



**elrc**

EDUCATION LABOUR  
RELATIONS COUNCIL

# Education Labour Relations Council: resolving disputes

Education is the adhesive that binds all strands of humanity and sparks development in all spheres of society

**T**he most powerful element of this order that is education is the educator. The educator provides the canvass on which future leaders develop their crafts and affirm their place in the world. The Education Labour Relations Council was established with the value of the educator in mind and our services are geared towards maintaining a peaceful and amiable relationship between the Employer (Department of Basic Education; FETC/TVET) and the educators (represented by the combined teacher unions in the ELRC).

The welfare of the educator is of supreme importance to the Council and the dispute resolution services and collective bargaining services offered by the Council embraces this ideal.

The ELRC administers the resolution of disputes referred by educators. More than 3000 arbitration awards have been issued under the auspices of the ELRC between 1994 and 2015. The Council's Dispute Management Services (DMS), through its groundbreaking approaches, has ascended to a seat of prominence in the South African Dispute Resolution Arena.

The Council's DMS department renders the following services:

- Preventive services, through training of Parties;
- Responsive services, through the resolution of disputes;
- Proactive services through research on new areas (case laws); and
- Policy influence through the analysis and evaluation of interventions.

The Council offers dispute prevention services, which is a proactive approach in resolving grievances in public education before they develop into disputes. The ELRC also provides training for Panellists (who act as mediators between the teacher unions and the Employer).

The Council has signed a significant number of collective agreements over the years, pertaining to, amongst others, the terms and conditions of employment and the recruitment and filling of posts.

The strategic objectives of collective bargaining services are:

- To maintain and promote labour peace in public education;
- To promote collective bargaining on all matters of mutual interest;
- To implement collective agreements through workshops; and
- To conduct research nationally and internationally.



The ELRC succeeded in getting the different Parties to work together to improve the quality of public education over the years. This ensured labour peace and improvement in education since its establishment in 1993. The ELRC has been successful in the signing of collective agreements that directly benefit educators in classrooms.

The ELRC engaged in meaningful research over the years that have influenced policy making on the conditions of service for educators. This includes research on Educator Supply and Demand, a Study Into Career Pathing and a Salary System for Educators and a study on the Revised Salary Structure Proposals in 2011, which examined the current educator salary system and how salaries have been shaped over the years since 1994.

The role of the Council extends beyond its mandate to maintain labour peace in public education. The Council collaborated with the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC) and the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) to ensure improvement in the quality of education offered in public schools and to cultivate an appreciation of the teaching profession. ▲