

# Press Release



**South African  
Institute of  
Race Relations**

*South Africa's Leading Research and Policy Organisation*

**For immediate release**

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## **The school, not race, makes the difference**

**A pupil's chances of passing matric improve dramatically if they attend a former 'Model C' school, says the South African Institute of Race Relations.**

In 2009 the matric pass rate for pupils in 'Model C' schools was 94%. The overall matric pass rate in 2009 was 60%, according to the latest *South Africa Survey*, to be released by the Institute in Johannesburg next week.

The data, which was provided by the Department of Basic Education, showed that, regardless of race, a pupil's chances of passing matric were greatly improved by attending a former 'Model C' school.

Former 'Model C' schools can trace their roots to the beginning of the 1990s. In 1990, the then-minister of education, Mr Piet Clasé, announced that from the beginning of 1991 parents with children in white government schools would be allowed to choose from three models how the schools would be run in future.

Model A would result in the school's becoming fully private. Model B would result in its remaining a state school, and being allowed to admit black pupils up to a maximum of 50% of the total pupil body. Model C would result in the school's becoming semi-privatised. The school would receive a state subsidy but would have to raise the balance of its budget through fees and donations. It would also be able to admit black pupils up to a maximum of 50% of the student body. From the beginning of 1992, a fourth option was added, Model D. These schools would remain under the control of the white education department, but would be able to admit an unlimited number of black pupils.

In 1992 the Government announced that all schools under the control of the House of Assembly would become Model C schools, unless parents voted by a two-thirds majority for Model B schools. As a result, by April 1992, approximately 1 900 former white schools had become Model C schools. This equated to 96% of all schools that were under the control of the House of Assembly.

Although the term 'Model C' is no longer officially used, it generally refers to formerly whites-only schools.

The performance of matric pupils in 'Model C' in 2009 schools was generally much better than the overall performance of matric pupils.

[more](#)

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The matric pass rate for Africans in former 'Model C' schools in 2009 was 88%. The overall pass rate for Africans in all schools in that year was 55%.

The pass rate for coloured pupils in former 'Model C' schools was 88%. The overall pass rate for coloured pupils was 76%. The pass rate in former 'Model C' schools for Indian pupils was 98%. The overall pass rate for Indian pupils was 92%. The pass rate for white pupils overall, and in former 'Model C' schools, was 99%.

Pass rates in schools formerly controlled by the House of Representatives (HoR), which had been reserved for coloured pupils under apartheid, and schools formerly controlled by the House of Delegates (HoD), and which were schools reserved for Indian pupils, were lower than those in former 'Model C' schools, but higher than the overall matric pass rate.

The matric pass rate for Africans in former HoR schools in 2009 was 64%, for coloured pupils 70%, for Indians 83%, and for whites 99%. The matric pass rate for Africans in former HoD schools in 2009 was 77%, for coloured pupils 81%, for Indians 91%, and for whites 100%.

According to a researcher at the Institute, Marius Roodt, these figures were not surprising. 'Former "Model C" schools are, in general, still better-resourced and managed than other schools. It is also likely that the greater involvement of parents through entities such as school governing bodies also contributes to improved results in "Model C" schools.'

Roodt added that there were still excellent schools in South Africa that were not former 'Model C' schools, however. 'Good results are also achieved in schools that aren't former "Model C" schools. A number of schools that are extremely poor managed to achieve pass rates of 100%, which is probably thanks to dedicated teaching staff.'

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