line with UDM Public Works policy, education physical infrastructure will have a high priority in Planned Sustainable Development programmes (Aimed at jobs creation and the integrated social and economic development of communities).

3.3. Teaching materials and resources

Additional funding will be made available to ensure that every school has the required learning materials and resources. This will not be limited merely to textbooks, but will include the provision of libraries, laboratories, computers and other relevant technologies that serve as teaching aids.



4. Educational institutions

Recognising that the current Government, instead of improving facilities, is reducing the number of education institutions at high cost to the communities involved, a UDM Government will be committed to bring education institutions closer to communities.

A UDM Government will ensure that all institutions are geared to implement the UDM Mission for Education, namely to be institutions that produce school-leavers and graduates that are equipped with balanced job-related and life-skills to enter the job-market, economy and greater society and be productive and responsible citizens. The values of an educated citizen will be underpinned by a patriotic sense of duty towards democracy and the responsibilities that it entails, as well as a commitment to develop the country in all spheres of society.

Higher Education must be on par with international standards and equip graduates to become professionals in line with the latest international research and development. South African graduates must be able to compete globally. It is therefore vital that in specific fields lecturers and academics from abroad are brought to South Africa to transfer their skills to South African higher education institutions and bring them into the network of global higher education institutions.

All education institutions will promote a culture of continuous learning. Adult Basic Education and Training will be enhanced with emphasis on employable skills, and not merely reading skills. In this regard the private sector can play an important role by ploughing back into communities, with the knowledge that this is an investment in a better skilled workforce.

5. Curriculum development

All curricula shall depart from the values and rights enshrined in the Constitution, and shall aim to foster respect for these rights and values, such as equality, dignity, as well as religious, racial, language and gender tolerance. In this regard curricula must be geared to produce the responsible and productive citizen referred to in the UDM Education Mission Statement.

In line with international standards, learners must understand their individual duties and responsibilities in a democratic society. Similarly, learners must be committed to develop their country in every sphere of society that they belong to. And finally every learner must understand the principles of sustainable development, including knowledge of the country's resources and how they should be utilised and managed for this and future generations' prosperity.

Curriculum development will be an inclusive process involving all stakeholders. It will also be a continuous process to adapt to changing needs in the job-market and society as a whole.

Career-orientated advice and education will be enhanced to ensure that children are assisted to determine their future professions timeously and are capable of identifying and attaining the various goals on the way towards their employment in that profession.

In line with the UDM's proposed National Plan of Action to deal with HIV/AIDS, HIV/AIDS education and awareness will be a compulsory aspect of all curricula. It is necessary to ensure that our children are equipped with the knowledge to prevent infection and also to become responsible participants in the national effort to fight this pandemic.

The UDM commits itself to appointing a Curriculum Development Committee composed of all stakeholders that will culminate in a comprehensive White Paper on the National Curriculum.



6. Establishing a spirit of excellence

A spirit of excellence will be promoted in all schools and educational institutions. It is vital that schools are places of discipline, order, neatness and productivity. A lack of commitment by stakeholders cannot be tolerated. This lack of commitment is reflected in the neglect of the dress code by teachers and pupils, vandalism and truancy. Government, the community, teachers and school children must unite in a spirit of excellence, determined to make every school part of the foundation of a world-class nation.

As professionals, teachers will be expected to contribute actively towards creating an atmosphere conducive to learning both in and outside the classroom. The vitally serious occupation of teaching must not be expected to tolerate the idle, the malingering or the educationally bankrupt. The Code of Conduct for teachers will be adapted to allow for swift and decisive action to be taken against those who abuse their position. Unregistered teachers will be given one year in which to correct their status.

Learners, similarly, will be expected to adopt a culture of learning and to appreciate the value of time. Emphasis will be placed on discipline in order to promote learning and each school authority will be expected to develop effective and constitutionally acceptable means to discipline pupils where required.

Children must be actively engaged at school during school hours. A system will be developed, which will consist of specially trained persons whose time will be dedicated to dealing with erratic attendance by pupils, with the involvement of their families.

Crime, especially sexual harassment and abuse, at schools will receive zero-tolerance. Offenders will be removed from the institution and punished with the full might of the law.