

# **EDUCATION POLICY**

## **PREAMBLE**

Education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles for sustainable development. It is the foundation of democracy -- preparing people to participate in society and be respectful of the human values. It is a right and an entitlement and should be free for people of all ages. The UN's SDG-4 concerning education also ensures that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary schooling by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to affordable vocational training, and to eliminate gender and wealth disparities with the aim of achieving universal access to quality higher education.

## **VISION**

The vision of the Greens is to create a healthy society with the help of life-long learning and training. The vision is to invest in the next generation and build a fair, successful and cohesive society. The vision is also to make education available for all as all people are entitled to free, well-funded and high quality education and ensure that universities are places of learning and research and have opportunities for higher education and life-long learning. The vision is to provide everyone with the knowledge and full range of skills they require to participate in society and lead a fulfilled life. Also, to ensure that education is treated as a process and not a product as higher education is essential in developing a civilised society; and ensure that there is no undue burden on individual students and recognise the societal benefits of higher learning and research. And, to make sure that schools are community hubs, providing health services, internet access, cultural services, adult education programmes, working collaboratively with community institutions.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The objective is to provide knowledge, learning skills, life-long learning opportunities, creativity and abilities to understand and use sources of information. The Greens believe that every person is entitled to a high-quality, free, accessible public education that gives them the best possible start in life. It is a basic right of all and must occur in a safe environment for them. Also, the objective is to recognise learning as a lifelong and life-affirming process to which all people should have access; and, promote equality, inclusivity, social and emotional well-being and responsibility with democratic accountability.

## **ACTION PLAN**

The Greens' action plan is to make education one of the highest priority areas to ensure universal, common and free education to all. All women should have access to education including secondary schooling and tertiary education as the socio-economically and culturally deprived and underprivileged sections of society should have without discrimination. Universal access to high quality education is fundamental to the economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, well-being and social fulfilment of society. Therefore, the Greens will –

### **Education and Society**

- Ensure sufficient and equitable public funding of state schools so that they can provide a high-quality education to all without relying on donations, fees, or fundraising.

- Ensure that education infrastructure and land remain in public ownership and control
- Ensure that all are entitled to access to a fair, comprehensive and equal education system, regardless of their background, including by establishing fair admissions policies applicable to all educational institutions.
- Provide curriculum material to schools free from corporate sponsorship and influence
- Ensure a secular government curriculum and education system free from religious proselytisation and materials that discriminate on the basis of race, sexuality or gender
- Ensure role of local authorities in the planning and provision of new school places
- Establish fair admissions policies, ensuring of equality of access to all
- Ensure open decision making in education system about curriculum, testing, reporting and teaching
- Prohibit the sale of government schools
- Oppose the privatisation of education
- Phase out public funding for private schools
- Not allow public-private partnerships for building or running schools
- Reject market-driven models of education
- Ensure education funding across all sectors that does not include or promote competition, privatisation, outsourcing, and other market based mechanisms
- Differences in educational outcomes should not be the result of difference in wealth, income, power, possessions or location
- Ensure that differences in educational outcomes should not be the result of difference in wealth, income, power, possessions or location
- Ensure access to high-quality education is fundamental to the development of a fair, economically prosperous, environmentally sustainable and socially cohesive nation
- Ensure that government education infrastructure and land remain in public ownership and control
- Encourage that the schools undertake an energy audit and demonstrate, annually, how they are reducing their carbon footprint and contributing to sustainability locally

### **Early Childhood Education**

- Introduce academic learning not before the age of 5
- Provide free nurseries and free early years education from age 3?

### **Primary and Secondary Education**

- Make compulsory for all young people to be educated between the age of 5-16
- Ensure that sex and relationship education is age-appropriate
- Work towards smaller class sizes with a student-teacher ratio of not more than 20-1 at both primary and secondary level
- Fund health checks in schools and increase the number of counsellors, nurses, and social workers in the schools to ensure that the physical, mental, and behavioural needs of children are met
- Recognise home-based schooling as a viable alternatives and ensure that it is parents' rights to educate their children in settings other than at school
- Ban military recruitment in schools

- Prohibit corporate advertising in schools
- Provide healthy school meals that are rich in vitamins, minerals, protein and fibre, and offer plant-based vegetarian options
- Increase funding for after-school programmes
- Develop critical thinking skills as they are vital for students to grow into effective citizens and workers
- Include vigorous civics curriculum in schools, to teach students to be active citizens
- Expand arts education and physical education opportunities at schools
- Ensure that schools have strong and effective anti-bullying policies
- Ensure that all parties -- parents, students, teachers and other staff and the wider community – are democratically involved in the running of the school
- Encourage schools and colleges to set up parent forums/councils to enhance the school's accountability and improve communication and collaboration over issues such as curriculum, provision, homework, attendance and behaviour management
- Encourage more hands-on learning in primary and secondary education
- Encourage students to attend schools nearer their homes so that there is less carbon footprints
- Ensure that vocational education training is provided in all schools
- Make available quality green space, including nature-play spaces, to all children and young people within educational settings
- Provide training in negotiation, mediation, and non-violence skills so as to make the students Green
- Ensure that costs to primary and secondary parents are minimised

### **Education for Marginalised**

- Recognise religious and cultural diversity and spirituality and encourage critical engagement with, and non-dogmatic exposure to, diverse, sometimes competing, worldviews and beliefs -- whether based on culture, religion or spirituality
- Ensure that privately-funded and run schools reflect the inclusive nature of society
- Include curricula on ethnic studies at the elementary and high school levels
- Ensure that the educational outcomes of girls, minorities, and marginalised peoples match with the rest of population
- Ensure that marginalised people are able to exercise meaningful control over the design and delivery of educational services for their children and other community members
- Introduce more targeted educational interventions for groups of students identified as vulnerable
- Grant schools freedom to recognise religious holidays, cultural celebrations and secular observations in the school calendar
- Increase support for students from diverse language speaking backgrounds
- Take measures to encourage girls, women and gender diverse people to participate in the full range of trades and disciplines, especially those which are traditionally male-dominated
- Ensure that all schools are resourced to provide special needs education as needed and are accessible for disabled learners
- Increase support for LGBTIQ+ students, including the implementation of LGBTIQ+-sensitive school-aged education and support programmes

- Ensure that asylum seekers and refugees have access to the public education system
- Ensure that the education system encompasses the history, culture and contemporary experience of the tribal/indigenous people including in the training and professional development of all teachers
- Ensure that all students have the right to access the primary and secondary public education system regardless of their visa status.

### **Teachers and Training**

- Recognise the social importance of teachers and ensure they are paid appropriate salaries
- Ensure that teachers are properly trained and resourced, including access to continuing professional development and mentoring opportunities.
- Provide training for teachers, educational staff and others who work or volunteer in schools on diversity and inclusion issues
- Ensure equality of opportunity and diversity in recruiting and developing teachers and other educational staff
- Reject performance based pay for school teachers and other educators.

### **Higher Education**

- Ensure that higher education institutions are properly funded by the state
- Increase in PhD Graduates as PhD level research helps drive innovation and economic growth
- Ensure access to comprehensive publicly provided tertiary education for rural, regional, indigenous and remote communities
- Ensure that the higher education system is regulated to protect international students from exploitation and ensure they are treated with dignity and equality and are able to access the services they need
- Ensure internationally competitive conditions for academic staff, including clear pathways to permanent work
- Ensure that the international students have access to high quality, safe, affordable and culturally sensitive education
- Support equal access to high-quality education, and provision of financial aid for college students full-time university and vocational education training (VET) students with a living allowance
- End military and corporate control over the priorities and topics of university academic research

### **Adult Education**

- Provide free education for adults to learn essential literacy, numeracy and life skills and to acquire skills and qualifications to assist in gaining employment
- Promote a diverse set of educational opportunities continuing education, distance learning, mentoring and apprenticeship programmes
- Ensure that diversity is available to all young people without discrimination
- Ensure that the adult education programmes are offered in community centres, schools, and prisons, as well as through other media

**References:**

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