



# JOINT EDUCATION TRUST

*Annual General Meeting 2001*





NINTH ANNUAL REPORT BACK MEETING

28 MAY 2001

*MC*                      *Kholofelo Sedibe, Divisional Manager*

AGENDA

Welcome	Mike Rosholt, Chair, Board of Trustees
The Future of JET:	Naledi Pandor, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
New Directions:	Nick Taylor, Executive Director
Guest Speaker:	Brian O'Connell. Director-General Western Cape Department of Education



## REPORT BY MIKE ROSHOLT CHAIRMAN

South Africa has for the last seven years been experiencing fundamental transformation, a process which is by no means yet complete. Now that the Local Government elections are out of the way, it can be claimed that political and constitutional change has been formally completed. It can also be claimed that the macro economic strategies and policies necessary- to allow the country's entry into the global economy are in place. However, it certainly cannot yet be claimed that the socio-economic change and grassroots delivery so essential for future social and political stability, has been anywhere near adequate. That is not to say that policies have not been put in place, but that generally their implementation has lagged.

It is in this very important field of socio-economic development that non-government organizations have in the past focussed their activities and efforts - and will continue to do so. They too have been affected by transformation. In the past effective NGO's have looked to raise their requirements almost entirely from the private sector or from trusts

and international aid agencies. Their fund raising is much more complex today. The private sector continues to be inundated with requests from NGO's but is now also being approached by government at all levels to contribute to a wider range of major projects. As a consequence many NGO's now have to supplement a reducing traditional contribution base with fee income earned from services to development agencies both within and outside government.

Many NGO's have also been affected in their operational methods by the changes of the last few years. Whereas in the past, after raising the necessary funds, they were left to carry out their activities and projects largely independently today they are very often carried out in partnership with the public and private sectors. This is a very encouraging development as it ensures projects are in conformity with government policies and guidelines, that they are prioritized and focussed and that the necessary overall capacity is in place. The partnership with government also ensures, their future sustainability.



The Joint Education Trust, since its launch in 1992 has been an important component of the non-governmental sector. It was a farsighted intervention by 14 companies, which recognized that their own individual corporate social investments in education, although significant, could never of their own make an effective impact on the systemic weaknesses of the national education system. Theirs was to be a collective effort and their R500 million contribution in 1992 rands was substantial. Since then JET has built up a nationally recognized expertise in sectors of the education field - has directly supported the work of many NGO's and helped to build up their capacity -- has indirectly benefited many underprivileged communities - and has throughout worked closely with government at all levels.

It has at the same time built up a managerial and financial control capacity which has been recognized by a variety of overseas aid agencies, foundations and trusts. This is borne out by the fact that over the past seven years JET has been charged with the management of educational initiatives to the value of well over R500 million, which represents a significant gearing of the original contribution by the 14 companies.

The original Joint Education Trust Deed stipulated that when the R500 million contributed by the corporate partners has finally been spent, the Trust comes to an end. 2001 will see this clause come into effect. Mindful of this, the Board of Trustees has for a number of years been exploring ways and means of ensuring that the staff and expertise built up by JET over the nine years of its life should continue to be available for the transformation and reorganization of South Africa's education system. This would mean that the future running costs had to be completely covered by fee income. And so it is very pleasing to be able to report that this objective was achieved in the 2000 financial year and that indications are that this will be repeated in 2001.

In closing, I should like to emphasize that any success which JET will have enjoyed over the period of its seven-year life have been in very large measure due to three very important contributions. Firstly, to the far sightedness, consistent support and generosity of its business contributors. Secondly, to the ever present guidance and professional advice of its board of trustees. I can quite unequivocally state that in all my experience of similar boards of trustees, this one ranks as one of the most effective.

And thirdly of course, to its management and staff firstly under the direction of Chabani Manganye and lately Nick Taylor. JET can, I believe, claim it has made a significant contribution to the restructuring of education in this country. That is certainly due in very large measure to the professionalism and devotion of Nick and his associates.

***A.M. ROSHOLT***

## REPORT BY NALEDI PANDOR

### VICE CHAIR

South Africa is a fortunate country in that it has many examples of notable contributions to the upliftment of the most disadvantaged in society.

Among these heroes and heroines are thousands of ordinary South Africans, unrecognised, seeking no accolades, yet making a vital change in the lives of others.

JET has been lucky in working with such individuals and in being associated with the best amongst us. One such a person is former president Nelson Mandela. Speaking at the JET Annual Meeting of 1996 he said:

"We welcome the formation of the Joint Education Trust in 1992 as a move inspired by patriotism and vision.... This dynamic partnership between government, business, NGO's and community organisations has facilitated a practical programme within a common vision for peace, prosperity and opportunity for all South Africans."

JET has certainly made strides in giving life to this vision and the excellent record of the Trust's work serves as firm testimony of the role staff and our partners have played in seeking to ensure access to opportunity.

The end of year 2000 sees JET entering a new chapter in its history. One that will continue to be guided and influenced by our original mission. We are pleased that we have practical confirmation that our original focus and vision were well placed. It is also pleasing to record that the wealth of experience and expertise we have built up will continue to strengthen our work as we develop new initiatives. 2001 will see the fulfilment of the brief for which the Trust was formed: the disbursal of the R500 million donated by the private sector. However, it has long been apparent that the other activities of JET have secured it a prominent niche in the field of education development in South Africa, and that this niche expertise has provided a strong foundation on which JET can build its future work. The Trust has decided to establish two new companies to take on this work during the course of 2001 and beyond.



Two considerations were paramount in guiding the formation of these non-profit companies:

- ✍ Their work should be framed by the same Mission which has served JET so well over the last nine years.
- ✍ They should be governed by a Board which reflects the same spectrum of perspectives, expertise and representativity exhibited by the current JET Board of Trustees.

I am pleased to announce that Thandiwe January-McLcan has accepted the position of Chair of the Board of Directors of JET Education Services and JET Education Management. Other non-executive directors appointed to date are Mike Rosholt, Thenjiwe Mtintso, Margie Keeton and Aubrey Matlole - all current JET Trustees - and Sindi Zilwa and Brian Figaji. The present JET Executive will constitute the Executive Directors.

I am confident that these arrangements will ensure that JET continues to be accountable to the education and training priorities of the country, and to make a major contribution to serving the needs of our poorest communities.

***NALEDI PANDOR***



## REPORT BY NICK TAYLOR

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### NEW DIRECTIONS: CONSOLIDATION AND RENEWAL

It has become a cliché to say that we live in a very dynamic environment, but nevertheless a cliché that dominates our lives. Constant and rapid flux, much of it unpredictable, dictates that only the most adaptable organisations survive, let alone thrive. I want to say two things about this situation, as a lead-in to giving you some examples which illustrate where JET is going in the immediate future.

First, our only defence against uncertainty and flux is knowledge. It provides us with a way of understanding where we are, and provides the compass for steering us into the future. Above all, it is important to distinguish between what is new, merely for the sake of being different, on one hand, and truly productive new directions for achieving our mission, on the other. Adapting to the future is not just about anticipating where the next buck may come from although that is important - for JET it is also about divining new ways of providing educational opportunities for the poor, as an essential investment in the future of the country.

In this regard, I want to announce a major research initiative in the field of schooling. JET has been working towards the reform of the schooling system for as long as the organisation has been in existence. I think it is beyond dispute that, in terms of projects under management and funds disbursed, we are by far the largest non-government player in this field. It is therefore incumbent on us to marshal all the information at our disposal, in the public interest, as a way of better understanding where we are going with this critical sector. It is not an exaggeration to say that the health of public schooling and the quality of the basic education it delivers will be a critical determinant in deciding whether or not the country can catch up to the information economy and provide equality of opportunity to all our citizens. At present our schooling system can be seen as a pipeline with more holes than pipe, haemorrhaging vast resources and delivering the most puny output.

In September, JET will host a major conference on school reform, led by a research paper currently in preparation which is investigating all approaches - public, private, and NGO - to school reform. This conference, in turn, is part of a broader and deeper investigation into the state of schooling with which we are busy. This study will culminate in a book length publication - the next step on from our last book 'Getting Learning Right' published in 1999. These developments are both a consolidation of one of JET's main areas of activity over the last nine years, and provide the tools for ensuring that we remain at the cutting edge of school reform.

The second development I want to point to arises out of work we have been doing in the field of workplace education and training for at least five years now.



However, here we are at present embarking on two new initiatives, which are significant in terms of both their scale and scope.

The first is a learnership project which aims to provide entrepreneurial skills to 1000 unemployed young people in the impoverished and often neglected Eastern Free State region. This project is a partnership between the national and Free State provincial Departments of Education and Labour, three of the newly established SETA's, the Education with Enterprise Trust, and JET.

The second of these initiatives is a workforce development programme which will open a new field of operation for the Trust, providing a comprehensive suite of services to working and retrenched adults, their unions and employers, and broker partnerships with provider institutions. The programme has already commenced with a pilot project situated at the Ford Motor Company in Pretoria, and is currently opening a second pilot site at the Durnacol Mine in Newcastle. These developments are driven by a partnership between the national and

provincial Departments of Labour, NUMSA and NUM, the Mine Workers Development Agency, the Ford Motor Company, Durnacol Mine, the Ford Foundation and JET.

These two workplace education programmes are breaking new ground in terms of exploring ways of implementing government's new policies on Skills Development. Everyone agrees with the principles, but no one is quite sure how they will work in practice. For this reason it is essential that they are rigorously evaluated and these research results fed into the public debate. JET is in a unique position here, in that it has the research capacity to undertake such evaluations, and is also driven by a public interest mandate.

I quote these three projects, both because they exemplify our largest current areas of work, and because they illustrate how we are using knowledge to stay afloat in the choppy waters of change, while remaining true to our Mission. Naledi mentioned how this Mission has guided us like a beacon throughout the nine years of JETS existence. I think it is appropriate, therefore, that I end by quoting these articles, the simplicity of which belies the months of hard bargaining amongst the diverse JET

partners in those uncertain days of 1992. For us, the beneficiaries of those tough talks, the result, have proved very wise indeed in guiding us through nearly a decade so far, and looking set to continue well into the future.

- ✍ To serve the development of the most disadvantaged groups in South African society.
- ✍ To mobilise and co-ordinate resources between the public, private and civil sectors.
- ✍ To improve the quality of education and the relationship between education and the world of work.
- ✍ To contribute to the process of long-term fundamental change in the education and training system.
- ✍ To show measurable results

***NICK TAYLOR***

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*From left to right: Mike Rosholt (JET Chairman), Naledi Pandor (JET Vice Chair), Nick Taylor (JET Executive Director), Brian O'Connell (Director General, Western Cape Department of Education)*

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*From left to right: Khanya Rajuili (NBI), Simon Mohapi (SMM), Sam Seepei (JET Trustee), Hemant Waghmarae (JET)*





*Mike Rosholt (JET Chairman)*

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*Left to right: Shaun Samuels (Simeka), Mokgapi Maleka (Open Society Foundation), Albert Channe (GDE) and Jace Pillay (JET)*





*Left to right: (Seated) Nick Taylor (JET), Kholofelo Sedibe (JET) (At podium) Brian O'Connell (Director General, Western Cape Department of Education)*

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*Amarlal Soma (JET) and Rodney Veldtman (NAPTOSA)*





*Kathy Tracey (JET), Ephraim Maringa (Secondary Schools English Research Project) and Patrick Madima (JET)*

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*Left to right: Maropeng Modiba (Wits), Zanele Twala (Junior Achievement), Shireen Motala (EPU) and Coco Cachalia (Kagiso Education Trust)*





*Left to right: Maureen Mosselson (Consultant,) Diana Bamford-Rees (CAEL), Gcina Hlope (Link Community Development) and Phindi Sigodi (JET)*

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*Penny Vinjevold and Jo Lazarus (seated centre) caught in a lunch group*





*JET Staff: Standing - left to right: Hawa Hoosen, Jim Wotherspoon  
Sitting - left to right: Kholofelo Sedibe, Jennifer Robers, Chris Murray (Consultant) and Anthony Gewer*

*Standing - left to right: Jeremy Ractliffe (JET Trustee) and Brian Whittaker (Business Trust)  
talking to guest speaker Brian O'Connell*





*Left to right: Anthony Dewees (UNICEF), Eric Matsomane (Mahlahle) and Aubrey Matlole (JET Trustee)*

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*Left to right: Mike Rosholt, Naledi Pandor, Nick Taylor, Kholofelo Sedibe and Brian O'Connell*



GUEST SPEAKER  
BRIAN O'CONNELL  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

WESTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**J**on Nixon, says: "Society is experiencing a phase of deep transition. Change is now ubiquitous, persistent and non-linear:

this is the chronic condition in which we live, making for a world that is increasingly complex with the unpredictable becoming a normal part of experience." (Nixon 1996:33)

Per Dalin appears to agree with Nixon when, referring to research done internationally on the challenges facing us humans today, he speaks of the unprecedented situation of ten revolutions occurring simultaneously, with worldwide implications for education. These are:

- ✍ The knowledge and information revolution
- ✍ The population explosion
- ✍ Globalisation
- ✍ The economic revolution
- ✍ The technological revolution
- ✍ The ecological revolution
- ✍ The social/cultural revolution
- ✍ The aesthetic revolution
- ✍ The political revolution
- ✍ The values revolution (Dalin: 1999)



He argues that together these represent the most daunting challenges our species has ever faced, challenges that require changes in the way in which we have understood the natural and social worlds and our place within it, challenges that will require a true paradigm shift, which will challenge our conceptual frameworks, our points of departure, our assumptions and our experience so deeply and so comprehensively that a satisfactory response to them will necessitate a revolution in our thinking as heretical and seminal as that of Copernicus and Galileo.

How do we respond to this "new world"? How do we equip our people to deal with it. Education, learning, knowledge, understanding, most social theorists now seem to say. A short while ago, we were carried confidently by the deep belief in structural change as being necessary and sufficient for the fulfilment of our transformational dreams. Recent events, globally, have at the very least created huge doubt, and the notion of social change being the

consequence of consistent and persistent social acts is now gaining ground.

It is with this as background that Jon Nixon asserts that "the deeper significance of learning lies through its forming of our powers and capacities in our unfolding agency" (Nixon 1996:49). We acquire knowledge, he argues, and through that knowledge, possibly, understanding so that we can interact with our world in all its complexity, and change it. This is, in essence what the historian Karl Marx argues when he states that we make ourselves and our society. Social change is fundamentally a historical phenomenon, the consequence of human actors, engaging with their social and natural worlds, and impacting on it. So then, to the extent that nature allows us, "the fault Dear Brutus is not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings". The critical existential question however remains: underlings with respect to what?

If the project of developing knowledge, understanding and a sense of personal and collective agency are the very stuff of sustained development, then how does a developing nation (economically, democratically and ideologically speaking) proceed with such a project?

I want to argue that "Such a project," the view a people have of themselves and their local and global context, the processes they engage in to better understand themselves and that context and the decisions they make and the actions they take in response to what they understand, are not the acts of government alone: they are essentially the responses of civil society, responses by everyman (everywoman) within an enabling and supportive framework, to the challenge of change. The role of government within such a process is crucial, but it is not sufficient.

It would appear to me that the first order of business must be the development of a coherent set of core values, something that enables the critical mass of the citizens to align themselves to the project of development. We know how effectively this was accomplished in Nazi Germany and in Communist Russia and other states where the power of the centre was absolute. How this project unfolds in a modern, fledgling democratic state, with huge ideological and material differences, is a question that has no answer in history. It is the fundamental conversation of this nation-state.

This brings us then to the relationship between organs of civil society and the state in South Africa. It is not an easy relationship, one might even at this time in the history of the second Republic, say that it is a fairly tense relationship, and becoming more so.

The South African government is faced with huge dilemmas. The liberation project assumed total political and economic victory over the old regime, with the power to reconstruct South Africa in the image of the victors. It assumed hegemony, forged in struggle, with almost complete support from the liberated masses.

This scenario was altered significantly by the comprises arrived at at Kempton Park, and by the collapse of the global military and ideological force underpinning socialism. Instead of

alignment with a strong international movement for dramatic social change, the new state found itself a weak player in a new global order, forced into significant compromises with respect to social and economic policy and instead of hegemony, we find the majority party in government caught in a fragile coalition, held together by history and compromise.

The first few years after 1994 saw a strong participation, and even leadership by NGOs and other private providers welcomed by the state. This was in part the response of a government, adjusting to a new role, and with far more important short-term interests than controlling the role of NGOs, in part a response to the chaos in the system and the lack of funds to respond to it, and in part, simply a continuation of the status quo at liberation, with many NGOs and other private providers, who had successfully intervened in the life of the oppressed with the assistance of internal and external donors, continuing to receive that support. Donors, who were committed to medium to long-term support, could not suddenly renege on commitments, and many donors had built strong relationships with highly effective and efficient organisations and, with respect to their own development goals, were reluctant to shift from the known and trusted.

Examples of this in the Western Cape were the National Access Consortium and the Teacher Inservice Project (TIP). In the case of the former, the state itself was keen to test the concept of a new institutional form in the FET band, but this could not easily be done within the state system as no legislation existed for the funding of such institutions. Better to support the experiment and deal with its outcome without having exposed itself too much. Also, at that time, the learners targeted by Danish funding for access to higher education, could not easily be accommodated in either the Technical College or Higher Education Institutions, as such courses did not qualify for state funding within those systems.

With respect to TIP, the agreement was between a foreign agency and the NGO, even though the service was to be rendered to a provincial department, making for a less complex process of decision-making and the management of the funds. There were difficulties however, the chief of those being some difficulty in consistently obtaining the kind of cooperation and commitment from the state department necessary for success. Much time and energy was needed to manage those relationships. Another difficulty was that the NGO was both the service provider and the holder of the purse, and this raised many questions with respect to the ownership of the project, not just at the level of cooperation, but at the legal level of the decision-making and responsibility.

Other NGOs, like MSTP, PSP, and SEP, who served schools with INSET programmes, had a similar set of difficulties. Chief amongst these was the problem of cooperation with subject advisers, particularly where the subject adviser's views on methodology differed from that of the NGO.

In this arrangement, NGO's would seek funds on the basis of their particular strength and offer the product to individual schools, or clusters of schools. This assistance was most often eagerly accepted by the Senior Managers of the school, but here too there were problems. Often the project focused on a particular subject and did little to change the culture of the school, and the work of the NGO was

undone by this culture which proved more than capable of defending against an isolated challenge. Often there was no strong commitment, even within the Departments targeted, with teachers participating reluctantly and the end of the direct intervention by the NGO signalled the end of the project. Often the system did not provide the most enabling environment possible for the programme to flourish, and tired, highly stressed and disillusioned teachers resentfully went through the motions. Often the conceptual base that made a common project possible did not exist.

A major difficulty for all NGO projects was that they were susceptible to attack for not producing results. Decisions about what outputs or outcomes constituted success were often decided by hostile, sceptical inquisitors, after the fact.

As the state became more confident, it sought to take back many of the spaces which had, by default, been occupied by NGOs and private providers. Apart from the growing, often quite aggressive rhetoric about the need of the Government to govern, moves were made to secure for the state control over donor funds. Easiest to deal with were international donors, particularly other governments, which were brought into a stronger relationship with the state via bilateral agreements and formal aid processes. The state also encouraged these donor states to channel all their assistance to South Africa, to state organs, via government to government protocols. While some governments preferred or maintained their relationships with NGOs and were not entirely convinced that Government control of funds would best ensure the realisation of their objectives, many began to cut off support for NGO's and channelled their money directly to state organs, provinces included, through the National Government.

The impact on NGOs, especially, was dramatic, and rapid. Whereas the major challenge in the past had been to develop a good product, and convince a donor of the benefits to both the donor and the recipient should this product be invested in, and then to offer this product, either to community structures or to formal organs of state, like schools, the challenge now was to be able, in open competition, to will government contracts.

Even where NGOs were still receiving support from donors for their discrete projects, both the national government, but particularly the provincial governments, were moving strongly towards greater control over these projects. The Western Cape is an example of this, where policy is now being drafted to regulate the relationship between the WCED and NGOs in order to articulate NGO offerings with the priorities of WCED. An Independent Western Cape Education Trust, strongly connected to WCED has been formed, and donors have been encouraged to become members. In this way donor funding might be channelled to WCED or to schools, via the Trust, with members retaining the right to either nominate their provider, if the provider has been accredited by WCED, and to indicate a focus for the project.

The creation of this Trust is a direct challenge to other trusts, or initiatives that do not generate their funds via their own assets, but who depend on donor funds. Independent trusts, like the DG Murray Trust, for instance, have also affiliated to the Western Cape Trust, with a view to ensuring that all its

education projects are aligned with WCED's programmes, with the Western Cape Education Trust, forming a clearing house for projects.

This Trust has only just begun to operate, and many teething problems are expected, but the goodwill is there from both sides to respond positively to these, as they emerge. The relationship of the trust with the bureaucracy of WCED has still to be fully explored.

Another Trust that has had to reflect deeply on its future is the National Access Consortium, Western Cape. Donor funding, for its original mission, access to higher education and to the world of work, has now begun to dry up. The challenge for the Trust was to see to what extent it could mainstream its programmes, and to this end the programmes have been moved to the South Peninsula Technical College. The programmes are being modified to comply with national prescripts with a view to offering them as Technical College and Technikon programmes from 2002. During the transition period, before the Colleges and the Technikons begin to generate subsidy for these students, the NAC must continue to subsidise the courses.

Given the apparent determination of the government to govern the critical question is whether there is room for independent trusts and NGEOs? Or should the field be abandoned and left to the state to manage?

With respect to the NGOs, the state will probably never have the internal capacity to service the system adequately. The challenges facing South African education institutions are just too vast and complex, for the state to take into its employ the required numbers of people with ever-current skills. It would make no management sense to do so. The challenge, I believe, is still to build strong partnerships with highly skilled, extremely flexible NGEOs and to employ these, or fund these, to work alongside departmental officials. The "good" NGEOs will flourish, while those which cannot win the trust of the Department or the client will fail.

The problem is more complex for large NGOs like the NACWC who were actually involved in the delivery of courses, as the state must clearly take responsibility for providing access courses. As stated, this is already being done. NACWC, however, has another arm, a curriculum and OD arm, and this can only be sustained if a relationship is brokered with the state, or some other organisation. The people in this team have developed much knowledge and skill, particularly in the FET band. With the restructuring of the FET and the creation of FET colleges with the mandate to induct our citizen's into life-long learning, this team must be preserved. But how? They can seek work individually in departments, and hope to influence what happens there, or they can form partnerships with departments while maintaining some autonomy that allows them to retain their focus, or they can become a Section 21 Company or become a fully fledged, for profit company. These alternatives are now being examined. A question that must also be asked is: is there any reason to sustain this arm of the NACWC? What would the loss be if it just ceased to exist?

What lies ahead for a trust like JET? If the funding from business ended, what void would the demise of JET leave? I believe that the skills developed by the JETS and NACs are much too valuable to be lost by this country. I believe also, that it is necessary for South Africa to have available to it organisations that have a strong developmental relationship with the state, but which occupy an independent space. The logic of the bureaucracy and the logic of politics are different from the logic of the interested outsider, different to the logic of civil society patriots with vision. In its need to make the huge conceptual and practical leaps suggested by dramatic global economic and political changes, South Africa needs creative and challenging spaces, but which are deeply connected to the welfare of the whole, and which are occupied by people of talent and skill. It would be a sad day for South Africa if IDASA was to flounder, so would it be a sad day if everything that JET knows and can do, was no longer available to the country.

The problem of 2005 speaks to this matter so directly. There were too many silences from too many voices of potential influence to direct those in the position of authority to genuine reflection. One problem was that challenging voices were sometimes responded to politically, and so are easily marginalised. More surprising were the self-imposed silences from seats of learning like universities, whose bone fides could not have been deflected as easily, given their mandate of creating knowledge for the benefit of the whole. Perhaps there were just too few strong, independent voices with a sincere stake in the welfare of the country, but with the intellectual and practical credibility that would have forced recognition of their views. Any hope we South Africans have for responding to the challenges of change must be that good thoughts must be followed by good practice. I think that it was Hargreaves who wrote that the future of teaching (learning) lies with those who turn hope into active virtue.

The argument or warning is clear: whatever our hope as a country is, it will remain just that unless we adopt an implementation focus. By that I mean, unless we understand change in all its complexity and we proceed with implementing it systematically.

It has often been lamented that we South Africans make policy without reference to implementation. The argument being that if the political will exists, then the means will be found. (I've read of this as VOLUNTARISM). To push the matter of implementation too forcefully is to betray a lack of revolutionary fervour. This is indeed a heroic but dangerously misguided view. Policy and implementation are not and cannot be thought of as separate matters. Any policy, if it is to be of more than symbolic value, must be supported by a realistic implementation plan. Failure to do this, particularly in the case of a large scale, critical innovation like major curriculum change is almost certain to ensure the failure of the project. The tragedy is often, that when it fails, the reason for failure is sought at the level of personal will or commitment or ability, rather than in the nature of the project itself. The personal tragedy that often accompanies this is that this "systems failure," is attributed to individuals who then pay the ritual price.

But implementation is not simply a political act. As Michael Fullan writes" "Implementation is a tricky business, even in the best of times. We are trying to change people's professional lives, while at the same time changing their stable working arrangements. We are doing it with practices unproven in the immediate context and in the name of outcomes we are not sure we can actually achieve. And we are ministering to people, which is always ethically delicate and politically hazardous." (Fullan 1992:7)

I wish to repeat that this is not a project that is the preserve of Government: IDASA's and other organs are absolutely necessary, to protect and direct. We have seen, with 2005, how effectively self-censorship closes down debates.

***BRIAN O'CONNELL***





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