

# Is South Africa Failing to Uphold its Human Rights Obligation with Respect to Right to Basic Education Through Extermination of Pit Latrines in Schools? Implications for Department of Basic Education

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*The right to basic education of a child is a requirement of human dignity. South Africa, through its new dispensation and conformity with human rights laws, is expected to transform and be consistent with the provision of the Constitution of 1996 that promotes and protects the best interest of the child. However, the current standards in a majority of South African schools, particularly in impoverished provinces, has clearly demonstrated the urgent need for rapid fundamental changes. This article provides a review of the constitutional right to basic education with reference to the welfare of the learners in South African schools and raises questions as to whether South Africa is out-of-depth in upholding its constitutional obligation with respect to the right to basic education in the eradication of pit latrines in schools. It argues that the lack of adequate resources in the provisioning of sanitation undermines many of the fundamental rights that are entrenched in the Constitution 1996. An overview of the international conventions and human rights treaties to which South Africa is a signatory is given, showing the country's commitment to protecting and improving the status and welfare of the children. Furthermore, the second section intersects the right to basic education with the best interest of the child as envisaged in South Africa's legal framework. The final section details how despite legislation in place, the existence of pit latrines in schools violates the right to life, health, and dignity of its learners, particularly the right to basic education.*

*Le droit de l'enfant à l'éducation de base est une exigence de la dignité humaine. L'Afrique du Sud, à travers sa nouvelle dispensation et sa conformité avec les lois sur les droits de l'homme, est censée se transformer et être cohérente avec la disposition de la Constitution de 1996 qui promeut et protège l'intérêt supérieur de l'enfant. Cependant, les normes actuelles dans une majorité d'écoles sud-africaines, en particulier dans les provinces pauvres, ont clairement démontré le besoin urgent de changements fondamentaux rapides. Cet article passe en revue le droit constitutionnel à l'éducation de base en se référant au bien-être des apprenants dans les écoles sud-africaines et soulève la question de savoir si l'Afrique du Sud perd pied quant à son obligation constitutionnelle en ce qui concerne le droit à l'éducation de base dans l'éradication des latrines à fosse dans les écoles. Il affirme que le manque de ressources adéquates pour la fourniture de services d'assainissement porte atteinte à de nombreux droits fondamentaux inscrits dans la Constitution de 1996. On présente un aperçu des conventions internationales et des traités relatifs aux droits de l'homme dont l'Afrique du Sud est signataire, montrant l'engagement du pays à*

*protéger et à améliorer le statut et le bien-être des enfants. En outre, la deuxième section met en relation le droit à l'éducation de base avec l'intérêt supérieur de l'enfant tel qu'il est envisagé dans le cadre juridique sud-africain. La dernière section détaille comment, malgré la législation en place, l'existence de latrines à fosse dans les écoles viole le droit à la vie, à la santé et à la dignité de ses apprenants, en particulier le droit à l'éducation de base.*

The children's right to basic education is of fundamental significance because it is "regarded as one of the most crucial constitutional rights in the enjoyment of all other rights that are envisaged in many national, regional and international instruments" (Churr, 2015, p. 2504). The right to basic education is one of the most widely accepted of all human rights provisions, having been a consistent feature of international conventions and human rights treaties since the establishment of the United Nations (Beitler, 2006). Therefore, the extent of rights in, to, and through education as detailed in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)* and *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)* is significant and places a substantial burden on those who have agreed to implement its principles in domestic law and policy. South Africa is not immune to this assertion. Marishane (2017) further advanced that this right must not only be guaranteed, but also be fulfilled to meet all children's educational needs in a holistic manner. This occurs when its three dimensions, namely: access, quality, and safe conditions are equally addressed (Arendse, 2011). However, to date, there still exists a disconnection between adequate infrastructure and school safety, which has shaped and continues to shape the transformation of education in the post-apartheid South Africa. According to a report by South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC; 2014), a majority of schools where safety and dignity are at risk still typically reflect the demographic inequalities of apartheid. The report further stated that:

Those areas which lack water and sanitation mirror apartheid spatial geography. Former homelands, townships and informal settlements are the areas in which communities and schools, which are black and poor, predominantly do not enjoy these rights and many others. The lack of access to sanitation has an impact on other rights including rights to dignity, education, health, safety and the environment (SAHRC, 2014, p. 3).

Therefore, the main impetus of the paper is that South Africa has been put on the spotlight concerning the provision of adequate and safe sanitation for its learners in its schools more than 25 years after democracy. A number of scholars have written on the right to education in the country, however, little focus and attention has been given to how the continued existence of pit latrines immensely contributes to the disparities in access to education amongst the rich and poor, rural and urban. This has, in the process, raised pertinent questions on South Africa's ability to uphold basic and fundamental rights to access to education for all.

### **The Legislative Context in the Fulfilment of the Right to Basic Education**

The achievement of the right to education is the first degree of realization in the process of ultimately fulfilling all forms of education. The right to education is a basic human right that is both intrinsically reasonable and socially indispensable that challenges the world to participate in an education revolution that would see every child learning and participating in a child-centered environment designed to meet the individual's unique needs (Tarc, 2013). A more thorough interpretation of the right to education is combined in General Comment No 11 and General

Comment No 13 of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) of 1999 whereby four essential elements of the right to education are availability; accessibility, acceptability; and adaptability. This article is aligned with the importance of availability and accessibility of safe sanitation for learners, in line with the promotion and protection of their human rights in schools.

As such, these four elements, which are referred to as a collection of rights, which when taken together constitute rights to, in, and through education as detailed in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* ([CRC]; Verhellen, 1993). The CRC, which is hailed as the turning point in the history of children, contains the most comprehensive international statement of rights to and in education (Lundy, 2015; Sloth-Nielsen, 1995). Moreover, it is the most ratified human rights instrument with foundational principles that underpin other human rights concerning children. These principles include: non-discrimination, best interests of the child, right to survival and development, and the views of the child. The CRC is unique because it protects the broadest scope of fundamental human rights ever brought together within one treaty—economic, social, cultural, civil, and political and places equal emphasis on all these rights (Lundy, 2015). The CRC is primarily concerned with four aspects of children’s rights, known as the four “Ps” namely: participation by children in decisions affecting them; protection of children against discrimination and all forms of neglect; prevention of harm to them; and provision of assistance to children for their basic needs (ICESCR, 1999).

The best interest of the child is the most important feature of human rights law and the role that it plays in children’s lives both at home and at school. This principle plays a critical role because it is captured in a majority of the CRC articles, the ACRWC, and the South African Constitution. Thus, the other remaining principles namely: non-discrimination by state parties of children regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or language, and child participation and decision making are also human rights principles that talk to issues of inclusion and the value of children. As such, state parties are expected to give recognition to the voices and participation of children, particularly with regard to education and protection against all forms of humiliation and torture.

The African continent has also adopted the prescripts of the community of nations by adopting the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child* (ACRWC). The ACRWC is viewed as the most prominent instrument dealing with children’s rights, and reinforces the standards of the CRC (Ekundayo, 2015) from an African perspective. Both of these instruments complement each other in putting the best interest of the child at the forefront continentally and internationally. The ACRWC stresses the importance of the right to education and requires states to take special measures to ensure access to education for disadvantaged children.

The above factors do not only entrench the domestication of international instruments, but also their affirmation in local contexts, and South Africa is not an exception to the assertions. The main prescript of the instruments mentioned above is to preserve and protect the interests of children in all facets of their lives including access to education. Therefore, it is the prerogative of the South Africa government to adhere to these rights in order to ensure that all children enjoy their rights in establishments such as schools.

### **The Right to Basic Education in South Africa: Past and Present Realities**

The major motivation of the inquiry into the manner in which South Africa has implemented the right to basic education is the fact that it has subscribed to major international commitments in relation to this right, including an assurance to the supremacy of her own Constitution 1996,

which endorses the language of human rights. For instance, section 7(1) of the Constitution describes the right to education as “the cornerstone of any modern, democratic society that aims to give all citizens a fair start in life and equal opportunities as adults” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). The 1996 Constitution, which is embedded on transformative goals, reigns supreme and the best interest of the child is the cornerstone of advancing the right to basic education as envisaged in section 28(2). Moreover, it aligns with the protection of learners in schools. The right to basic education and best interest of the child are interrelated because they both focus on children with regard to policy formulation, resource allocation, protection, non-discrimination, survival, and development of learners within a school setting.

The two rights (basic education and best interests) are given effect by the adoption of the *Children’s Act 38 of 2005*. The preamble of the *Children’s Act* is an extension of the democratic values and fundamental human rights contained in the Constitution and it sees itself insubstantial and paltry without reliance on international instruments in which South Africa is a signatory. The *Children’s Act 38 of 2005* talks to the protection of children rights. Thus, the rights of children surpass all other rights and interests (Songca, 2011). As such, schools are expected to conduct themselves in line with the supreme law of South Africa by ensuring that best interests of the child are not flouted.

Of further significance, the right of the child to basic education was affirmed by the adoption of the *South African Schools Act (SASA)* and the *National Education Policy Act (NEPA)* in 1996. The implementation of the right to education in all South African schools must abide by what is contained in SASA and NEPA. According to Bloch (2009) and Sayed and Motala, (2012) SASA fashioned a leeway for an autonomous approach to education in South Africa. As a result, a majority of learners have gained access to basic education in which the state is expected through reasonable measure to progressively make available. On the other hand, the promulgation of NEPA was meant to bring the South African education policy in line with the constitution, which supports the fundamental rights of all learners, particularly to the right to basic education (Van der Vygver, 2012). The act also buttresses on the process of developing and implementing school policies whereby school stakeholders such as the Department of Basic Education (DBE), School Management Teams (SMT), the District Education Officer (DEO), School Governing Bodies (SGBs), and parents were expected to work as a team (Mestry, 2017). The implementation of NEPA somehow exerts considerable pressure on the South African government not only to oblige, but also to adhere, provide, promote, and fulfil the right to basic education that is based on human rights principles, while redefining the education system of South Africa based on equality. In essence, both the SASA and the NEPA are policy guidelines that schools are expected to tap from to ensure that all the constitutional obligations and legislative mandates of fulfilling the right to basic education for all learners are achieved (Mestry, 2017).

Though the foregoing legislative context in the fulfilment of the right to basic education clearly outlines that every school-going child be given the opportunity to learn in a safe and secure school environment, the current status quo is reflective of the opposite (Marishane, 2017). Despite its constitutionalized status as a human right, the South African education system is reeling from a myriad of factors that affect the delivery of the right in question, which are traceable from the past (Christie, 2006). The school system is affected by disparities in the provisioning of water and sanitation, safe environment, and inadequate funding, which raise questions on the provisioning of quality education to school-going children in South Africa (Spaull, 2012). The situation is acute in rural areas that have always been at the receiving end of the fruits of the new dawn of democracy whereby a number of learners have either met their death or been injured due to existing

hazardous school structures, such as pit latrines. Thus, instead of schools promoting the realization of human rights, they have been labelled as places of violation of human rights due to lack of access to basic sanitation, resulting in high absenteeism, poor classroom performance, and early school dropout, death, and incidences of outbreak of major illness amongst learners (WHO & UNICEF, 2013).

### **The Severity of Use of Pit Latrines as a Violation of Human Rights for Learners in South African Schools**

Since 1994, South Africa has made significant progress in improving the provisioning of quality education in line with the prescripts of the new constitutional dispensation and especially of the promotion of human rights. South Africa should be credited for the rights-oriented legal framework in creating the standards against which rights may be enforced. However, scholars such as Grossen et al. (2017) advanced that though there is evidence of a water tight constitutional foundation in South Africa, it cannot be denied that the tenacity of structural inequalities are still deeply entrenched. This part concretizes the argument herein that the right to basic education for millions of learners is far from being fulfilled, taking into consideration that to date a majority of rural schools in South Africa do not have provision for safe sanitation and still use pit latrines. This is despite the fact that ICESCR in *General Comment No 20*, paragraphs 1 and 7 is explicit that neither the right to human dignity nor the right to an adequate standard of living (Article 11 of the ICESCR) can be enjoyed without adequate sanitation. Thus, the problem is rooted in the disconnection between adequate infrastructure and school safety that has shaped and continues to shape the transformation of education in the post-apartheid South Africa.

For instance, there are a number of clauses in the Constitution, particularly in the Bill of Rights, that implicitly refer to a right to basic sanitation and are fundamentally related to the enjoyment of the right to dignity (Tissington, 2011). The right to sanitation as reaffirmed by the UN Human Rights Council and the United Nations General Assembly in 2010 is legally binding in international law and a distinct human right. These two organizations recommend a human rights-based approach to education emanating within a framework of the realization of children's right to education which are embedded in equality, non-discrimination, and respect for the rule of law. Moreover, in 2013 the Regulations on Minimum Norms and Standards in South Africa advanced that the use of plain pit latrines be eradicated in schools.

However, to date there are still thousands of learners that are exposed to use plain pit latrines, especially in rural schools, due to infrastructural backlogs, which are an impediment to positive learning outcomes (Dyantyi, 2018; Macha & Kadakia, 2017). For instance, in 2018, Equal Education highlighted that the South African government had failed in its commitment to ensure that all schools have access to water and sanitation by 29 November 2016, as mandated by the *National Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure* (Arendse, 2011; Equal Education, 2018). A report by the Department of Basic Education's National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) in 2018 further suggested that a total of 8702 schools South Africa used pit latrines as a form of sanitation. In the *State of the Nation Address* (SONA) 2019, President Ramaphosa revealed that the country had implemented the *Sanitation Appropriate for Education* (SAFE) after identifying 4000 schools that had improper sanitation.

However, the statistics given during SONA 2019 were not commensurate with figures given by DBE, namely that by March, 2018 there were a total of 23,471 public schools and 8679 had pit

latrines. Thus, the existence of these pit latrines has led to catastrophic consequences with a number of cases, some backdating to 2007, being tabled in the courts whereby the best interest of the child was highlighted as the bone of contention. In addition, the ruling by the courts as a site of struggle for upholding human dignity and security of learners has led to unanticipated ambiguities, an indication that the education system is still failing to recognize the needs of its learners in a holistic manner (Engelbrecht, 2006). This is despite the existing laws and policies that are meant to protect the rights of learners and promote their social justice (Nkonyane, 2014). Moreover, this cements a clear deviation from what is provided in article (1) (b) of the *Convention against Discrimination in Education* of 1960 as well as section 28(2) of the South African Constitution. Furthermore, this illuminates an audit trail that does not reflect the accurate assessment of schools in need of SAFE as reported by Section 27 in 2018. The foregoing assertions further draw attention that South Africa is not living up to what is stated in *Government Gazette of the Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure* (2013). For instance, Regulation 12(4) clearly states that plain pit and bucket latrines are not allowed in schools.

It cannot be denied that what is written in a majority of policy frameworks and regulations meant to be implemented in schools is totally divorced from the situation on the ground because the footprints of the apartheid education system subsist. Moreover, the quality and provision of adequate resources in South Africa's public education system continues to require substantial reform (Franklin & McLaren, 2015). The extant literature abounds with evidence that points to the undesirable consequences of failure to fulfil the right to basic education holistically through adequate and safe school sanitation, which has in the process compromised the right to life, health, dignity, and security of learners (Charles, 2019; Macupe, 2019; Mlaba, 2020; Ramaphosa, 2018).

Critical voices such as Bloch (2009), Fleisch (2006), and Pretorius (2014), posited that despite the constitution being the supreme law, the education system in South Africa currently remains in crisis, is dysfunctional, and has been termed a national disaster. This is despite the fact that the gratification of the right to basic education is meant to be all-inclusive, taking into consideration that the state has put in place a legislative and policy framework to meet its obligations in this regard. Thus, since the state is viewed as the bearer of obligations with regard to right to basic education, failure to comply with these obligations constitutes a human rights violation, for which the state is accountable (Van der Berg, 2007) as in the case of *Komape and Others versus Minister of basic education* (Shange, 2018).

Consequently, the traumatic death of children in South African schools because of the lack of safe sanitation that should be foundational to a conducive school environment has touched and continues to strike a painful chord in the hearts of many South Africans. This is made unbearable by the continued manifestation of the past in terms of disparities in access to education and in existing infrastructure, which has created a distinction between rural and urban schools. Most of the schools that lack the basic infrastructure are from rural areas. At face value, the government appears to be doing its best, but the impact of the past continues to be felt in rurally located schools. For instance, Lumka Mthethwa's death drew so much attention from the media and other platforms that were castigating the DBE, the school in question, and the SGB on their recklessness and lack of political will by cheating learners out of their rights to basic education. Whereas, the death of Michael Komape, aged 5, in 2014 at Mahlodumela Primary School near Polokwane, occurred at a time when the DBE was facing increasing pressure to fix school infrastructure as per the standards and norms for school infrastructure in 2013, particularly pit latrines (Dyanty, 2018).

2018). Both Komape and Mthethwa fell into pit latrines and drowned in human excreta. This led to school toilets being labelled as the most dangerous place within school grounds, particularly for the learners in Eastern Cape and Limpopo Province, who are without basic sanitation (Bhagwan, 2018). These two cases are just a tip of an iceberg in comparison to the number of learners that have had their right to human dignity and right to basic education compromised by using pit latrines in their respective schools. Below are some of the cases from electronic media including pictorial evidence, which paint an accurate picture beyond what is provided through annual reports, whereby learners have either been hurt or have died due to the existence of pit latrines in their respective schools.

- In 2013, Lister Magongwa, aged seven, died after the walls of a toilet collapsed on him at Mmushi Primary School in Limpopo.
- Oratile Diloane, another young learner from the North West, fell into an exposed pit latrine in 2016 at Tlhotlheletsang Primary School, swallowed excrement, and was severely injured.
- Six-year-old Siyamthanda Mtunu died in 2017 at Dalasile Primary School in Eastern Cape Province after toilet walls collapsed on him.
- In February 2020, a Grade 5 learner fell into pit latrine at Lebuaneng Primary School in Mokopane, Limpopo Province.

### **Graphic Evidence of Pit Latrines in South African Schools**

There exists a wave of graphic evidence through electronic media of pit latrines in South African schools highlighting the inhumanity, degradation, and violation of the right to health, education, and life that young learners are exposed to on a day-to-day basis as they attend school as depicted below in Figures 1 through 3.

Figure 1

*Graphic Evidence of Pit Latrines in South African Schools*



*Note.* From Ngubane, N. (2019, June 11). Filthy pit latrines and no water at Pietermaritzburg primary school. *Groundup*. <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/parents-fear-their-children-will-drown-pit-latrines-pietermaritzburg-school> Copyright 2013 by N. Ngubane. In the Creative Commons.



Figure 2

*Graphic Evidence of Pit Latrines in South African Schools*



*Note.* From Fihlani, P. (2018) South Africa's school pit latrine scandal: Why children are drowning. *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-44329712>. Copyright 2014 Gallo Pictures. In the public domain.

Figure 3

*Graphic Evidence of Pit Latrines in South African Schools*



*Note.* From Caines, K. (2018, March 20). Third world horror: Girl, 5, drowns in school pit latrine. *9NEWS*. Retrieved from <https://www.9news.com.au/world/third-world-horror-five-year-old-girl-drowns-in-school-pit-latrine-in-south-africa/7f189846-66d3-404b-9cd0-066b27efbdca> Copyright 2018 Equal Education. In the public domain.



Linked with the above, it should be borne in mind that the State, particularly the DBE, stands accused of failing to live up to what the country has acceded to in international and regional instruments concerning adherence to the right to life, education, dignity, health, and safe environment by ensuring that the sanitation for learners is fit for purpose and not a breach of constitutional duties. Accordingly, *Africa Check* advanced that, these discriminatory and retrogressive steps should have been a red flag not only for the DBE but for the SMTs, SGBs, parents, teachers, and school heads as well, who are responsible for safety of learners in schools and their right to human dignity (Hazvineyi, 2019). Thus, Heleba (2019) averred that a lack of political will to budget for basic sanitation, and appreciation of the health benefits through basic sanitation remains a major problem. A majority of learners across the country, especially in rural schools, rely on pit latrines, though these have been labelled as unlawful, unsafe, and lacking in privacy and do not promote the right to health. For instance, the age of learners that have either been injured or have died due to derelict toilets in schools are in the Grade R (Foundation Phase) phase who under normal circumstances are supposed to be accompanied to toilets that are designed to accommodate their needs. Furthermore, the *National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy* of 2015 highlights that Government recognizes foundation phase as a fundamental and universal human right to which all young children are equally entitled without discrimination (Department of Social Development, 2015). Whereas, Article 24(2)(e) of the CRC emphasizes that States parties must take appropriate measures to ensure that “all segments of society, particularly children [enjoy] the advantages of hygiene and environmental sanitation.”

However, findings in a report by *School Sanitation Management Handbook* (report TT 699/16) illuminated that children either miss class waiting for toilets or leave school seeking a place to relieve themselves. Moreover, their health is often compromised in the process as illnesses are transferred in filthy toilets (Bhagwan, 2018). In light of the foregoing, it may be concluded that there exists lack of effective management programmes, adequate resources, and political will to meet the needs, dignity, and safety of learners (Bhagwan, 2018). For instance, a reduction of National Budget in 2018 by the National Treasury for funding earmarked for school infrastructure also showed that the government continues promote the apartheid legacy which negatively impacts on poor schools with infrastructural deficits. Moreover, this was an indication that the government was prepared to continue supporting discriminatory tendencies that hinder the realisation of the right to basic education for millions of learners, particularly the core sanitation infrastructure (Equal Education, 2018). Tsesane and Teffo (2020) advanced that the latest cuts made to the education budget by Finance Minister Tito Mboweni, further save as a case in point that these cuts will continue to deeply affect the water and sanitation situation in a majority of schools, particularly in Limpopo and the Eastern Cape province.

The examples discussed herein and the extant literature show a high level of obliviousness of the DBE in taking responsibility in the fulfilment of the right in question. Furthermore, use of pit latrines in schools is reflective of the lack of respect for the right to dignity, health, and life, respectively. One death of a school learner is too many and undermines the tone of the Constitution, which requires the state to be role models in promoting the culture of respect for human rights based on the values of the Constitution. The subjection of learners in rural locations to unfriendly learning environments that compromise their dignity loses sight of the dramatic change brought by the Constitution as highlighted in the preamble that seeks to “heal the divisions of the past in the establishment of a just society” (1999, p. 1). It also minimizes every opportunity that presents itself for all the learners to develop and reach their full potential while experiencing the complete freedom in the enjoyment of their right to basic education.

## Conclusion

Though South Africa is signatory to a number of education rights in international and regional instruments, it appears not to be implementing these commitments to the fullest extent, particularly in domestic law. As such, this has cascaded down to school setup whereby the rights promised and the rights delivered to promote basic education and adequate provision of infrastructure (sanitation) for learners particularly in township and rural schools remains questionable. This has led to court-based rulings as a way of adopting human rights language rendering the commitment to realize the right to basic education for all learners. Lack of provision of safe sanitation for a majority of learners through eradication of pit latrines questions section 195 of the Constitution and puts the education system under scrutiny whether it is capable of fulfilling its obligations to realize the right to education using the maximum of its available resources. This article further concludes that the DBE stands accused of acting irrationally by ignoring the threats learners face in using pit latrines which have been termed unlawful, unsafe, and a gross violation of basic human rights such as the right to education, life, and health as captured in CRC, ACRWC, South African Constitution, SASA, and NEPA respectively. The civil society as evidenced through electronic media has in the process also picked up the truncheon on this issue that the intent and the purpose of domestic law that supports the right to basic education is marred with high levels of incompetency. In conclusion, it has been seen that the prevalent discrimination tendencies that learners in rural locations continue to be exposed to through use of pit latrines exacerbates gross violation of human rights. This indicates that the traces of apartheid and systematic inequalities subsist and stands in the way of the attainment of equal rights to basic education. Thus, the article further concludes that the right to basic education remains a detached lexicon within the education system in South Africa due to failure by the DBE to eradicate pit latrines as articulated in the existing legislation towards children's rights. Moreover, the subjection of learners to learning environments that are not fit-for-purpose is totally divorced from the tone that is used in the Constitution as well as a host of other existing education legislatives and frameworks which are non-discriminatory and seek to promote the culture of respect for human rights for all learners. Therefore, this calls for a synergy between the DBE by education stakeholders such as DEO, SMTs, SGBs, and parents to have the political will toward eradication of pit latrines in South African schools while promoting and protecting the best interest of the child so that the right to basic education is not a means in itself but a means to an end.

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