



### 30 August 2012

Media Contact: Jonathan Snyman

Tel: 011-482-7221

E-mail: jsnyman@sairr.org.za

## Number of public schools in decline

The number of public schools in the country decreased by 9% between 2000 and 2011, from 26 789 to 24 365, according to the South African Institute of Race Relations.

The data, sourced from the Department of Basic Education, reveals that six of the nine provinces had fewer public schools in 2011 than they did in 2000. The number of pupils attending public schools during this period increased by a little over 1%.

Jonathan Snyman, a researcher at the Institute, said the decline in the number of public schools is not necessarily a cause for alarm. 'The majority of public schools are under-resourced and the closure or merging of smaller schools with dwindling pupil numbers helps to free up resources.' Mr Snyman added that migration patterns could also help to explain declining numbers of public schools in some provinces. While the overall number of pupils in the country has increased, the Eastern Cape, Free State, Limpopo, and the North West, all experienced a decline in the number of pupils at public schools. All of these provinces experienced net out-migration (where more people move out of the province than in) between 2006 and 2011.

<b>Public schools by province, 2000 and 2011</b>			
<b>Province</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Change</b>
Eastern Cape	6 178	5 589	-9.5%
Free State	2 538	1 371	-46.0%
Gauteng	1 905	2 040	7.1%
KwaZulu-Natal	5 693	5 957	4.6%
Limpopo	4 138	3 931	-5.0%
Mpumalanga	2 053	1 821	-11.3%
North West	2 294	1 614	-29.6%
Northern Cape	486	591	21.6%
Western Cape	1 504	1 451	-3.5%
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>26 789</b>	<b>24 365</b>	<b>-9.0%</b>

Source: Department of Basic Education, *School Realities 2011, Education Statistics in South Africa at a glance, 2000*

ends