

CONGRESS MOTIONS

MATTERS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The motions of national importance deal with the organisation of trade unions, with emphasis on members' wellbeing and safety, conditions of service and the protection of the profession.

1. THE PROTECTION OF TRADE UNIONS' RIGHTS, AS WELL AS THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE (1.1 (a))

The Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes that:

1. The protection and expansion of trade unions' organisational rights are essential for the continued existence of responsible trade unionism and the protection of teachers' labour interests;
2. The loss or restriction of organisational rights can render trade unions irrelevant and have serious consequences for the education sector;
3. The right of trade unions to organise and to participate in lawful protest action must be protected and upheld;
4. The increasing pressure to classify parts of the public service as Essential Services places existing labour and organisational rights under pressure; and
5. The activities of the Essential Services Committee (ESC) place increasing pressure on the SAOU to actively protect these rights.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU act decisively against any infringement of organisational rights and the right to organise.
2. A legal audit be conducted of:
 - 2.1. Current restrictions on organisational rights; and
 - 2.2. Proposed changes that may affect the right to organise.
3. A strategic response plan be developed to:
 - 3.1. Further expand the public image of the SAOU as a responsible trade union;
 - 3.2. Reaffirm the role of teacher unions within a modern labour environment;
 - 3.3. Determine the needs of young educators regarding trade unionism; and
 - 3.4. Develop a future-oriented and sustainable trade union approach for the future.

Submitted and supported by:

National Standing Committee

2. THE WELLBEING OF TEACHERS AS A PRECONDITION FOR QUALITY TEACHING (1.1 (b))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The increasing administrative burdens, disciplinary challenges, emotional demands and ongoing policy and curriculum changes to which teachers are exposed daily;
2. The direct link between teacher wellbeing and the quality of teaching, learner performance and effective classroom management;

3. Excessive administrative requirements reduce valuable teaching time and contribute to increased stress, burnout and reduced work satisfaction among teachers;
4. Staff shortages, increased workload and insufficient support negatively affect the sustainability of the teaching profession;
5. Increasing safety risks within schools threaten the physical, emotional and professional safety of teaching personnel;
6. Emotional support, professional balance and healthy working conditions are essential for effective teaching; and
7. Schools, governing bodies, education departments and trade unions play an important role in creating a supportive and professional working environment.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU promote teacher wellbeing as a strategic priority within the education system.
2. The SAOU insist that the Department of Basic Education address:
 - 2.1. The reduction of unnecessary administrative burdens;
 - 2.2. The elimination of duplication in reporting and documentation;
 - 2.3. The simplification of administrative processes; and
 - 2.4. The effective use of technology to reduce administration.
3. A comprehensive investigation be conducted into the nature, extent and necessity of administrative requirements within schools in order to protect teaching time and reduce workload.
4. Programmes and support systems be promoted that focus on:
 - 4.1. Emotional support;
 - 4.2. Stress management;
 - 4.3. Professional balance;
 - 4.4. The safety of teaching personnel; and
 - 4.5. The promotion of work satisfaction and professional pride.
5. Awareness campaigns be launched to emphasise the importance of teacher wellbeing as the foundation for quality education.
6. Cooperation between schools, governing bodies, education organisations and the Department of Basic Education be strengthened in order to promote a culture of support, safety and professional respect for teachers.
7. The SAOU continue to facilitate research and discussion on the impact of administrative overload, workload and safety on the sustainability of the teaching profession.

Motion compiled from:

- KwaZulu-Natal (2);
- Eastern Cape (6);
- Mpumalanga (4);
- North West (37);
- Eastern Cape (41); and
- Free State (12).

3. THE SAFETY OF TEACHING PERSONNEL WITHIN SCHOOLS (1.2 (e))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The increasing safety risks to which teaching personnel are exposed within schools;
2. The fact that educators are increasingly exposed to violence, intimidation, harassment, threats and assault within the school environment;

3. The negative impact that unsafe working conditions have on teacher wellbeing, professional pride, discipline and quality teaching;
4. The need for clear safety protocols, effective support and cooperation between schools, education authorities and law-enforcement agencies; and
5. The importance of schools remaining safe professional working environments for teaching personnel.

The Congress recommends that:

1. Comprehensive and enforceable measures be urgently introduced to protect the safety of teaching personnel within schools.
2. Clear protocols be developed and implemented for:
 - 2.1. The prevention of violence and intimidation;
 - 2.2. The reporting of incidents;
 - 2.3. The handling of threats and assaults; and
 - 2.4. The support of victims within the school environment.
3. The SAOU support and promote a strict zero-tolerance approach to any form of violence, harassment or intimidation against teaching personnel.
4. Schools and education authorities implement strengthened safety and support measures in cooperation with relevant law-enforcement and safety agencies.
5. The SAOU continue to promote the safety, dignity and professional protection of teaching personnel as a strategic priority within the education environment.

4. THE PROTECTION OF PURCHASING POWER AND SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENT OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE WITHIN THE PUBLIC SERVICE (1.5 (e))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The increasing financial pressure that inflation, higher living costs, interest rates, food prices, fuel costs and economic uncertainty place on public service employees;
2. Fair salary adjustments play an important role in the retention of professional staff, job satisfaction and quality service delivery within the education sector;
3. The current multi-year public service agreement makes provision for salary adjustments linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), as well as adjustments relating to housing and medical benefits;
4. Multi-year agreements can promote stability within the bargaining process, but also carry the risk that economic changes and increased living costs are not adequately accommodated;
5. Salary adjustments should not merely follow inflation, but should genuinely protect the purchasing power and financial wellbeing of employees;
6. Housing, medical costs and retirement planning place increasing pressure on public service employees;
7. The housing allowance and medical subsidy form an integral part of conditions of service;
8. Organised labour must retain sufficient room to respond to changing economic and fiscal conditions within future bargaining cycles; and
9. Previous public service agreements have often caused tension where employees' purchasing power declined over time, despite formal salary adjustments.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU prioritise, during future public service negotiations, that salary adjustments protect and improve the real purchasing power of employees.
2. The SAOU strive for:
 - 2.1. Fair and meaningful salary adjustments;

- 2.2. Housing allowance adjustments that keep pace with actual housing costs;
- 2.3. Medical subsidy adjustments that address the increasing cost of medical cover; and
- 2.4. The protection of total service benefits within the public service.
- 3. The SAOU give preference to one-year salary and conditions-of-service agreements in order to ensure greater responsiveness to economic changes and inflationary pressure.
- 4. The SAOU should, however, not be excluded from the possibility of concluding a responsible multi-year agreement, provided that such agreement:
 - 4.1. Adequately protects employees' purchasing power;
 - 4.2. Contains clear minimum guarantees;
 - 4.3. Realistically accommodates inflationary and economic risks;
 - 4.4. Includes regular review mechanisms; and
 - 4.5. Promotes the sustainability of public service remuneration.
- 5. The SAOU continue to conduct research and consultation on the long-term impact of inflation, medical costs, housing costs and fiscal policy on public service employees.
- 6. The SAOU ensure active participation in all future public service negotiations in order to protect and expand the professional, financial and labour interests of teaching personnel.

Motion compiled from:

National Standing Committee

5. THE STRENGTHENING OF THE SAOU'S MANDATE REGARDING GEMS AND THE PROTECTION OF MEMBERS' MEDICAL BENEFITS (1.5 (g))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

- 1. The proposed increase in GEMS member contributions for 2026 placed serious financial pressure on public service employees and their families;
- 2. Sustained pressure by organised labour resulted in the proposed increase being reduced from 9.5% to 7.5%;
- 3. Increasing medical costs, administrative expenses and uncertainty about sustainability have a direct impact on members' purchasing power and access to affordable medical cover;
- 4. GEMS was originally established to give public service employees access to affordable, quality medical cover that places the interests of members and their families first;
- 5. The SAOU is of the view that poor financial planning, institutional shortcomings and excessive cost structures should not be recovered from members;
- 6. Transparency, accountability and meaningful participation by organised labour are essential for good governance within GEMS; and
- 7. There is an increasing need for the SAOU to maintain a clear, active and strategic mandate regarding the protection of members' medical benefits and financial interests.

The Congress recommends that:

- 1. The SAOU continue to participate actively in all processes relating to GEMS in order to protect the financial and medical interests of members.
- 2. The SAOU strive for:
 - 2.1. Fair and affordable member contributions;
 - 2.2. Full transparency regarding administrative costs, contracts, procurement processes and executive remuneration;
 - 2.3. Meaningful participation by organised labour within decision-making processes; and
 - 2.4. The protection of quality medical benefits for public service employees and their families.

3. The SAOU continue to apply pressure for:
 - 3.1. Independent investigations where necessary;
 - 3.2. Improved accountability and good governance within GEMS;
 - 3.3. Responsible financial management; and
 - 3.4. Sustainable solutions that do not place unreasonable financial pressure on members.
4. The SAOU provide regular feedback and communication to members on developments relating to GEMS, medical benefits and negotiation processes.
5. The SAOU continue to act together with organised labour and other relevant role players to protect the long-term sustainability, affordability and integrity of GEMS.

Motion compiled from:

National Standing Committee

6. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION (1.1 (c))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The increasing influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on teaching, assessment, administration and professional practices within the education environment;
2. The opportunities AI offers to reduce administrative workload, improve efficiency and support teachers professionally;
3. The need for clear guidelines, responsible implementation and continued training on the effective and ethical use of AI in education;
4. The fact that AI cannot replace the unique human role of the teacher, namely the building of relationships, the shaping of values and the holistic development of learners;
5. The risk that inadequate control, training and policy clarity may harm teachers' professional identity and the quality of teaching; and
6. The need for AI to be integrated into the education system strategically, in a human-centred and educationally responsible manner.

The Congress recommends that:

1. AI be integrated into education strategically and responsibly, with the teacher as the central role player in the learning process.
2. The SAOU continue to:
 - 2.1. Promote targeted training and professional development on AI;
 - 2.2. Support teachers with the effective and ethical use of AI;
 - 2.3. Support the responsible use of AI to reduce administrative workload; and
 - 2.4. Protect the professional role of the teacher within a technology-driven environment.
 - 2.5. Be actively involved in the development of clear national guidelines for the ethical and educational use of AI within the education sector.
3. Continued research, discussion and monitoring be promoted regarding:
 - 3.1. The impact of AI on teaching and assessment;
 - 3.2. Its influence on teacher wellbeing and workload;
 - 3.3. The professional implications of AI for the teaching profession; and
 - 3.4. The responsible integration of AI within schools and classrooms.
4. The SAOU prioritise the protection and strengthening of the teaching profession by ensuring that AI supports, but does not replace, the human dimension of teaching.

Motion compiled from:

- KwaZulu-Natal (1);
- Mpumalanga (3); and
- Eastern Cape (7).

7. STRENGTHENING THE STATUS AND QUALITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) TEACHERS AND PRACTITIONERS (0-5 YEARS) (1.1 (e))

The Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes that:

1. The foundation of a child's development and future learning is established during the early childhood development years;
2. Early investment in quality education and development has a direct positive impact on learner readiness and long-term education outcomes; and
3. Learners are better prepared for entry into the Foundation Phase when quality ECD support is available.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The status and quality of Early Childhood Development educators and practitioners be deliberately strengthened through improved training and the formalisation of professional standards.
2. The SAOU take steps to ensure that:
 - 2.1. ECD educators are better supported and fairly remunerated; and
 - 2.2. The role of ECD practitioners as a critical foundation for learner development is formally recognised and integrated into the broader education system.
3. The SAOU promote cooperation between relevant role players in order to expand access to quality ECD services and prepare learners optimally for the Foundation Phase.

Submitted and supported by:

Western Cape (8)

8. THE PROTECTION OF THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF TEACHERS (1.5 (a))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. Increasing micromanagement and administrative control undermine the professional judgement, autonomy and status of teachers;
2. Policy decisions are often made without sufficient input from practising teachers and schools;
3. The retention and development of quality teachers are directly linked to the professional status and image of the teaching profession;
4. Professional recognition, accountability and support are essential for quality teaching and sustainable education; and
5. Teachers must be recognised, protected and empowered as professionals in order to strengthen the status of the teaching profession.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU actively promote and protect the professional status, image and integrity of the teaching profession.
2. The SAOU continue to:
 - 2.1. Promote the professional image of education during all gatherings, seminars and meetings;
 - 2.2. Recognise and reward teachers' professional contributions and excellence; and
 - 2.3. Strengthen the professional autonomy and standards of the teaching profession.

3. The SAOU engage with relevant role players to further expand the status, standing and professional recognition of teachers within the broader community.

Submitted and supported by:

North West (39)

STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

These motions concerning statutory obligations deal with outstanding aspects of the South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996, as amended, participation in the rewriting of the post provisioning model and the repositioning of inclusive education.

9. THE DELAY IN REGULATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SASA AS AMENDED (BELA) (1.2 (a))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The ongoing delay in the finalisation and publication of regulations for the implementation of the BELA amendments;
2. The uncertainty created for schools, governing bodies and teaching personnel by the absence of clear regulations;
3. The risk of inconsistent application, increased administrative pressure and legal disputes in the absence of sufficient policy guidelines;
4. The need for clear, practically implementable regulations to promote legal certainty, stability and consistent implementation within schools; and
5. The fact that ongoing uncertainty is already causing tension and litigation within the education environment.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The Department of Basic Education urgently finalise and publish the outstanding BELA regulations timeously.
2. Clear implementation guidelines be developed to:
 - 2.1. Promote legal certainty for schools and governing bodies;
 - 2.2. Prevent inconsistent application of policy;
 - 2.3. Limit administrative and legal risks; and
 - 2.4. Strengthen stability within the education environment.
3. The SAOU continue to:
 - 3.1. Monitor the implementation of BELA;
 - 3.2. Provide input on the practical application of regulations; and
 - 3.3. Consult with relevant role players on challenges and unintended consequences of the implementation.
4. The SAOU prioritise the protection of schools, governing bodies and teaching personnel during any further implementation processes relating to BELA.

Submitted and supported by:

Eastern Cape (24)

10. THE NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF GRADE R AS A COMPULSORY COMPONENT OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM (1.2 (b))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June notes:

1. The important role that Grade R plays in early childhood development, school readiness and long-term learner development;
2. The ongoing inequality in access to quality Grade R teaching and support;
3. The need for sufficient funding, infrastructure, staffing and training for the successful implementation of compulsory Grade R;
4. The risk that insufficient support and unplanned implementation may harm the quality and sustainability of Grade R; and
5. The need for any further implementation to be realistic, educationally responsible and sustainable.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU support the implementation of Grade R as a compulsory component of the school system, provided sufficient support and resources are made available.
2. The Department of Basic Education urgently focus on:
 - 2.1. Quality training of Grade R educators;
 - 2.2. Sufficient infrastructure and learning support;
 - 2.3. Fair and sustainable funding; and
 - 2.4. Practical implementation plans for all schools.
3. The SAOU continue to provide input on the practical implementation, support and sustainability of Grade R within the education system.
4. Any further implementation of compulsory Grade R should be phased, realistic and supportive of schools and teaching personnel.

Motion compiled from:

National Standing Committee

11. THE REWRITING OF THE POST PROVISIONING MODEL (1.2 (d))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The fact that the current post provisioning model no longer adequately reflects the realities of the contemporary education landscape.
2. The increasing pressure on schools as a result of overcrowded classes, staff shortages and delays in filling vacancies.
3. The fact that the current model does not take sufficient account of:
 - 3.1. Class sizes;
 - 3.2. Location of schools;
 - 3.3. Migration patterns;
 - 3.4. Inclusive education;
 - 3.5. The needs of special schools; and
 - 3.6. Changing curriculum and staffing requirements.
4. The negative impact that staff shortages, vacant posts and increased workload have on teacher wellbeing, learner support and quality education.
5. The need for a fair, responsive and context-driven model that reflects the realities of schools and educators.
6. The important role of organised labour and practitioners in the development of a realistic and implementable model.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The current Post Provisioning Model be urgently reviewed and restructured to better reflect the changing education landscape and the real needs of schools.
2. The revised model:
 - 2.1. Take account of actual learner numbers and class sizes;
 - 2.2. Fairly accommodate schools in different geographical and socio-economic contexts;
 - 2.3. Adequately address the needs of special schools;
 - 2.4. Promote teacher wellbeing and a sustainable workload; and
 - 2.5. Strengthen the quality of teaching and learner support.
3. The Department of Basic Education urgently focus on:
 - 3.1. The swift filling of vacant posts;
 - 3.2. The reduction of overcrowded classes;
 - 3.3. The improvement of support services; and
 - 3.4. The fair distribution of resources and personnel.
4. The SAOU ensure active and meaningful participation in the rewriting process of the Post Provisioning Model and continue to provide input on its practical impact on schools and teaching personnel.

Motion compiled from:

- Gauteng (13 and 14);
- Limpopo (20);
- Mpumalanga (21); and
- North West (38).

12. THE INTEGRATION OF WHITE PAPER 6 ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS (1.2 (g))

The Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes that:

1. The expansion of inclusive education within the mainstream is supported in principle. However, there is concern that the current approach does not sufficiently take account of the practical realities with which schools and educators are confronted daily;
2. Mainstream schools in many cases do not have sufficient capacity, infrastructure, resources or support services to effectively accommodate learners with high support needs;
3. Educators in mainstream schools are generally not sufficiently trained or equipped to effectively support learners with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, namely Mildly Intellectually Disabled (MID) and Severely Intellectually Disabled (SID);
4. The lack of specialised training, resources and support systems not only places pressure on educators, but also limits the quality of teaching that can be provided to all learners;
5. The integration of learners with serious support needs into mainstream environments is not necessarily in the best interests of the learners concerned;
6. Specialised schools have the expertise, adapted curriculum and support services that are essential for the optimal development of these learners;
7. The proposed repurposing of special schools may prejudice the availability and quality of specialised support;
8. The extra challenges and burden on a school are not taken into account by the Department of Basic Education, and more specifically, weightings in respect of SID and MID learners are not correctly used in calculating post provisioning;
9. The shift to mainstream education without sufficient capacity and preparation may lead to marginalisation rather than genuine inclusion; and

10. The SAOU is of the view that the proposed approach to inclusive education is not sustainable or educationally responsible in its current form.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The implementation of White Paper 6 on inclusive education in mainstream schools be continued only where it is supported by sufficient capacity, training, funding and clear policy and curriculum guidelines.
2. Inclusive education must be practically implementable and take place in the best interests of all learners, taking into account:
 - 2.1. The needs of the individual learner;
 - 2.2. The classroom environment; and
 - 2.3. The broader school community.
3. The SAOU will take steps to support, strengthen and expand special schools in order to optimally accommodate learners with high support needs, while mainstream schools will be appropriately supported to implement inclusive education responsibly and sustainably without compromising the quality of teaching.

Motion compiled from:

- Mpumalanga (22); and
- Western Cape (25).

13. THE HANDLING OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION WITHIN THE MAINSTREAM (1.3 (e))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. There is already a significant shortage of special schools and available placements for learners with high support needs;
2. The repurposing of existing special schools without expanding capacity places further pressure on an already overloaded system;
3. Many mainstream schools do not have sufficient resources, training and support to effectively accommodate learners with moderate intellectual disabilities (MID);
4. The lack of sufficient support increases the risk that learners will not receive the necessary educational support and development opportunities;
5. There is still uncertainty regarding the curriculum, implementation and support of MID learners within mainstream schools;
6. Effective inclusive education requires thorough planning, sufficient funding, specialist support and sustained professional development; and
7. Insufficient preparation and support may have a negative impact on teaching quality, learner outcomes and the sustainability of inclusive education.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU support the principle of inclusive education, provided that it is implemented responsibly, realistically and in an educationally responsible manner.
2. The implementation of the repurposing of special schools and the placement of MID learners in mainstream schools should not proceed without:
 - 2.1. Sufficient capacity at special schools;
 - 2.2. Specialised support to mainstream schools;
 - 2.3. Clear curriculum guidelines;
 - 2.4. Practical implementation plans; and

- 2.5. Sufficient resources and training.
3. The SAOU continue to:
 - 3.1. Promote the expansion and protection of special schools;
 - 3.2. Monitor the support needs of mainstream schools; and
 - 3.3. Provide input on the practical implementability of inclusive education within the mainstream.
4. A balanced approach be followed that prioritises the best interests of learners, teachers and the broader school community.

Submitted and supported by:

National Standing Committee

FINANCES

The motions concerning finances deal with the impact of financial shortages on the constitutional right to quality basic education for learners and optimal working conditions for teachers.

14. THE REVIEW OF THE FUNDING MODEL OF SCHOOLS (QUINTILES) (1.2 (f))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The fact that the current quintile-based funding model no longer adequately reflects the actual socio-economic and demographic realities of schools;
2. The fact that quintile classifications have not been meaningfully reviewed for many years, despite substantial changes within school communities;
3. The increasing diversity of learner populations and the growing financial pressure experienced by schools and governing bodies;
4. The fact that many schools serve learners from diverse economic and geographical backgrounds, irrespective of their existing quintile classification;
5. The need for funding to be allocated fairly, contextually and in support of inclusive education; and
6. The increasing financial pressure on schools to sustainably maintain quality education, infrastructure and support.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The current quintile-based funding model be urgently reviewed in order to better reflect the changed realities of schools and school communities.
2. The revised model:
 - 2.1. Ensure fair and context-driven funding;
 - 2.2. Prioritise the updating of outdated demographic and socio-economic data;
 - 2.3. Support the principles of inclusive education;
 - 2.4. Address the increasing pressure on governing bodies and schools; and
 - 2.5. Promote financial sustainability and equal access to quality education.
3. The Department of Basic Education review and address the practical impact of the current model on schools, governing bodies and learner support.
4. The SAOU continue to provide input on a more equitable, realistic and sustainable funding model for all schools.

Motion compiled from:

- Gauteng (17); and
- Northern Cape (23).

15. THE NON-PAYMENT OR LATE PAYMENT OF NORMS AND STANDARDS AS A VIOLATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION'S CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION AND LEARNING (1.2 (h))

The Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes that:

1. Learner performance in many schools is strongly influenced by socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment and limited access to resources;
2. The non-payment or late payment of norms and standards is a violation of learners' right to quality education and undermines schools' ability to ensure effective teaching and learning;
3. Non-payment places schools under unnecessary financial pressure, which has an impact on available funds for the appointment of staff at schools, while quality teaching cannot take place without the necessary learning material and safe schools; and
4. The SAOU is in favour of a review of the funding model by Treasury, the national and provincial education departments, and the timeous payment of norms and standards to schools.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU take the necessary steps to compel the Department of Basic Education to pay the funds timeously.
2. Clear, practically implementable guidelines be established to:
 - 2.1. Ensure financial certainty for schools and governing bodies; and
 - 2.2. Limit risks.
3. The SAOU will be in ongoing consultation with other relevant role players and will facilitate monitoring and feedback on the payment.

Submitted and supported by:

- Gauteng (15);
- KwaZulu-Natal (18); and
- North West (36).

16. THE REJECTION OF COST-CUTTING MEASURES TO THE BENEFIT OF QUALITY EDUCATION (1.1 (d))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The fact that the SAOU rejects measures that, for the sake of cost savings, prejudice the quality of teaching and learning;
2. The cutting of posts and resources places increased pressure on school management teams and educators to maintain quality teaching;
3. Certain departmental initiatives cause unnecessary expenditure without tangibly addressing the challenges within schools;
4. Available funds should rather be applied to core needs such as sufficient personnel, training, resources and infrastructure;
5. Limited budgets, vacant posts and staff shortages lead to overcrowded classrooms, increased workload and limited professional functioning within schools;
6. These limitations undermine the ability of schools and the Department of Basic Education to deliver quality education effectively; and
7. Insufficient infrastructure and space place further pressure on schools and worsen disciplinary challenges.

The Congress recommends that:

1. Cost-cutting measures that prejudice the quality of education be rejected by the SAOU and that sufficient funding be prioritised to ensure sustainable quality teaching.
2. The SAOU place pressure on the Department of Basic Education to:
 - 2.1. Fill vacant posts;
 - 2.2. Provide sufficient resources; and
 - 2.3. Improve school infrastructure in order to reduce overcrowded classrooms and increased workload.
3. Available funds be strategically applied to core needs within education rather than to initiatives that do not add tangible value to teaching and learning.
4. Advocacy be undertaken at national level for a funding approach that supports the professional functioning of schools and enables teachers to deliver quality teaching effectively and with the necessary autonomy.

Submitted and supported by:

North West (5)

CURRICULUM

Curriculum motions deal with the unfinished and unfunded curriculum matters of the Department of Basic Education.

17. THE FUTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE-STREAM MODEL (1.3 (a))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The purpose of the Three-Stream Model to develop different learning and skills pathways within the education system;
2. The ongoing uncertainty regarding the policy, implementation and practical application of the model;
3. The lack of clear guidelines, sufficient support and realistic implementation plans for schools and teaching personnel;
4. The pressure that new curriculum streams place on schools, resources and personnel; and
5. The need for special schools and existing support frameworks to be protected.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU support the retention of the Three-Stream Model, provided that it is implemented responsibly, realistically and in an educationally responsible manner.
2. The Department of Basic Education urgently make provision for:
 - 2.1. Clear policy guidelines;
 - 2.2. Practical implementation plans;
 - 2.3. Realistic timelines; and
 - 2.4. Sufficient support to schools.
3. The SAOU continue to monitor the implementation of the model and evaluate its practical impact on schools and teaching personnel.
4. The model be reviewed if it cannot be implemented sustainably, effectively and in an educationally responsible manner.

Motion compiled from:

National Standing Committee

18. THE FUTURE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE (GEC) (1.3 (b))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The purpose of the General Education Certificate (GEC) to support alternative learning pathways and learner progression within the education system;
2. The increasing concern regarding the implementation, standardisation and credibility of the GEC;
3. The lack of sufficient support, training and policy clarity for schools and teaching personnel;
4. The administrative and assessment pressure that the GEC places on schools and educators;
5. The lack of a functional, recognised and credible certification framework for learners; and
6. The risk that insufficient implementation may prejudice the credibility of the education system and learner opportunities.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU support the principle of the General Education Certificate, provided that it is properly planned, standardised and supported.
2. The Department of Basic Education urgently develop and implement the following:
 - 2.1. Clear policy guidelines;
 - 2.2. A functional national certification framework;
 - 2.3. Uniform implementation practices; and
 - 2.4. Sufficient support to schools and educators.
3. The further implementation of the GEC be reconsidered until sufficient policy certainty, support and standardisation exist.
4. The SAOU continue to provide input on:
 - 4.1. The practical implementability of the GEC;
 - 4.2. Its impact on teacher workload;
 - 4.3. Assessment standards; and
 - 4.4. Its value for learner development and further learning opportunities.
5. Any future implementation must be realistic, educationally responsible and administratively sustainable.

Motion compiled from:

- Limpopo (19); and
- Northern Cape (34).

19. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNFUNDED INITIATIVES (1.3 (c))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The increasing implementation of new curriculum initiatives without sufficient funding, resources and support to schools;
2. The additional administrative, financial and professional pressure that unfunded initiatives place on schools and educators;
3. The fact that schools are often expected to provide infrastructure, training and resources themselves without additional support;
4. The risk that inequalities between schools will be further deepened by insufficient support and funding;
5. The negative impact that overload, inadequate planning and fragmented implementation have on teaching quality and learner performance; and
6. The need for realistic timelines, strategic planning and sustainable support for any new education initiative.

The Congress recommends that:

1. No new curriculum initiative be implemented unless provision is made for:
 - 1.1. A clear funding model;
 - 1.2. Sufficient resources;
 - 1.3. Professional training;
 - 1.4. Realistic implementation timelines; and
 - 1.5. Sustainable support to schools and educators.
2. The SAOU continue to monitor and provide input on the practical impact of new curriculum initiatives on schools and educators.
3. The Department of Basic Education ensure that any new initiative is educationally responsible, financially feasible and administratively implementable before implementation takes place.
4. The SAOU promote the principle of meaningful consultation with teachers and schools before the implementation of new initiatives.

Motion compiled from:

National Standing Committee

SAOU

The SAOU motions deal with the strategic direction within the SAOU and service delivery to SAOU members.

20. STRATEGIC DIRECTION WITHIN THE SAOU (1.4 (a)- (e))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The important role of research, data analysis, trend identification and strategic planning in accountable decision-making and effective organisational development.
2. The need for future strategic decisions, organisational development and service delivery models to be supported by credible research and practical implementation processes.
3. The constantly changing nature of the education, technology, labour and organisational environment within which the SAOU functions.
4. The need for the SAOU to act strategically, proactively and innovatively in order to remain relevant, sustainable and influential within the education environment.
5. The need for the SAOU's strategic direction to remain continuously aligned with:
 - 5.1. Increasing the value proposition of members;
 - 5.2. Establishing the SAOU as a recognised public opinion leader with an authoritative voice;
 - 5.3. The development of sustainable alliances and networks;
 - 5.4. The strengthening of the SAOU's brand and values;
 - 5.5. The development of strategic and innovative thinking; and
 - 5.6. The application of a values-driven leadership model.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU continue to use research-driven decision-making and strategic planning as core principles of organisational development and future sustainability.
2. Relevant research findings be responsibly analysed, interpreted and used strategically in order to:
 - 2.1. Strengthen organisational relevance;
 - 2.2. Further expand service delivery to members;
 - 2.3. Promote strategic adaptability;
 - 2.4. Proactively address future organisational challenges; and
 - 2.5. Strengthen the organisation's influence within the education environment.

3. Strategic development and future organisational planning be continuously aligned with the SAOU's strategic objectives, values and long-term sustainability.
4. Opportunities be created for strategic discussion, innovation, knowledge sharing and cooperation within all structures of the organisation.
5. The SAOU continue to develop new strategies, approaches and implementation processes that strengthen the organisation's relevance, adaptability and service to members.

Submitted and supported by:

National Standing Committee

21. THE STRENGTHENING OF THE SAOU'S SERVICE DELIVERY, BRAND AND SUPPORT TO MEMBERS AND GOVERNING BODIES (1.5 (f))

The Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes that:

1. The education environment is increasingly changing and new organisations and role players are promoting alternative support models within schools and governing bodies;
2. The SAOU has, over decades, built up an established tradition of professional service delivery, labour protection and support to teachers, schools and governing bodies;
3. Governing bodies, parent communities and governing body educators increasingly need accessible support, practical advice, training and professional guidance;
4. Effective communication, a modern media presence and strategic brand-building have become essential to further strengthen the SAOU's role, value proposition and unique identity within the education environment;
5. The sustainable growth of the SAOU depends on continued trust, visibility, relevance and quality service to existing and future members; and
6. The SAOU's professional, balanced and solution-driven approach remains an important distinguishing factor within the education and labour environment.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU continue to support and protect its members, governing bodies and school communities according to the established SAOU tradition of professional service, integrity and responsible trade unionism.
2. The SAOU continuously review and refine its service delivery model in order to:
 - 2.1. Offer more accessible and targeted support to governing bodies and schools;
 - 2.2. Better address the changing needs of members and school communities;
 - 2.3. Further expand professional support and advisory services; and
 - 2.4. Strengthen the value of SAOU membership visibly and practically.
3. The SAOU expand and modernise its media and communication strategy to:
 - 3.1. Further strengthen the SAOU brand;
 - 3.2. Communicate the organisation's unique identity and professional approach more clearly;
 - 3.3. Ensure greater visibility within the education environment; and
 - 3.4. Reach young educators, governing bodies and school communities more deliberately.
4. The SAOU continue to develop strategic support, training and partnerships that strengthen the professional and community character of schools.
5. The SAOU continue, as a credible, professional and independent role player, to protect and expand the interests of teachers, governing bodies and quality education.

Motion compiled from:

National Standing Committee

OTHER MOTIONS

These motions deal with the improvement of service delivery in the public sector, the strengthening of the education system and the unlawful classification of schools.

22. IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY BY DISTRICT OFFICES (1.5 (b))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. Slow response times and poor service delivery by district offices harm the effective functioning of schools;
2. District offices are frequently inaccessible due to network problems, limited availability and poor communication;
3. Insufficient support by district offices places additional pressure on school management teams and teaching personnel;
4. Unstructured, informal and late communication causes confusion, poor planning and deficient implementation; and
5. The lack of standardised working methods and clear communication channels harms service delivery and cooperation between schools and districts.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU take the necessary steps to demand improved service delivery and support by district offices and provincial education departments.
2. District offices:
 - 2.1. Be accessible and responsive;
 - 2.2. Apply standardised working methods;
 - 2.3. Ensure timeous and formal communication; and
 - 2.4. Support schools professionally and consistently.
3. The practice of late, uncoordinated and emergency communication be actively addressed and limited.
4. The SAOU continue to monitor problems relating to service delivery, communication and administrative support at district offices and bring them to the attention of relevant authorities.

Submitted and supported by:

North West (40)

23. THE APPOINTMENT OF MALE TEACHING PERSONNEL (1.5 (c))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. There is an increasing decline in the representation of male educators within the education sector;
2. Male educators play an important role in the holistic development, discipline and support of learners;
3. The lack of male role models, especially within primary schools, may have a negative impact on the diversity of educational support and learner development;
4. The teaching profession increasingly experiences challenges in attracting and retaining male educators in the profession; and
5. There is a need to investigate and strategically address the reasons for the decline in male teaching personnel.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU launch a research investigation into the reasons for the shortage of male educators within the education sector.

2. The SAOU, taking into account the findings of the investigation:
 - 2.1. Develop strategies to attract male educators to the teaching profession;
 - 2.2. Promote programmes to retain male educators within the profession; and
 - 2.3. Create awareness of the value of diverse role models within schools and classrooms.
3. The SAOU facilitate discussions with relevant role players to strengthen the sustainability and attractiveness of the teaching profession for young men.

Submitted and supported by:

Free State (42)

24. THE USE OF THE TERM "MODEL-C SCHOOLS" (1.5 (d))

The SAOU Congress on 24 and 25 June 2026 notes:

1. The term "Model-C schools" is still used within the education environment and by education authorities;
2. The continued use of the term reinforces historical divisions and outdated perceptions within the education system;
3. The term no longer reflects the inclusive and diverse nature of contemporary South African schools; and
4. The use of the term is inconsistent with the principles of inclusivity, transformation and equality within education.

The Congress recommends that:

1. The SAOU support and promote the discontinuation of the use of the term "Model-C schools".
2. The SAOU formally engage with the National and Provincial Departments of Education on the continued use of the term.
3. Education authorities be requested to refrain from using the term officially or informally within communication and policy environments.
4. The promotion of inclusive, modern and non-divisive terminology within the education system be supported.

Submitted and supported by:

Free State (43)