

Management & Leadership

POLICY • LEADERSHIP • MANAGEMENT • GOVERNANCE

for South African Schools

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Much of this issue is devoted to the document *Education Roadmap: Focus on schooling system* which is the product of an ANC think-tank on public schooling in this country. It is in part a document produced with an eye on the coming elections but given the party's powerful position in the country, it also provides useful insights into how the post-election government plans to tackle some of the many challenges facing public schools. Besides providing a summary of the contents of the document, we also provide some comments on the policy proposals it makes in the "10-point programme", the product of the "Roadmap process". We hope you will find it helpful as you think about the way ahead for your own school and the things that can be done better.

The Roadmap document confirms the magnitude of the effort that will be required to achieve significant improvement in literacy and numeracy levels in the Foundation phase – improvements that are required for public education to deliver the level of skills that are required if this country is to thrive. As an example of 'best practice' in the Foundation phase, we feature the Foundation phase of Rondebosch Boys' Preparatory School and the systems and approaches they use to produce the results that they do. Rondebosch Prep is one of the two best-performing schools in both Literacy and Numeracy in the Western Cape and it is not difficult to see why when one sees just how much time and effort go into ensuring that pupils are well taught and regularly assessed.

Disappointingly, most high schools have to deal with problems related to the abuse of drugs by pupils far too regularly. The disciplinary hearings that are often part and parcel of this process are always taxing on the time and patience of those involved. Provincial Education Departments and MECs are not always supportive of schools in these cases, while the parents of the pupils involved are almost inevitably defensive and highly critical of the school's handling of the matter. Problems for schools are compounded when lawyers become involved and litigation ensues. Fairbairn College was involved in such a case, with an application for a judicial review of the decision to expel the pupil being taken to the Cape Division of the High Court. Because the strength of its case and the meticulous manner in which the SGB handled the matter, the court ruled in favour of the school and the Head of Education. We hope that our article based on the judgement in this case will encourage schools and SGBs to follow the example of the Fairbairn SGB when dealing with cases of serious misconduct, as doing so will help ensure that they achieve the outcome that they sought. ■

SM&L

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Education Roadmap

– way out of the morass or a road to nowhere?

There has recently been significant media coverage of the ruling party's education discussion document entitled *Education Roadmap: Focus on schooling system*. It is an interesting document not only because it provides insights into possible future plans for education subsequent to next year's elections but also because it includes some detailed statistics about the current state of education in this country. The ANC has recently called for a public debate on its contents and with this in mind **SM&L** has prepared three reports for the interest of its readers. These three reports are not meant to be comprehensive comments but have been compiled rather to stimulate our readers' evaluation of the Roadmap document.

The document is the product of a 3-phase process, with the fourth phase, "Facilitate the implementation of the recommendations" still to come. The process started in July and involved the gathering of research information and inputs from stakeholder groups and technical sub-committees. Participants in the process included SADTU, the ANC NEC sub-committee on Health and Education, the Minister of Education, National DoE, PEDs, DBSA, the Wits School of Education, CEPD, EPU, the National Treasury, academics and training institutions. The three phases which have been completed and which produced the Roadmap are:

Phase 1: Diagnose the status of the education schooling system

Phase 2: Identify reasons for the current education outcomes

Phase 3: Consolidate findings to make recommendations around short-term interventions.

Part 1: "South Africa – what's been happening?" and Part 2: "What are the current interventions?" provide - as their titles suggest - an overview of how the education landscape has changed for schools since 1994. Successes and current challenges are identified, and the DoE's key priorities in 2008 are listed. Some of this information is provided in boxes elsewhere on these pages. Part 3 lists and elaborates on the fundamental challenges that were identified by the process and Part 4 makes recommendations on strategies to address the identified problems. It is these latter two parts which are of most interest because they provide insights into the ruling party's thinking about schooling in this country and the strategies it plans to employ to improve a system which, from the evidence provided, is performing very poorly.

The fundamental challenges

The report identifies 6 fundamental challenges which it sees as obstacles to the achievement of quality schooling for all. The challenges identified are:

- 1 Socio-economic status
- 2 Teachers
- 3 Dysfunctional schools
- 4 OBE in schools without capacity
- 5 Financial resources
- 6 Responsibilities and accountability

The data provided as evidence of the extent of these problems is telling and demonstrates just how challenging they are.

Challenge 1: Socio-economic status

This challenge relates essentially to the relationship between social disadvantage and pupil performance. Socio-economic status and parent education are strong predictors of pupil performance. The reasons for this relate to the "power differential" between poor parents and teachers, which is seen to limit accountability and the functionality of SGBs. Poor or less educated parents are less able to judge how well their children are performing at school than their more affluent and better-educated peers. This problem is seen to be exacerbated by the absence of externally-set examinations. Children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are also more likely to be single or double orphans and/or victims of violence and other traumas that affect their ability to learn. Data is provided linking the percentage of 20 – 24-year-olds who pass Grade 12 to the highest educational attainment of either parent. If either parent had a degree, the successful Grade 12 percentage was 84% while if the highest educational attainment of either parent was less than Grade 10, the percentage was just 30%.

Challenge 2: Teachers

This challenge was seen to be multi-dimensional and included:

- Teacher knowledge
- Teaching practices
- Quality of teaching
- Teacher numbers
- Teacher performance and evaluation

It was once again the evidence that was presented that provided the best insight into the extent and nature of the problem. A graph showing the relationship between the school-level continuous assessment (CASS) and the examination mark for Mathematics HG in 2005 demonstrated just how poor school assessment can be a predictor of success. The 2005 national CASS average was above 50% while the average examination mark was below 30%. At one school, the average CASS mark was almost 80% yet in the examinations the average of the group was less than 30%. There is also clear evidence from the graph that the greatest discrepancies between CASS and examination marks are to be found in those schools which performed most poorly in the examinations.

Other evidence presented relates to the knowledge of Grade 3 teachers. A baseline test conducted in 2004 assessed the knowledge of a sample of Grade 3 teachers drawn from 24 primary schools selected at random. The teachers were given Grade 6 level literacy and numeracy tests to complete. The average score for 23 teachers was 55%, with the majority of teachers scoring between 29% and 50%.

The generally poor quality of classroom teaching was also identified as a problem, including the apparent failure to use textbooks, despite the availability of these and the poor quality of instruction and pupil-based exercises. Evidence from studies cited included the failure of teachers to use textbooks in 43% of language classes and 69% of mathematics classes and that "in the majority of classes children engage in writing exercises no more than once a week." What little writing is done consists predominantly of exercises composed of isolated words; sentences are seldom seen, while longer passages are virtually non-existent.

Based on the above, the report identifies teacher quality as being central to the challenges but also sees a looming shortage of teachers as adding to the problem. The implementation of a system of performance evaluation is also seen as an issue because of the negative experience of inspections in 'African' schools during Apartheid, the absence of an effective teacher appraisal system and the complexity of the processes involved in the IQMS system.

Challenge 3: Dysfunctional Schools

Dysfunctional schools are identified as being problematic for two reasons:

- their failure to provide adequate levels of teaching and learning for pupils. Evidence presented included findings that teachers at township schools spend 3,5 hours on instruction each day compared with 6 hours per day at suburban schools. Teaching time at these schools is lost to administrative tasks such as 'form filling' (which takes up 28% of their time), absenteeism, disorganisation, failure to enrol pupils on time, inactivity and external interruptions, amongst others.
- the exodus children of working and middle-class parents, at great cost, to suburban schools.

The report also notes that 77% of children in our schools do not feel safe in the classroom.

Challenge 4: OBE in schools without capacity

The introduction of the outcomes-based curriculum model is seen as problematic because it required teachers to have considerable subject knowledge and skills and schools to have a minimum level of resources. These challenges were seen to have been exacerbated by the fact that most children are not taught in their home language. The report notes that the DoE's 'Foundations for Learning Campaign' aims to address some of these shortcomings. This conclusion has resulted in considerable media publicity being given to calls for the demise of OBE as if this approach to teaching and learning is like a coat of paint that can simply be removed once followed.

Challenge 5: Financial resources

Education funding is seen to be insufficient and education spending is seen to be inefficient. South Africa spends 5% of GDP on education which, while a very significant percentage, is below the UNESCO benchmark of 6%. The proportion of provincial budgets spent on education has fallen and there is a great deal of inefficient spending on items such as textbook procurement, school feeding schemes and scholar transport. Estimated capital spending and maintenance backlogs based on the National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) are R153bn and R30bn respectively. This is needed to alleviate problems such as overcrowding (42% of schools) and the provision of water, toilets and electricity to schools which do not have the basic necessities. The funds needed contrast sharply with the R18bn that has been allocated in the budget to these items over the next three years.

The report notes that a policy decision has been made to increase no-fee schools from the poorest 40% to the poorest 60% (quintile 3) but stresses the need to provide these schools with adequate compensatory funding





and in good time to prevent some of them going into decline.

Challenge 6: Responsibilities and accountabilities

This challenge relates to lack of alignment between the DoE and the PEDs, which together have concurrent responsibility for public schooling. Part of the problem is seen to stem from the fact that provinces are not obliged to observe national priorities, particularly in relation to the allocation of financial resources. Concerns are also raised about the districts, district offices and the lack of capacity of most SGBs and their focus on finance and funding rather than on learning and teaching.

Proposed interventions

A number of interventions are suggested, grouped under the headings: in-school, support to schools and societal.

In-school

In-school interventions include the proper use of teaching time (including “zero tolerance for anti-social behaviour by teachers e.g. drunkenness, sexual assault etc.”), prioritising the ‘Foundations for Learning Campaign’ and the use of textbooks, better practical management courses for principals, deputies, HODs and district supervisors and the complete filling of all teacher vacancies.



Roadmap 10-point programme

A. In-school

- 1 Ensure that teachers are in class, on time, teaching. Teachers should also be required to use textbooks in class.
- 2 Focus on improving the quality of early childhood education and primary schools, including implementing the Foundations for Learning Campaign emphasising the promotion of language and numeracy.
- 3 Conduct external tests for all Grade 3 and Grade 6 learners every year, and provide the results to parents.
- 4 Ensure evaluation of all teachers based on the extent to which learner performances improve, with results influencing occupationally specific dispensation pay for teachers.
- 5 Enhance recruitment of quality teachers and strengthen teacher development:
 - offer bursaries to attract quality student in-take into teacher training institutions and offer student loan repayments to attract young graduates into teacher contracts.
 - enhance pre-service and in-service teacher training, inter alia through better co-ordination and resourcing.
 - ensure that teacher unions have a formal and funded role in teacher development.

B. Support to school

- 6 Strengthen management capacity to ensure working districts and schools. This entails bringing in management capacity from the private sector, civil society and elsewhere in the public sector.
 - Phase in a process of measurable

improvements through targeting efforts at selected education districts and dysfunctional schools

- Use infrastructure budgets as an incentive for schools that deliver improved teaching and learning.

7 Increase use of ICT in education, including audiovisual teaching materials in the classroom to supplement teaching and demonstrate quality teaching to learners and educators.

8 Improve national-provincial alignment and efficiency of education expenditure, through procuring textbooks nationally and allocating resources to improve district capacity. In this regard, the use of conditional grants is an important tool to ensure alignment.

C. Societal

9 Develop a societal compact for quality education. This will include a National Consultative Forum dedicated to clarifying ‘non-negotiables’ and performance targets for key stakeholders, and the monitoring thereof.

- Encourage mobilisation of communities at all levels to raise awareness and participation in education issues. Examples include graduates assisting their former or dysfunctional schools, corporate social investment, party branch campaigns to clean up schools, support of food gardens and encouragement of young graduates to enter teaching (“Teach SA”).

10 Implement poverty-combating measures that improve the environment for learning and teaching, such as a nutrition programme (a cross-cutting programme with health), basic infrastructure for schools, and social support for children.



Support to schools

Support to schools includes:

- stabilising and supporting schools that are working
- strengthening education districts by deploying competent management teams to selected districts to assist dysfunctional schools
- improving the capacity of districts and the clarification of their roles and functions
- reviewing OBE
- the revision of regulations to enable the national procurement of textbooks
- the regular external testing of pupils in primary and secondary schools
- the implementation of a decisive approach to teacher evaluation

Societal

Societal interventions include:

- scaled up and better resourced early childhood interventions
- the use of regulatory impact assessments to determine the likely effects of future design changes in education, beginning with the extension of the no-fee school programme to quintile 3 schools (Perhaps they have been reading SM&L. Ed.)
- a formal and funded role for teacher unions in supporting teacher development
- agreed input and output targets for national and provincial governments to be determined and reviewed by CEM
- the establishment of a National Education Consultative Forum, as the basis for a 'social compact on education'.

The product of all of the above is summarised as a 10-point programme which is the Roadmap. This is listed in a separate box. ■

SM&L Comment

The Roadmap document includes a great deal of interesting information. There are also some recommendations which, if implemented, could have a significant impact on public schooling in this country in the medium to long term. Documents of this kind, however, need to be treated with caution. Political parties and politicians in most democracies love to use education as an issue when campaigning because it is something about which everyone understands a little and which everyone considers to be important. Politicians across the world are also notoriously fickle, espousing the latest fad if they think it will bring them votes. Their proposals are also usually big on promise but small on detail, particularly in relation to those things that are difficult to do or which require substantial funding. This Roadmap document is no different in this regard and questions need to be asked about the following:

1 Infrastructure spend

Where will the money come from to fund additional school infrastructure? The country is already heavily committed to infrastructure expenditure related to the 2010 World Cup. Sourcing additional funds for school infrastructure will not be easy, given the current massive financial losses suffered by major institutions in the developed world and the accompanying downturn in their economies.

2 Effective evaluation of teachers

Will the teacher unions support a system of teacher evaluation based on the extent to which pupil performance improves and with results influencing OSD pay for teachers? And how supportive will they be if principals or district officials act to ensure that teachers are "in class, on time, teaching", or that they are using textbooks? There are many schools in this country where as a matter of principle teachers refuse to let principals enter their classroom to observe them teaching. They are often supported by their respective unions in their stance on this issue.

3 National Consultative Forum dedicated to clarifying the 'non-negotiables' and performance targets.

This sounds like polit-speak for a gathering of people with their own agendas who like to talk and who, because they are unable to reach any kind of consensus, make decisions and produce reports that are of little or no consequence. It is likely to be a diluted version of the ELRC bargaining councils, with the unions doing their best to further their members' interests and the DoE and PEDs trying to get teachers to be more productive.



4 External tests for Grade 3 and 6

We must assume that this is referring to the annual testing of all Grade 3s and 6s. While it is a laudable goal, given the current inability of the system to provide any valid and reliable indicator of pupil performance, it is a massive undertaking. In 2006 there were 1 073 888 pupils enrolled in Grade 3 (and 8 98 956 enrolled in Grade 6) which is nearly double the number enrolled in Grade 12 in the same year¹. These pupils attended one of the more than 19 000 primary and combined schools compared to the just over 10 000 combined and secondary schools attended by the Grade 12s². This gives some idea of the magnitude of the challenge of this kind of national testing, particularly if it is to provide reports to parents as has been suggested.

5 Review of OBE and if necessary issue of its “death certificate”

One can only hope that the bizarre suggestion that the current outcomes-based curriculum model be abandoned is indeed treated as just a wild notion. The one thing that we cannot afford to embark on is another round of major curriculum reform. A significant part of our current problems is a consequence of the turmoil produced by the roll-out of Curriculum 2005 and its subsequent refinement. It is a complex model and major curricular reform creates significant stresses to the system wherever it is introduced. There is also not much evidence from research linking the quality of the curriculum to improved outcomes in terms of pupil performance. What is most needed is some stability in the system and a commitment to simplifying and refining those aspects of the curriculum and assessment requirements which are most demanding of teachers' time. The complaints from teachers and schools relate more to the bureaucratic and administrative demands that the curriculum places on them – particularly in relation to assessment - rather than on its content and approach.

So, what kind of interventions would work and which are likely to give the best return in terms of cost and impact on pupil performance? All the research suggests that pupil performance is linked to the quality of the principal in terms of his/her ability to create an environment which promotes teaching and learning and the quality of classroom teaching – that is, what the teacher actually does in the classroom. We would therefore like to suggest three strategies that would be relatively simple to implement and which are likely to produce a good return in terms of pupil output per rand of spend.

SM&L suggests

1 Improved training and support for principals and district officials

The “Executive Leadership in Teaching and Learning” offered by the Wits School of Education is an example of the kind of course that is likely to provide principals with

the knowledge and skills they need to lead and manage the teaching and learning process in their schools more effectively. (The Wits Executive Leadership course was featured in Vol. 2 No. 8 of *SM&L*). The advantages of this kind of course over the ACE:SL courses are that it focuses on the teaching and learning process and the fact that it is a modular course stretching over a single school year. Offering separate courses for primary and high school principals may also hold some advantages. Primary school heads could then focus on strategies for improving literacy and numeracy skills while high school heads could focus on issues of timetabling and the management of subject teams.

District officials responsible for monitoring school performance should be provided with similar training so that they can become proficient at identifying the key indicators of well-managed schools and know which questions to ask when schools are underperforming.

Hand in hand with this process is the need to provide principals with the support that they need to tackle tardy, recalcitrant and underperforming teachers, who undermine the entire system. Until there is a system in place which is able to deal expeditiously with those who will not change, we are unlikely to see significant improvement.

2 More and better in-service training for teachers

Ongoing and focused professional development should be part of the working life of all teachers. Successful and highly functional schools can be left to undertake this work in their own way for the teachers that teach there. Underperforming teachers and teachers who teach at dysfunctional or partially-functional schools should be required to attend in-service training on a regular basis. Most important, however, is the quality of the courses. Quality has been a major drawback in much of the training offered by the DoE and PEDs, mostly because many of those responsible for the actual presentation have neither expertise in nor experience of what they are presenting. Better use should be made of experienced and expert teachers. They need to be well paid for their services and the training they provide could and should be taken into account when they are assessed in terms of IQMS and OSD, and for salary increments.

The courses offered to teachers should have a narrow focus on classroom practice and should provide training in very specific teaching skills. Short half-day courses, run in afternoons and on Saturday mornings, and which a teacher can apply almost immediately in their own practice are likely to have the most impact.

3 An intensive drive to recruit more and better students to the teaching profession

Bursaries and soft loans are not enough. Somebody needs to go out there and persuade matriculants and

Continued on page 10

Foundation Phase

Managing literacy and numeracy in the Foundation phase

Rondebosch Boys' Preparatory School has been ranked consistently as a top performer in both literacy and numeracy. We visited the school in an effort to discover what they are doing to achieve this success.

Shelagh Scholtz is head of the Foundation phase at Rondebosch Boys' Preparatory School (RBPS), a school that has been ranked consistently as a top performer in both numeracy and literacy by the Western Cape Education Department. SM&L visited her in an effort to discover what she and the school are doing to achieve these excellent results.

It is immediately apparent from a visit to RBPS that it is a well-run and well-maintained school but this is what you would expect given its location, its history and the community that it serves. While this may partly explain the basis of the consistently good results that it continues to achieve in the Grade 3 and Grade 6 diagnostic test scores, it is not sufficient to explain the excellence of these results – that set the school apart from other similarly resourced schools.



Shining light - Shelagh Scholtz with some of the RBPS boys

Planning

Planning is part and parcel of effective management in all well-run schools. What perhaps differentiates what Shelagh does at RBPS from other similar schools is the nature and extent of this planning. To say Shelagh and her team are meticulous in their planning is an understatement. The planning process for the following year starts during the last two weeks of the year. The planning process takes place in the following steps:

1 Theme identification

All the teachers involved in the teaching at Foundation phase level meet as a group to brainstorm, identify and select the themes for the following year, with different themes selected for each quarter. This initial meeting aims to achieve three purposes:

- the identification of appropriate and innovative themes
- a co-ordinating role between grades to ensure that pupils do not encounter the same themes and/or the same activities if similar themes are chosen, as they move from grade to grade. Where the same theme is selected for two different grades, great care is taken to ensure that the treatment of the theme and the resources used are different.
- the sequencing of the themes in the school year i.e. the allocation of themes to a specific term for each grade.

2 Theme development

Once the themes and their sequence have been decided, the further development of the theme is dealt with at a grade level.

This planning involves the three class teachers in each grade. One of the class teachers in each grade is a designated Grade Head and forms part of the management structure of the school. The Grade Head for each grade is responsible for ensuring that the class teachers work together to develop each of the four themes that will be the focal points of the year. The idea is to integrate the themes into every aspect of the teaching and learning process for the term. Therefore the themes must be incorporated into all Life Skills and Life Orientation lessons, as well as into the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy. This is perhaps the most important element of the planning as it is during this phase of the planning that the teachers, working together as a grade team, use the learning outcomes for the grade to flesh out the content and skills that they will teach each term. All learning outcomes are covered each term and the work is carefully planned to ensure that the teaching and learning that is planned will grow the content knowledge and skills of the pupils as they progress through the year. The planning is initially on a quarterly bases in the form of a term plan for the grade for each term of the year and then on a weekly basis. Both the quarterly and the weekly plans are the product of joint planning sessions or the teachers who teach that grade. This planning is completed before the end of the school year and teachers may not leave until this planning is complete and handed in to Shelagh.



Jackie Assessment Task 2

Write a report of the storms in the North for The Cape Times

Cape Times

Storms in the North.



Dangerous!!!
On Saturday and Sunday it was a disaster!! There were waves up to six feet tall!!
Roofs blew off, cars blew off it was such a windy day. If you stood outside and you didn't hold on to something you would blow away!
People lost houses, shops and tents.
There were also hail stones as big as a big ice cube!!!

An example of extended writing from the Literacy portfolio of one of the Grade 2 pupils

3 Learning programmes

Detailed separate learning programmes are prepared for Literacy, Numeracy and Life Orientation, with the input from all of the Foundation phase teachers. For Literacy and Numeracy these are listed under each Learning Outcome, with the assessment standards to be met for each grade. This ensures that class teachers are fully aware of the assessment standards that need to be met in each grade. It also gives them a better understanding of their need to build on the work that is done in the previous grade and on what they need to do to ensure that their pupils are adequately prepared for what will be required of them in the next grade.

4 Formal Assessment Tasks

At the heart of the planning are the formal assessment tasks. Shelagh requires teachers to assess the pupils in their class formally every week in Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills. The assessment tasks are once again the product of a joint effort by the grade team and must be prepared in advance before the end of the previous term. The assessment tasks are listed on an Assessment Termly Plan which shows which assessment tasks are scheduled for completion in each week of the term. The Assessment Plan and the Assessment Tasks for the term are then filed ready for use in the following term. The great advantage of this process is that it ensures that the teachers plan the assessment tasks together, thus ensuring better co-ordination of teaching within the grade. It also ensures that there is greater focus on what is being taught each week as the teachers are all aware of the learning that will be formally assessed in that week.

5 Timetables

Each class teacher draws up her own individual timetable for the year, based on the school's guidelines and policy framework. These stipulate the amount of time that must be devoted to each learning area or subject in each phase, as well as the break times and the starting and ending times of each day. What is unusual and perhaps different about the timetable set-up at Rondebosch is the scheduling of the teaching of literacy and numeracy times. Literacy is scheduled for the start of the day in all classes so pupils are fresh and alert. The Numeracy / Mathematics period is scheduled for the period immediately after first break because this is likely to be the next most productive time for pupils (the break allows them to burn off some physical energy and re-charge their mental batteries). An extract from the Foundation phase guidelines document is provided in the box below.

6 Weekly planning sheet

Every teacher is expected to complete a weekly planning sheet on which is indicated exactly what work will be covered in Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills. An example of a completed planning sheet is given on facing page. The planning sheet must be completed prior to the start of the week. These planning sheets are checked regularly by the Grade Head, HOD for the phase and by the Headmaster.

RBPS Foundation Phase Timetables

Literacy Learning Programme

Phonics, spelling, creative writing, factual writing, reported writing, comprehension, formal grammar, sentences, etc. are all components of Language. NB! Handwriting is part of Language.

Time:

Gr. 1 & 2 - 9 hrs 10 min per week: 1hr 50 min per day

Gr. 3 - 10 hrs per week: 2 hours per day

Numeracy Learning Programme

Is reflected on timetables as Mathematics. Computers can form part of this for Gr. 2 & 3.

Time:

Gr. 1 & 2 - 7 hrs 30 min per week: 1 hr 30 min per day

Gr. 3 - 8 hrs 45 min per week: 1 hr 45 min per day

Life Skills Learning Programme

Time:

Gr. 1 & 2 - 5 hrs 50 min per week: 1 hr 10 min per day

Gr. 3 - 6 hrs 15 min per week: 1 hr 15 min per day

GRADE 2 3 WEEKLY PLANNING SHEET :

WEEK: 3, 4, 5

DATE: 28 Jan - 15 February 2008

LITERACY:
LISTENING/SPEAKING: News listening skills Manners, emotions + feelings
POETRY: Basic nursery rhymes Rhythm + rhyme Hello is a handy word.
LANGUAGE: Mr manners - respect each other
My brother and I not me and my brother
FACTUAL/IMAGINATIVE WRITING: 1. feelings 3. bedtime story. 2. The teddy bear picnic
PHONICS: 1. initial blends 3. sh 2. end blends
SPELLING: 1. 1 3. 3 2. 2
HANDWRITING: 1. r n m 3. cog mm 2. u x c w w iii iii

GRADE HEAD: [Signature]
DATE: 23/01/2008

NUMERACY:
COUNTING: 10's ↔ 100 1's ↔ 10 2's ↔ 20 5's ↔ 50
PROBLEM SOLVING: verbal sums sharing up to 10
NUMBER CONCEPT: odd/even number names 1-10 0 in different places in sums
NUMBER OPERATION: revise vocab addition subtraction minus etc.
MEASUREMENT: length + weight - me
DATA HANDLING:(GRAPHS) Feb weather chart birthday graph
SHAPE/GEOMETRY: patterns □ □ □ □ ○ △ ○ △ tangrams

H.O.D.: [Signature]
DATE: 24/1/2008

LIFE SKILLS
My family - relationships different kinds of families
conflict resolutions feelings
Athletics Day Friday 15 Feb
Class picnic - 29 Jan.
AFRIKAANS: - greet - telworte 1-10 - dae van week - my gesig

HEADMASTER: _____
DATE: _____

This allows them to check that all teachers are on track and are covering the work that they are expected to cover.

Baseline Assessment

Within the first 15 days of the start of the school year, each class teacher is expected to have completed a Base Line Assessment report on every pupil in his or her class. This is an assessment instrument (test) that the school has developed to determine the extent to which pupils have the basic knowledge and skills that they need when they start the year. As its name implies, it is used as a baseline for the pupil for the year and the progress of individual pupils is measured against their performance in the baseline assessment tasks at the start of the year. Their scores in the baseline assessment and any associated documents are filed as part of each pupil's Personal Profile. The Personal Profile is a file containing personal information relating to the individual pupil's progress, health and welfare-related information where relevant, as well as records of any interventions that may have been necessary as a result of behavioural or learning difficulties.

Learning support

The baseline assessment and the regular weekly assessment of pupils ensure that struggling pupils are soon identified, allowing their class teachers to provide them with more focused attention and additional support. In instances where the class teacher feels that a child requires more comprehensive support than he or she can provide

4 +4 8 +2 10 -5 5 -3 2

6 +2 4 -4 0 +3 3 +2 5

Double 4 is 8 Half of 8 is 4
 Double 10 is 20 Half of 10 is 5
 Double 6 is 12 Half of 6 is 3

6-3=3
There are 6 children on the swings.
3 children get off.
How many children are left?

2+3=5
There are 2 children on the see-saw.
There are 3 children on the roundabout.
How many in all?

An example of a numeracy-based activity from the portfolio of a Grade 1 pupil.



Word Makers folders – unfortunately no longer produced – in use by Gr. 2s. The folders are divided into 3 sections representing the beginning, middle and endings of words. The first and last sections contain the letter and letter groups commonly found in beginning and end blends of words respectively and the middle section is for vowels and vowel digraphs. In using them, the children are exposed to both the synthesis and analysis of words.

or where the problem requires specific professional therapy, a meeting is arranged with the parents of the child to discuss the matter and possible options. These include referrals to the school's remedial teacher or to an occupational or speech therapist. The school has a specialist support centre which provides these services at an additional cost to parents.

Each teacher has one fixed 30-minute period in the timetable providing time for meetings with the parents of the pupils that he or she teaches. The parents are informed of this time and are expected to make use of this time if they feel they need to meet with their child's teacher. This is also the time when the teacher is able to call a meeting with parents.

Monitoring procedure

Class teachers meet with their Grade Head on a weekly basis to discuss progress and to plan for the week ahead. This ensures that there is joint planning and good co-ordination between the teachers. These meetings are also used to raise concerns about problem pupils, to plan outings or excursions – each grade in the Foundation phase has one excursion each term – and to identify and source resources that may be needed in the week ahead. The Grade Heads in turn meet Shelagh, their phase head, on a regular basis to report on progress within each grade and to discuss matter peculiar to the Foundation phase.

It is not surprising that the boys at Rondebosch Prep do well when one sees first-hand the thoroughly professional way in which the school goes about its business. The

teachers are knowledgeable, skilled and committed and the school is managed in a way that ensures that they plan and work together. There is certainly no place to hide if you are a slacker - which is as it should be. The result is that the pupils get the kind of educational start in life that every child in this country deserves. Sadly in the majority of schools in this country this does not happen. This can be attributed partly to poverty and to lack of resources, including the quality of the human resources available at these schools; but in many of these schools there is also a lack of commitment from those that manage and those that teach. Principals need to insist that teachers meet their time commitments, that they plan together, that when they arrive at their classes they are well prepared and that they assess the pupils they teach on a regular basis. This, after all, is what they are paid to do. Until we get this right and until principals and district officials begin to accept responsibility for the performance of the schools, we are unlikely to see any significant improvement in our educational output as a nation. ■

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students at tertiary institutions that teaching is a worthwhile and rewarding profession. Directorates in the DoE and PEDs dedicated to - and accountable for - the recruitment of sufficient teachers would be a good first step. The UK is an example of a country which has done this successfully and recent studies have shown that teaching is now seen there as one of the first-choice professions for undergraduates. One possible innovative approach would be to offer high schools financial incentives for every past student who qualifies as a teacher. Simplifying the process schools need to go through to access funds from the EDTP Seta for learnerships would also help as it would encourage them to recruit promising students into learnerships.

These three interventions are not the kind of BHAGs³ that are mentioned in parts of the Roadmap document, they do not require major changes in the way our education system does business and they will not require large capital expenditure. They can also be implemented almost immediately. They are also probably too mundane and technical for politicians who love to trumpet new initiatives. What is different is that they are simple and they are likely to work, as measured by improved pupil outcomes. They are also not too different from some of the proposals in the 10-point programme listed in the Roadmap. We hope that the focus will fall more on such initiatives rather than on those that sound grand but deliver little. ■

References

¹ Data based on information provided in *2006 School Realities* published by DoE

² Data based on information provided by *2007 National Assessment Report* published by the DoE

³ Big Hairy Audacious Goals, a term used in business.

Education Law

High Court supports SGB disciplinary procedure

A recent High Court judgement provides some useful guidelines for principals and SGBs when dealing with cases of serious misconduct.

A recent judgement handed down by the Cape of Good Hope Provincial Division of the High Court provides some useful guidelines for principals and SGBs when dealing with cases of serious misconduct. The case involved a pupil who had been found guilty of serious misconduct by the SGB, who then recommended to the Head of Education that he be expelled. The Head of Education accepted the recommendation and made the decision to expel the pupil. The guardian of the child then appealed this decision to the MEC who dismissed the appeal and confirmed the decision to expel the pupil.

The guardian of the pupil then approached the High Court, with the request that it review and set aside the decision that the pupil be expelled from the school. While this decision was awaited, the guardian successfully obtained an interim order allowing the pupil to return to school.

It is important to note that the guardian's argument was based much more upon claim of procedural irregularities than on a debate about the use of dagga. In fact, the learner pleaded guilty to smoking dagga in school uniform and contested only whether he sold it to fellow pupils at school.

Amongst the reasons offered as a basis for the request for a high court review of the decisions were the following:

- that the expulsion was procedurally unfair
- that the SGB, Head of Education and MEC for Education did not properly apply their minds to the matter and that their decisions were grossly unreasonable
- that the rules of natural justice were not complied with
- that the SGB did not have a quorum when it made the decision and that it acted in bad faith. (This was

based on the fact that the two pupil representatives on the SGB were not present at the meeting.)

In dismissing the approach to the High Court with costs, the judge made a number of important points which are worth noting by all involved in such disciplinary processes:

1 The nature of disciplinary hearings

Disciplinary hearings are "Administrative tribunals" not courts of law and that what is required of a tribunal is that they "should act fairly in affording the affected individual a fair hearing". "Fairness" in a tribunal must be deduced from the circumstances of each case, having due regard to the factors, namely the nature of the inquiry, the rules governing the tribunal and the subject-matter". The judge quoted from a statement made by Lord Loreburn, a judge in England, in the matter of Board of Education vs Rice. This position, given in the adjacent box, has been adopted and accepted by courts in South Africa.

This statement contains several interesting and useful guidelines on the kind of approach that should be adopted in disciplinary hearings.

The 'Fairness' of a Tribunal

Lord Loreburn LC In English case, Board of Education vs Rice, 1911 AC 179, 182 as quoted in the High Court judgement

"In the present instance, as in many others, what comes for determination is sometimes a matter to be settled by discretion, involving no law. It will, I suppose, usually be of an administrative kind ... In such cases the Board ... will have to ascertain the law and also ascertain the facts. I need not add that in doing either they must act in good faith and listen fairly to both sides, for that is a duty lying upon everyone who decides anything. But I do not think they are bound to treat such a question as though it were a trial. They have no power to administer an oath, and need not examine witnesses. They can obtain information in any way they think best, always giving a fair opportunity to those who are parties in the controversy for correcting or contradicting any relevant statement prejudicial to their view"

2 The quorum required for an SGB meeting

An SGB quorum, in terms of the measures applicable in the Western Cape, is a "majority of enfranchised members of the governing body". The entire SGB need not therefore be present of a disciplinary hearing or any other legal process conducted by an SGB. (Editor's caution: This may be different in other provinces.)

3 The rights of other learners cannot simply be ignored

In his judgement, the judge said the following: "It appears from the facts of this matter the ills of our society have spilled over into the grounds of our schools, which ordinarily should be safe havens for education and training. The Applicant's

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Book Review



Making Quality Education happen: a 'how-to' guide for every teacher

Dr Richard Hayward, the author of this publication and editor of "Quality Education News", a free online newsletter for schools published by the South African Quality Institute, is to be congratulated on this useful and informative publication. The 69-page A4 format book offers an excellent overview of 'Total Quality Education', a management model for schools based on 'Total Quality Management' (TQM) system. TQM is an approach to the management of quality, used mostly in the manufacturing industry. Adopted and refined by Toyota amongst others, it is given credit as the driver of quality in their manufacturing processes and ultimately for their long-term success. The book explains the model in clear and simple language and uses anecdotes and school-based examples to illustrate the points made. There is a chapter devoted to each of the 'five pillars of a quality school', identified as Values, Leadership, Improvement Plans, Communication, and Tools and Techniques. There is also a chapter on 'Implementing Total Quality Education' and a good bibliography which is helpful for those who may be interested in reading further about this approach to management and leadership.

'Making Quality Education happen' is an excellent introduction to 'Total Quality Education', a useful resource book for principals on the subject and should be part of the resource pack available to teachers in every staffroom. The book is available from the author for just R30, including packaging and posting, thanks to generous sponsorship of the printing and publication costs by Caxton and the CTP group. Dr Hayward, the South African Quality Institute and the sponsors are to be congratulated on producing a book of this quality and making available at such low cost. To order the book, contact Dr Hayward at:

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son like any other learner has undoubtedly a constitutional right to proper basic education. In my view, a learner and in particular learners at high school institutions cannot place in jeopardy his or her fellow learner's equally important right to proper basic education in a safe environment by indulging in serious misconduct, like selling and abusing drugs on school premises. With rights come responsibilities. Our learners and more importantly, at high school institutions, must appreciate and understand that misconduct, like in open society, attracts sanctions and in appropriate circumstances may include expulsion. The overwhelming majority of parents in South Africa at great cost and personal sacrifice only want the best education for their children. The Applicant in this instance is no different. The offences (the Applicant's son have been found guilty of is very serious. His further presence at the school does compromise the safe environment for his fellow learners, and the sanction of expulsion is not disturbingly inappropriate in the circumstances of this case."

What is clear from the court record is that the school prepared very well for this case. The SGB made sure that it was scrupulously correct in the way in which it followed the procedure and legislative requirements for a fair hearing. This included the keeping of a comprehensive and detailed record of the hearing procedure – the judge refers at one point to an item on page 292 of the records - which one must assume were based on recorded transcripts of the hearing. These were used extensively by the judge to refute the allegations that the hearing had been procedurally unfair and therefore to support the findings of the SGB. Principals and SGBs are well advised to follow this example, particularly when dealing with cases where aggrieved parents are likely to turn to the courts in an effort to overturn the decisions of the school and education departments. ■

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