

AN ACT TO ADOPT THE EDUCATION LAW OF A.D. 2001

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An act to adopt the Education Law OF A.D. 2001

It is enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Republic of Liberia in Legislature assembled:

Section 1: That from and immediately after the passage of this Act, the Education Law of 1972 and all Education laws amendatory thereto, of the Republic of Liberia shall be, and the same are hereby, repealed, and shall be enacted in their place and stead a new Act entitled: "An Act to adopt The Education Law of A.D. 2001", which shall form Title 10 of the Liberia Code of Laws Revised as follows:

Chapter 1. Policy Framework, in general

Section 1.1 Short title. This Act may be briefly cited as: "Education Law of A.D. 2001".

Section 1.2 Liberia Education Philosophy.

The basic assumptions of Liberian education policy shall be:

- (a) to ensure that every Liberian freely develops his or her human potential to realize and enjoy his or her inalienable human rights, such as life, liberty, association, speech and access to opportunities and to the wealth of the Nation of the fullest.
- (b) to emancipate and empower every Liberian man, woman and child socially, economically and politically.
- (c) to reflect our national commitment to education and the necessity of making our schools the chief and most effective instruments of our political and social institutions in order that our democratic ideals shall become meaningful both in the present and future as the spearhead of economic, social, political and spiritual reforms.
- (d) to motivate in the learners a respect for the dignity of every human being, develop an appreciation for the dignity of labor, instill in them a desire to attain self-reliance and the fulfilment of self-realization.
- (e) to develop programmes that ensure the irrevocable belief that universal education is not only desirable, but also essential for the success of our democratic society.
- (f) to make the content of Liberian education flexible to reflect the aspirations and hopes of the Liberian society, as well as the legitimate manpower needs the nation, subscribe to diversified needs of students and the nation in varying geographical and social settings, placing emphasis on responsible citizenship and developing an understanding of, and appreciation for, the culture of Liberia, Africa and other peoples.
- (g) to reflect our education philosophy in the cultivation of the finer and more lasting intangible disciplines of life - the moral, aesthetic and spiritual values that are the functional and vitalizing forces in individuals and the nation. The Liberian education philosophy shall flow from the wholesome Liberian Cultural Heritage - beliefs, customs, folklore, arts, crafts, and literature - as well as from our new outlook, new needs and priorities dictated by present national and international demands; respect for human rights and dignity, world peace and economic development.

Section 1.3 Cardinal principles

The cardinal principles to guide our national education philosophy in the education and training sector shall entail:

- (a) protecting the inalienable rights of Liberians, including freedom of speech, association and religion as enshrined in our constitutions.
- (b) decentralization of governmental authority and parallel economic development.
- (c) building the national economy for sustained growth and development for the benefit of Liberians and genuine partners in progress.
- (d) reducing illiteracy by providing quality, realistic and practical education at all levels for all citizens without discrimination;
- (e) enhancing women's rights and upliftment of their status in society.
- (f) espousing sensitivity and responsibility in a decentralized government model.
- (g) ensuring justice, fair play and equal access to all possible opportunities.
- (h) achieving the cutting edge of science and technology to keep pace with world and community.

Section 1.4 Long-term goals

In pursuit of its philosophy and cardinal principles of social and economic development, the government of Liberia shall adopt the following long-term education goals as the central instruments of the promotion of peace, reconciliation, social, economic, political and cultural development:

- (a) develop the total individual so that he or she will become a loyal citizen to make useful and continuous contribution toward his or her own development and that of the Nations.
- (b) provide universal basic education through the formal and non-formal processes to help the masses improve their living standards and tackle the immediate problems of illiteracy, health and sanitation.
- (c) strengthen scientific and technological learning as a basis for speedy industrialization and economic advancement.
- (d) stimulate, conserve and promote the cultural heritage and the national policies of unification and integration.
- (e) ensure equitable geographic distribution of educational opportunities and the decentralization of the delivery of services and facilities.
- (f) ensure access, relevance and equality at all levels and in all educational programmes and services for all Liberian youths and citizens.
- (g) equip the individual to be able to earn a sustainable livelihood.

Section 1.5 Strategies

The following shall be adopted as the dynamic strategies to achieve our national education priorities:

- (a) a high degree of decentralization by the delegation of a wider scope of authority and responsibilities to the "grassroots" (i.e., counties and districts) with strong county and district education offices (CEOs and DEOs) representing the Ministry of Education (MOE).
- (b) a significant improvement of the provision and distribution facilities, equipment, furniture and textbooks based on proper mapping (location) and academic classification of public and private schools, including basic educational institutions nationwide to achieve access, equity and standards.
- (c) the provision of non-formal adult education and learning centers, where adequate, to serve as extension feeder schools for willing and able ones.

- (d) a significant change in the national education curricula through the introduction of "core curricula" nationwide, in addition to any locally adopted "complementary curricula".
- (e) a significant change in the teaching profession by liberalization and professionalism whereby teachers well-trained and licensed under conditions set by the Government shall negotiate their employment contracts with school boards or County Education and Training Council (CETCs), and for which government salaries will essentially become complementary "incentives", while the MOE will intervene to adjust inadequacies for the sake uniformity at the national level.
- (f) a significant change in the structure and running of government services by streamlining the MOE, strengthening the CEOs, DEOs for improved planning and administrative services; the creation and strengthening of 64 Local Schools Management Committee (LSMCs), 15 County Education and Training Council (NETC) to mobilize the community, identify ways and means, and propose adaptation required in every reconstruction program.
- (g) the establishment and or activation of relevant commissions and boards that shall focus on, coordinate and or advise the MOE on such areas as (i) accreditation, examinations and academic standards; (ii) national youth service programs and (iii) inter-Governmental, non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) resources and relations.
- (h) a high degree of partnership, participativeness, consultation and management of educational facilities and services nationwide.
- (i) the prioritization and provision of Basic Education for all citizens in the framework of education for all (EFA).

Chapter 2. Education System

Section 2.1 Categories of Schools

The Substantiative categories of Liberian Education System shall constitute both regular and intermediate institutions of learning. The six categories of institutions of learning of universal education shall comprise: (i) Early Childhood Education; (ii) Primary Education; (iii) Junior Secondary School (both academic and technical); (iv) Senior Secondary School (both academic and technical); (v) Junior College and other post-secondary educational institutions and (vi) Colleges and Universities. Intermediate institutions of learning shall involve: (i) Teacher's Education; (ii) Adult Education; (iii) Vocational Training; (iv) Literacy Programs; (v) non-Degree Theological Seminaries; (vi) Seminars; (vii) Workshops and (viii) Conferences. Their distinctive or basic characters and the levels of achievement are herein below described as follow:

Section 2.2 Early Childhood Education

The Government of Liberia shall be committed to ensuring that provisions be made for all children to receive sound pre-first or early childhood education as being essential to the later development and the rapid educational advancement of children to the level of primary education and beyond. The MOE shall encourage and require all districts and counties to establish facilities for early childhood education. The Government shall, therefore, work harmoniously with its partners to ensure access to early childhood education programs, develop standardized and sustainable programs in this area and build capacities for this level to have a favourable impact on the nation's classrooms. The age range for attendance on early childhood programs shall be from 2 to 6 years old. The programs shall aim at providing all necessary opportunities for each child to develop the appropriate physical, mental, emotional

and social skills, attitudes and habits to enable him or her to proceed to the primary level and continue to learn and live a useful and happy life.

Section 2.3 Primary Education

Primary education shall be made available and become free and compulsory starting in the year 2003 for all children within the framework of universal primary education (UPE). At the end of the primary education cycle, each Liberian child shall – in addition to the academic competency and survival empowerment – possess marketable skills and be computer literate. Special provision shall be made to reduce wastage at this level and to improve access and the staying power performance of girls in school. The age range for entering and leaving primary education shall be 6 to 11 years old.

Section 2.4 Basic Education

Basic education in Liberia shall be defined as all education, which provides the foundation for continuous and lifelong learning. All citizens of Liberia shall have the right to basic education as a human right, and shall entail all education up to the 9th Grade (JSS) as well as adult education to include literacy, numeracy and skill acquisition amongst other aspects, taking into account both formal and non-formal education programs. Basic education shall be consistent with global parameters and dimensions that not only provide literacy, numeracy, oral expression and problem solving abilities, but also skills which equip human beings to be able to earn a decent living and live productive lives. In Liberia, it shall be free as soon as possible and shall reflect the spirit and content of the global EFA Movement (Education for All) to take into account peace and civic education to enable a person to become a stabilizing member of his or her society and the global village. With the advent of the new information age, a super technological society, computer literacy shall become a part of basic education.

Section 2.5 Secondary Education

Secondary level education shall include three years of Junior High School (Junior High Secondary School, (JSS) and three years of Senior High School (Senior Secondary School, SSS) and shall encompass 1 to 3 years vocational technical schools and institutions. Secondary education (3 years JSS and 3 years SSS) shall be available in public, mission-sponsored, concession-sponsored, privately sponsored and self-help community schools. Pupils who complete primary education (i.e., the Sixth Grade Level) shall be eligible to continue their education at the Junior High School Level up to the Ninth Grade for a Junior High School Certificate; similarly, a Senior Secondary School (i.e., SSS) graduate shall be awarded a Senior Secondary School Diploma, with emphasis on the following pointers.

- (a) The ultimate purpose of Liberian Secondary Education shall be to provide opportunities to satisfy the common and diversified liberal, moral, social, spiritual and technological needs of individual adolescents and the society. The Secondary School System shall have the responsibility to develop learning activities that effectively provide for the needs, interests and abilities of students in the modern scientific, technological and information society.
- (b) Specially the programs of study at Junior Secondary School shall be focused to provide articulation between the elementary schools (primary schools) and the more diversified Senior High school work, to help students to explore a variety of work-related experiences and identify their abilities and interests, and to guide students to information about their country, their educational empowerment and training opportunities.
- (c) The programs at the Senior Secondary School level shall be focused thus: (i) to provide broad-based program that shall be geared to ward the needs of the national economy to allow students to move into middle-level technical and professional positions and (ii) to

help students to become problem-solvers, develop independence and assume responsibility as members of the Liberian Society.

Section 2.6. Sixth Grade National Examinations.

Consideration shall be given to the re-introduction of the Sixth Grade National Examinations before the year 2005.

Section 2.7. Ninth Grade and Twelfth Grade National Examinations

Both the 9th Grade and the 12th Grade National Examinations shall continue to be available and administered by the West African Examinations Council, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. However, as soon as possible, the 12th Grade National Examinations shall be totally discontinued and replaced by the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE).

Section 2.8. Higher Education: Scope

Higher Education as a concept shall encompass all educational programs and institutions above the Senior Secondary Level, such as, junior colleges, community colleges, technical or technological institutions, polytechnics, theological schools, seminaries and universities. But, junior colleges shall be limited to the granting of Associate of Arts Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates while only accredited colleges and universities shall grant undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees.

Section 2.9. Adult Non-Formal Education

Adult Non-Formal Education and out-of-school education shall be available throughout Liberia to all out-of-school youths. This form of education also take into account the basic learning needs of adults and out-of-school youths including their needs for literacy, numeracy, oral expression, productive skills and capacities as well as civics and peace education.

Section 2.10. Teacher Education

Cognizant of the poor quality and caliber of many teachers who constitute the work force of the Education and Training Sector of the Liberian economy; the Government shall be always committed and determined to improve the caliber of teachers by identified and diversified teacher education programmes of training and re-training to enable the emergent teachers to cope and deal with existing realities and incoming trends to surmount persistent problems inherited from the past and maintain the requisite number of teachers for the education system. In order to achieve this goal, teachers shall be adequately compensated and motivated to conform to the changing demands and cope with the challenges of the system.

Section 2.11. Vocational and Technical Education

More serious attention shall be given to vocational and technical education as follows:

- (a) The Government of Liberia shall set up and implement specific programmes to attract “specialist” teachers and special students as well as encourage and enhance the professional participation of female teachers into specialized secondary technical, vocational and science education.
- (b) The Government shall review, promote and strengthen science and technology education at Teachers Training College (TTCs) and other college levels by support to laboratories, equipment, facilities and staffing, including those related to agriculture, mining, and communication (informatics).

Section 2.12. Local Governing Body for Every Primary School

All institutions set up for purposes of primary education, whether public or private, shall comply with the Education Law, the policies and regulations of the MOE. Such schools, among other requirements, shall have a Governing Body or Board, Parents and Teachers' Association (PTA), or Committee which shall include parents, community leaders, teachers and representatives of Local School Management Committee (LSMC). The administrative, instructional and support staffing of such schools shall be in accordance with the numbers and qualification provided by law and regulations. The curricula of primary education as specified by the MOE shall include "core" areas such as: Mathematics, English Language, History, Social Studies and Elementary Basic Science.

Section 2.13. Reform and Standardization

The MOE shall endeavor at all times to give effect to its enunciated policies as follows:

- (a) review existing Junior and Senior Secondary School Curricula, re-develop them and provide standard textbooks, materials and library facilities for them to respond to the JSS and SSS System as well as the needs of the Liberian Society.
- (b) attract highly qualified teachers and instructors by providing attractive salaries, incentives and fringe benefits.
- (c) strengthen the teacher's colleges by providing adequate facilities and relevant programmes as well as support for qualified teacher trainers, training staff development incentives/opportunities in the Teachers' Training Colleges (TTCs) and universities.
- (d) promote science and technology education both at the Secondary Schools Teachers' (TTCs) and universities, by support to science and technology laboratories and facilities, including those related to agriculture, industry, mining and communication (informatics).
- (e) support vocational and technical education programs at the multilateral high schools and science centres as well as other vocational schools and centres.
- (f) Establish and conduct career education and vocational guidance programs to help the youths make realistic career decisions.
- (g) Rehabilitate existing vocational schools and facilities.
- (h) Support the WAEC to effectively provide adequate and more reliable evaluation of secondary education programs in view of the gradual phase-out of its National Examinations for Secondary Schools.
- (i) Provide subsidy, loan and scholarship schemes to support deserving students, especially females.

CHAPTER 3. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Organization, Management And Administration

Section 3.1. Organization of Ministry

In accordance with the Executive Law, the Minister of Education appointed by the President of Liberia with the advice and the consent of the Senate shall head the Ministry of Education? This Ministry shall have three departments each to be headed by a Deputy Minister, and shall be further organized into eight major bureaux and every bureau shall be headed by an Assistant Minister, all appointed also by the President with the advise and consent of the Senate. However, the internal organization of each bureau, including organizational charts of

the bureaux, shall be determined by the Minister in consultation with the Deputy Minister to efficiently carry out the exercise of its functions.

Section 3.2. Duties of Ministers

The Minister of Education shall:

- (a) have full power over and supervision of all public schools and institutions of higher learning to the extent provided by the law and permitted by their charters.
- (b) be constantly informed on the condition and operation of all public and private schools and other educational institutions and of the general state education in Liberia.
- (c) formulate policies and regulations to govern the conduct and operation of all schools in Liberia, in accordance with the law.
- (d) serve as chairperson ex-officio on relevant national advisory board of extra-ministerial national councils, tribunals and committees.

Section 3.3. The Deputy Ministers of Education: Ascendancy

The three Deputy Ministers of Education shall be the principal assistants to the Minister of Education and they shall perform such specific duties as may be assigned or delegated to them by the Minister of Education under the Education Law of Liberia. In the event of absence, disability, death, resignation or removal of the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister for Administration, or in his or her absence, the Deputy Minister for Instruction, or in absence of the two, The Deputy Minister of Planning, Research and Development shall succeed to the duties of Minister of Education, until he/she (Minister) shall return or until a successor is appointed.

Section 3.4. Deputy Minister of Education for Administration: Duties

The Deputy Minister of Education for Administration shall be responsible for the internal administrative affairs of the Ministry of Education, including the providing of technical staff service, conduct of all financial and fiscal affairs of the Ministry of Education, management of all physical properties of the Ministry; contracts, procurement, custody and distribution of supplies and equipment; and providing services for use of the Ministry in the collection, analysis and reporting of information on ministerial activities. Complaints of the nature of administrative offences, such as arbitrary suspensions or dismissals with or without pay, serious insubordination to superior, dereliction of duty, seduction or any abuse or molestation of a student or teacher, including sodomy, homosexuality and lesbianism; child abuse or serious violation of the human rights of students, teachers, professors, other faculty members and staff occurring on school campuses or environments; or administrative appeals from final decision of Local Schools Management Committee (LSMCs) or from the National Education and Training Council (NETC) or any advisory board shall lie to the Deputy Minister of Education for Administration or be directed to the Minister of Education (where the Deputy Minister is a member of the advisory board of council), prior to any desired court process.

Section 3.5. Deputy Minister of Education for Instruction: Duties

The Deputy Minister of Education for Instruction shall be responsible for effectuating the basic purpose of the Ministry, which is education; the development and direction of primary and secondary education which includes, more specifically, planning of curricula, preparation or selection of instructional material, and their training, setting of standards of pupils' completion of courses, and analysis of needs for special educational services and facilities. The Deputy Minister of Education for Instruction shall implement instructional plans of the Ministry, including classroom instruction, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of instruction. He or she shall also monitor and have cognizance of the activities of all relevant

autonomous National Advisory Boards or Extra-Ministerial National Council, Boards and Committees on education and instruction, particularly the Board for the Certification and licensing of Teachers and the Board for Accreditation of Schools in Liberia.

Section 3.6. Deputy Minister of Education for Planning, Research and Development: Duties
The Deputy Minister of Education for Planning, Research and Development shall:

- (a) Prepare plans for the development of an improved educational system for Liberia and propose priorities that will most advance such development.
- (b) Be in charge of the formulation of programs and projects and designed to further the purpose of the Ministry, provide guidance to the officials who implement such programs and projects;
- (c) Assist in preparing the annual budget for the Ministry;
- (d) Review and evaluate proposals of foreign aid agencies;
- (e) Develop and approve proposals of different bureaux, divisions, departments of the Ministry of Education for transmission to the UN agencies, other governments and partners in sector;
- (f) Coordinate preparation of the Annual Report of the Ministry of Education;
- (g) Serve as liaison between the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Education as well as the UN Agencies, NGOs, and partners in the Sector.
- (h) See that relevant statistics on education in Liberia are provided at least on an annual basis and from time to time in relation with other agencies, which gather data.

Section 3.7. Assistant Ministers: Duties

As the principal assistants to Deputy Ministers of the relevant department, each of the Assistant Ministers shall serve as head of one of the various bureaux of that department and shall perform such specific or general duties as may be assigned or delegated by the respective Deputy Minister and the Minister of Education. The eight Assistant Ministers, as provided in section 3.1 shall be namely: Assistant Minister of Education for Administration; Assistant Minister for Secondary Education; Assistant Minister for Primary Education; Assistant Minister for Planning and Research; Assistant Minister for Vocational and Technical Education; Assistant Minister for Curriculum and Textbook Development, Assistant Minister for Teacher Education, Accreditation and Certification; and Special Assistant to the Minister of Education.

Section 3.8. County Education Officer: Duties

There shall be established a County Education Office in every County created and existing under the laws of the Republic of Liberia, which is to be conveniently located at the County Seat of Government. As a Central Education Office of the County and the Branch Office of the Ministry of Education, it shall be headed by a County Education Officer (CEO) appointed by the Deputy Minister of Education for Instruction with the approval of the Minister of Education. The duties of the County Education Officer shall be, as follows:

- (a) To prepare and submit to the Minister of Education for approval the list of positions required to set up the County Education Office; budgets covering personnel salaries; stationery and office supplies; office furniture and fixtures; office equipment; transportation vehicles; gas and oil; cost of maintenance; et cetera, for all District Education Officers and the County Education Office.

- (b) To supervise the implementation of all relevant national education policies, regulations, decisions, programs and development projects through the District Education Officers, as directed by the Ministry of Education.
- (c) To make regular quarterly and annual or special reports to the Deputy Minister of Education for Instruction, with a summary of the monthly and annual reports received from District Education Officers (DEOs) for the reporting period. Annual Reports from County Officers are due no later than on November 30th.
- (d) To serve as a member of the County Education and Training Council (CETC).
- (e) To take appropriate initiative to handle any important problem-situation arising and seriously confronting education in the county and advise the Ministry of Education immediately and accordingly.
- (f) To report simultaneously the problem-situation to the County Education and Training Council (CETC) and to the Local School Management Committee (LSMC) concerned to obtain their collective views and opinions for more effectively resolving the problem.
- (g) To employ all personnel and contractors, including qualified and licensed teachers to teach in public schools operation in the County with the approval of the Minister of Education.
- (h) To also relay to private schools in the County the national education policies, decisions, development and training programs affecting their operations.

Section 3.9. District Education Officer: Duties:

The number of education or school districts in any particular county of the Republic of Liberia shall be determined exclusively by the Minister of Education. Each school District Education Officer (DEO) shall be appointed by the Deputy Minister of Education for Instruction with the approval of the Minister of Education, whose duties shall include the following:

- (a) to prepare and submit to the County Education Officer the list of positions required to set up the District Education Office: annual budgets covering personnel salaries; stationery and offices supplies; office furniture and fixtures; office equipment; transportation vehicles; gas and oil; cost of maintenance; et cetera; for all public schools in the Education District.
- (b) To supervise the implementation of all relevant national education policies, regulations, decisions, programs and development projects through public and private Schools presidents, principals and their facilities as directed by the Ministry of Education.
- (c) To make regular quarterly and annual or special reports to the County Education Officer, with a summary of the monthly and annual operations reports received from the presidents and principals of all public schools in the School District. Annual Reports from District Education Officers are due no later than on November 15th of every school year.
- (d) To serve as a member of ex-officio of the Local Schools Managements Committee (LSMC) of the District.
- (e) To perform any other administration duties as directed by the County Education Officer or the Ministry of Education.