

# School Management & Leadership

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## Brain-based learning at the SAPA National Convention

For more about brain-based learning and the SAPA National Convention turn to pages 6 & 7.



*Alta van Heerden Chairperson of the Organising Committee welcomes delegates at the opening of the 2007 SAPA National Conference*



## Budget Time

**Advice for public schools on planning and preparing their budgets for 2008**

The final term of the school year is a busy time for all schools. Uppermost in the minds of teachers is the completion of the curriculum, the setting and marking of the final assessment tasks for the year and the sorting and organising of portfolios and mark sheets. High schools face the additional challenges of the Senior Certificate examinations and the externally set and moderated but internally marked Grade 11 examinations. These will be the first examinations written by pupils based on the new National Curriculum Statements and have been introduced this year to help pupils and teachers prepare for the National Senior Certificate examinations which will be written for the first time next year.

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## SM&L

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If this were not enough to keep principals and their senior staff busy, the fourth term is also the time for the finalisation of budgets and those responsible for preparing the school budget should already be well advanced in the process of gathering the information they need. Although school finances and budgets are essentially the responsibility of the School Governing Body and more particularly the Treasurer of the SGB, the day to day management is usually delegated to the principal or senior member of staff and/or the school bursar or member of the school administrative staff.

In terms of current legislation, all state schools should be provided with the following information by their provincial education departments by 30 September each year

- staff establishment for the following year
- provisional school funding allocation for the following three years in terms of the Norms and Standards for School funding and how this has been calculated.

In terms of the norms and standards the MECs for education in each province must, by 30 September each year, also publish in the Provincial Gazette the entire resource targeting list for the province. This list must include amongst other things:

- the names of schools
- the poverty score of each school
- the national quintile in which each school is situated
- the SASA Section 21 functions allocated to each school (These functions allow schools to have greater control of how their allocated funds are spent)
- which schools are no-fee schools.

PEDs are also required in terms of these norms and standards to make all this information available to the public and schools on an ongoing and updated basis. Parents, School Governing Bodies and principals are therefore within their rights to demand that they be provided with this information, as it is information that is essential for meaningful and accurate budgeting.

Because education is a provincial competence, each province is responsible for formulating its own policy prescriptions for school budgets. These, however, must meet the legislative prescriptions of the South African Schools Act. These include :

- the Governing Body of a public school must prepare a budget each year in accordance with guidelines determined by the MEC for Education.
- the budget must show the estimated income and expenditure of the school for the following year.
- the budget must be presented at a general

meeting of parents convened on at least 30 days' notice for their consideration and approval by a majority of parents.

- the notice to parents must inform them that the budget will be available for inspection at the school at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting.
- the resolution approving the budget for adoption by the majority of parents attending the meeting must provide for:
  - the amount of fees to be charged
  - the equitable criteria and procedure for the total, partial or conditional exemption of parents who are unable to pay school fees
  - the estimated cumulative effect of the trends of non-payment of school fees by parents. (i.e. whether the number of parents who are not paying school fees is increasing and the extent to which this is affecting the schools income from fees)
  - the estimated cumulative effect of the fee exemptions granted to parents and its influence on the school fee income.

It is obvious from the above that the Treasurer needs to have finalised the budget and proposed school fee for the following year well before the date of the parents' meeting. Once finalised, the proposed budget and school fee need to be taken to the Governing Body for its comment and adoption as the budget that it is recommending to parents for their approval and adoption. The format and level of detail of the budget that will be published and made available to parents also needs to be decided on by the Governing Body. Where feasible this budget or an abbreviated version of it should be circulated to all parents 14 days prior to the parents' meeting. Parents requiring further detail or clarity on items listed can then be invited to contact the treasurer or bursar prior to the meeting for discussion on these items. This helps reduce instances of individual parents asking innumerable questions about specific concerns that they may have or of having them nit-pick details of the budget at the meeting, something that one needs to try to and avoid.

The Budget Check List provided in the adjacent box has been prepared by School Management & Leadership to help principals and School Governing Bodies to meet their fiduciary responsibilities. In terms of current legislation these policies and procedures must be prescribed by the MEC for education in each province by notice published in the Provincial Gazette. This is because education is a provincial competence. The list is based on Provincial Notice 10/2004 of the Western Cape Education Department and their financial policy documents.

## Budget Checklist

- the appointment of the person responsible for preparing the budget has been approved by the Governing Body and this has been minuted
  - a time-line for the preparation of the budget has been drawn up which includes the:
    - the date of the Governing Body meeting to approve the budget
    - the date of the general meeting of parents to approve the budget
    - the date on which notice of the general meeting of parents must be distributed to parents (at least 30 days before the meeting)
    - the date on which the budget must be available at school for inspection by parents (at least 14 days before the meeting)
  - the budget to be presented to parents includes:
    - the actual income and expenditure for 2006
    - the projected income and expenditure for 2007 (the full year)
    - the estimated income and expenditure for 2008 (the budget)
    - the % variance between actual expenditure for 2006 and projected expenditure for 2007 for each line item
    - the % variance between the projected expenditure for 2007 and the budgeted expenditure for 2006.
  - the following line items are included in the budget:
    - School fees
      - gross school fees (school fee x number of students)
      - exemptions in respect of school fees
      - bad debt in respect of school fees
    - Other income (hire of school facilities, tuck shop etc.) including income from the state (Norms and Standards allocation, unscheduled maintenance allocation, municipal services allocation etc.)
    - Other expenses (municipal services, textbooks, maintenance, personnel expenditure, sport, subject materials etc.)
- A schedule with details of current figures showing items such as capital expenditure, investments, assets and liabilities etc is included with the budget.
  - The budget has been approved by the Governing Body for submission to the parents
  - The notice to parents of the general meeting was sent out at least 30 days before the scheduled date of the meeting.
  - The notice to parents included a schedule of current and proposed school fees, a notification that the criteria and procedure to be followed for fee exemption may be obtained from the school, and a notification that the budget will be available for inspection at school 14 days prior to the meeting.
  - The notice to parents includes an invitation to attend the meeting and informs them that a resolution to approve of the budget and proposed school fees will be proposed at the meeting
  - The budget and criteria and procedure for the full or partial remission of school fees was available for inspection by parents 14 days prior to the meeting.
  - The minutes of the 2006 parents' budget meeting were read/ distributed at the parents at the meeting
  - An attendance register was taken at the meeting
  - The procedures of the meeting were minuted
  - A detailed budget for 2008 was presented to parents
  - Parents voted on and approved individually:
    - the fees to be charged in 2008
    - the equitable criteria and procedure for the total partial or conditional exemption of school fees
    - the budget
  - After the meeting a notice was sent to all parents informing them of the school fees for 2008 and that they could obtain information on the total, partial or conditional exemption of school fees from the school.



# Successful School Leadership:

Research findings by the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) in the UK

Research into successful school leadership in England conducted by the NCSL<sup>1</sup> and others, including an independent study of school leadership undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)<sup>2</sup> provides valuable insights into what constitutes effective practice. Interestingly, there is evidence that shows that when compared to other professions, people in wider society in England think that head teachers (principals) provide particularly good examples of leadership. Ofsted, the body charged with the task of evaluating the performance of schools and principals in England, estimates that 80% of school leaders there are doing a 'good', 'very good', or 'excellent' job at leading and managing their schools. The success of principals of English schools can probably, at least partially, be ascribed to the effectiveness of the NCSL. Information about the NCSL and its work is provided elsewhere in this edition of SM&L.

Leithwood et al<sup>3</sup> makes seven strong claims about successful school leadership based on their review of the literature in this field:

**1 School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning.**

Interestingly the influence of classroom teaching and school leadership becomes particularly significant if out of school variables such as pupil intake and background factors are controlled. School leadership explains up to 20% of the difference and classroom teaching up to 30% of the difference in pupil learning if these out of school factors are controlled. This evidence demonstrates very clearly the burden of responsibility that rests on the shoulders of principals and their management teams and the reason for them to be held accountable for the quality of pupil learning in their schools.

**2 Almost all successful leaders draw on the same repertoire of basic leadership practices.**

The basic leadership practices that have been identified are:

- Building vision and setting directions – specific practices include: building a shared vision, fostering the acceptance of groups' goals, demonstrating high performance expectations.
- Understanding and developing people – specific practices include: providing individualised support and consideration, fostering intellectual stimulation, and modelling appropriate values and behaviours. What is important is the way in which the leader integrates the functional (what needs to be done) with the personal (providing support and equipping people with the knowledge and skills they need to do what needs to be done.)

- Redesigning the organisation – specific practices include: establishing work conditions which allow teachers to make the most of their motivations, commitments and capacities, building collaborative cultures, restructuring and reculturing the organisation, building productive relations with parents and the community and connecting school to its wider environment.

- Managing the teaching and learning programme – specific practices include: fostering organisational stability, strengthening the school infrastructure, staffing the teaching programme, providing teaching support, monitoring school activity and buffering staff against distractions from their work.

**3 The ways in which leaders apply these basic leadership practices, not the practices themselves, demonstrates responsiveness to, rather than dictation by, the contexts in which they work.**

The important thing that emerges here is the need for principals not only to be sensitive to the size, situation, educational phase and socio-economic context of the school but also to its "level of performance or success". The contexts of schools in crises or in the early stages of being "turned around" differ from those of schools which have a sustained record of good performance. It is the ability to nuance the application of these practices so that they are appropriate for the current status of the school that distinguishes the best leaders.

**4 School leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions.**

The direct contribution that school leaders make to staff capacity in terms of their own curriculum content knowledge is at the most, modest. Where they do make a difference is in the influence that they have on staff members' motivations, commitments and beliefs about the supportiveness of their working conditions. Recent evidence has shown that teachers' emotions shape their motivations (levels of commitment, sense of efficacy, moral, job satisfaction, stress etc.) which in turn influence pupil learning. Teachers' emotions, in turn have been shown to be strongly influenced by school leadership practices, particularly in regard to their commitment, resilience and effectiveness. Principals and other school leaders have an important responsibility in this regard and need to focus their attention on providing a working environment that is supportive of the emotional needs of their staff.



5 School leadership has a greater influence on schools and students when it is widely distributed (shared).

Distributed leadership includes leadership provided by individual teachers, staff teams, parents, administrative staff, students, members of school management teams, as well as that of the principal. Its influence on pupil performance is significantly greater than that of the principal alone. It is clear from this that pupil performance is enhanced in schools where principals delegate authority in a way that develops the leadership potential of staff and students.

6 Some patterns of (leadership) distribution are more effective than others.

The research underpinning this claim supports that of the previous claim. Generally the schools with the highest levels of pupil achievement attributed this to high levels of influence from all levels of leadership, although the head was seen to have the greatest influence (both good and bad!). Evidence also suggested that there is no loss of power and influence on the part of principals when the power and influence of others in leadership positions in the school increases. Distributed leadership is also seen to be most effective where leadership practices are co-ordinated.

7 A small handful of personal traits explains a high proportion of the variation in leadership effectiveness.

The traits identified - mostly from research in the private sector but also from studies of principals' efforts to improve low-performing schools - as having a positive association with leadership effectiveness include:

- Being open-minded and ready to learn from others
- Being flexible rather than dogmatic in their thinking within a system of core values
- Persistent in their determination to achieve their objectives such as greater staff motivation and commitment, and improved learning and pupil achievement.
- Resilient
- Optimistic

These traits also help explain why successful leaders facing challenging conditions continue to push forward when there is little reason to expect progress.

The PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) report, "Independent study into school leadership"<sup>4</sup> commissioned by the English Department for Education and Skills (DfES) identified the following characteristics of effective leaders based on the expectation of leaders from teachers and support staff.

For teachers, effective leaders:

- Are visible and approachable
- Are supportive
- Have in-depth knowledge of the school and wider community
- Are interested in wider issues rather than just results
- Understand classroom practice
- Are non-hierarchical and consultative
- Distribute leadership effectively
- Act and feed back on concerns raised.

For support staff effective leaders:

- Recognise and value the work of others
- Communicate fully and effectively with all staff
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Provide development opportunities
- Adopt an open, consultative approach
- Have a constructive approach to performance management
- Act and provide feed back on concerns raised

These and other research findings from the NCSL, which we will continue to publish, provide a great deal of food for thought and much to reflect on for principals and others involved in leadership positions in schools as well as for those who occupy leadership positions in district offices and PEDs and the DoE. The DoE has already shown a degree of intent with the introduction of the ACE programmes but much more needs to be done if principals are to be equipped with the skills and knowledge that they need to do what is required of them. Equally principals need to understand the extent to which they can influence the quality of learning in their schools and be held accountable for it.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> *What we know about school leadership*. NCSL & DfES, Nottingham (2007)
- <sup>2</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). *Independent study into school leadership: Main report*. DfES, London (2007)
- <sup>3</sup> Leithwood, K. Day, C. Sammons, P. Harris, & Hopkins, D. *Seven strong claims about successful school leadership*. NCSL & DfES, Nottingham (2006).
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid



## Oakhurst's "Welcome to Cape Town"

The enchanting performance at the opening ceremony of the SAPA Conference by the pupils of Oakhurst Girls' Primary School is a wonderful example of how music, dance and drama can be combined to enhance learning and build a sense of community within a school.

One of the highlights of the opening ceremony of the SAPA National Conference was the "Welcome to Cape Town" performance by the pupils of Oakhurst Girls' Primary School. Their bright and energetic song and dance routine was made up of extracts from "Hoezit Annie" a production loosely based on the Musical "Annie" which was written, directed and produced by Julie Womack and Sally Stewart, two teachers at the school. The music for the song "Welcome to Cape Town" was written by Bernadette White-Phillips, a music teacher.

The original production involved every child from the school as well as all of the teachers and was written, in part, to celebrate the school's centenary in 2006. It was this celebration that prompted Julie and Sally to choose a theme which celebrated not only Oakhurst's 100th birthday but also its commitment to being proudly South African and proudly Capetonian. In this version of Annie, Annie is a street child who is fostered by a family in Rondebosch, the Cape Town suburb in which Oakhurst is situated. Annie is kidnapped by gangsters headed by notorious gangland character Staggy Malone and is finally rescued by the KLAP (SWAT) team. The roles of the KLAP team in the play were performed by the staff.

Productions of this kind involving music, dance and drama offer wonderful learning opportunities for children. Besides the opportunities to sing, dance, act and play musical instruments, the pupils also learn about working together in big groups and about the technicalities of sound and lighting which for this production was done by the Grade 7 class. All of these skills form an important part of the national curriculum and resonate well with the theory and practice of brain-based learning.

A whole-school production of this kind also holds a number of benefits for the school as a community. Although there were no doubt many squabbles and minor irritations along the way, in the end productions of this kind bring the members of the school community closer together as they work towards a common goal and can take pride in their achievement. In Oakhurst's case the production ran for five nights with a range of food stalls, all in line with the proudly Cape Town theme, providing food for the audience and participants before, during and after the show. Also in line with the theme and typical of the generous spirit which is embedded in the educational philosophy of Oakhurst, funds raised from the production were donated to "Ons Plek" a shelter for girls.



Sally Stewart & Julie Womack who conceived, scripted, produced and directed "Hoezit Annie" which was the source of their material for the opening ceremony

Sally and Julie polished their producing and directing skills by attending a one-day Musical Production Workshop presented by The Very Crazy Music company (Contact details: P.O. Box 760 Melville 2109, Telephone 011 888 7638, Fax: 011 888 3795).



Delegates exercising to "stimulate their brains"

SM&L had hoped to bring you more about the SAPA National Convention including summaries of some of the presentations and the names of the National Executive Committee. We were, however, unable to obtain copies of these presentations or the names of the NEC prior to going to press. We hope to bring you this information in the next edition of SM&L.

# Brain-based learning

The theme of the 2007 SAPA National Conference was “Leading brain-based schools”. In this article we provide some background material on “brain-based learning”.

The 2007 SAPA National Conference held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre was attended by nearly 1 000 delegates with representatives from all 9 provinces as well as some from outside of South Africa. Delegates were entertained during registration, at the opening and during the breaks with music and dance performed by pupils from a diverse range of Cape Town schools. Perhaps the most exciting and colourful was the performance by the pupils of Oakhurst Girls’ Primary School, of excerpts from their own production “Howzit Annie” devised as part of their Centenary celebrations last year.

The theme of the conference was “Leading Brain-based Schools” and conference presenters included a number of local and international specialists in brain-based learning.

Brain-based learning as a teaching and learning strategy began to emerge as a concept in the early 90s based on the work of people such as Edward de Bono and Howard Gardner. One of the early writers and presenters on the ways in which research into how the human brain develops and learns could be used to dramatically prove teaching and learning was Dr Jeannette Vos co-author of *The Learning Revolution*<sup>1</sup>. Dr Vos was the key-note speaker at an Educational Conference hosted by Hilton College in June 1997 as part of their 125 birthday celebration, which I was fortunate enough to attend.

New non-invasive techniques have been developed by neuroscientists which make it possible for them to identify which parts of the brain are active when different kinds of learning take place as well as the way in which the brain stores, manages and recalls information. This has made it possible for them to conduct clinical trials similar to those used to test the efficacy of different medical interventions, to measure the effectiveness of different teaching and learning strategies. Simply put, neuroscientist can tell which ways of learning work best and why they work best.

Renate and Geoffrey Caine list 12 Mind/Brain Learning Principles in their publication *Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain*<sup>2</sup>. These are:

## 1 The brain is a complex and adaptive system:

The brain has the capacity to function at many levels and in many ways simultaneously. In their words “learning engages the entire physiology. Thoughts, emotions, imagination, predispositions and physiology operate concurrently and interactively as the entire system interacts with and exchanges information with its environment.” The important implication of this is that

learning and teaching is most effective when it engages the whole brain (person).

## 2 The brain is a social brain

Throughout our lives our brains change in response to our engagement with others and, like it or not, individuals form part of larger social systems. Our identity depends on establishing community and finding ways to belong and our learning is profoundly influenced by the nature of the social relationships within which we function.

## 3 The search for meaning is innate

The brain seeks constantly to make sense of our experience. This search for meaning is value driven and ranges from the need to eat and find safety to seeking to answer questions such as “who am I?” and “why am I here?”

## 4 The search for meaning occurs through “patterning.”

Patterning refers to the way the brain connects new and novel stimuli to the familiar. Its purpose is to discern and create patterns of relationships between what is new and what is known. Mind maps are simple visual models of the ways in which the brain manages information. The nature and structure of patterning is unique to each individual.

## 5 Emotions are critical to patterning

What we learn is influenced and organised by emotions and mind-sets. These involve our expectations, prejudices and biases, self-esteem and the need for social interaction. Most importantly our emotions and thoughts shape one another and cannot be separated. It is for this reason that an appropriate emotional climate is essential for sound education.

## 6 Every brain simultaneously perceives and creates parts and wholes

The notion of the left and right brain performing different functions is only partially true as both hemispheres of the brain interact with every activity. The brain is also able to perceive both the whole and its parts simultaneously.

## 7 Learning involves both focussed attention and peripheral perception

The brain is able to absorb information that lies beyond its immediate focus of attention. These peripheral signals, which may not be part of our conscious thoughts, include sensory stimuli from the learning environment as well as those derived from our own inner attitudes and beliefs.

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## **8 Learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes**

Much of our learning is unconscious and we are not aware of the processes involved. Understanding therefore may not necessarily occur in class but may hours or even weeks later. Pupils can be helped with this process by providing them with opportunities to reflect and elaborate on their ideas about what they are learning during and after the learning process – helping them to think about what they are thinking (metacognition)

## **9 We have at least two ways of organising memory**

The two ways of organising memory called taxon (or rote) memory and spatial memory. Meaningless (unconnected or unrelated) information is organised using the taxon memory while meaningful information is organised using locale memory. The taxon systems are motivated by reward and punishment. Spatial memory is what allows us to instantly recall events, such as or memory of what we had for dinner and that it is always engaged, inexhaustible and is motivated by novelty. Meaningful learning requires a combination of both systems. It is important for teachers to recognise this particularly when presenting new information which may be perceived initially as being “meaningless”.

## **10 Learning is developmental and development occurs in several ways**

Although the brain remains “plastic” throughout life in terms of its ability to learn new things it is also developmental with certain predetermined sequences of development. The experiences we have during these early developmental phases fix the way our brain organises and process information. It is for this reason that new languages and the arts should be introduced to children very early in life.

## **11 Complex learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat.**

The brain learns best when it is challenged in an environment which encourages risk. When it perceives threats, however, it becomes less flexible and reverts to more primitive responses. Perceived threat in this instance relates to a feeling of helplessness or fatigue not to the absence of challenge or to feeling good. Some stress is an inevitable part of learning and challenge.

## **12 Every brain is uniquely organised**

Although all our brains have the same set of systems each is unique. The differences are a result of the distinctive genetic makeup, experiences and environment which are peculiar to each individual.

Andrea Spears and Leslie Wilson in their article “*Brain-based Learning Highlights*”<sup>3</sup> make the following recommendations about the teaching and learning process based on the principles of brain-based learning.

- Provide a rich, stimulating environment using material produced by pupils. This should not be limited to classrooms and other teaching venues but should include corridors and play areas.
- Organise classrooms and other learning spaces to accommodate group learning and social interaction.
- Link indoor and outdoor spaces so that pupils can move about for more brain oxygenation
- Create safe places for students where threat is reduced. This is particularly important for those who live in large urban areas.
- Provide a variety of settings where pupils can learn. This is particularly important for primary pupils who may be more comfortable and learn more successfully while sitting on the floor, under desks or in corners.
- Change displays in the classrooms and corridors regularly to provide stimulus for brain development. Establish places where students can act out scenes or make presentations linked to their content learning.
- Have multiple resources available in adaptable learning spaces so that a variety of approaches can be integrated into the learning process. Examples include access to computers and wet areas for the sciences.

Teachers need to be able to recognise the “teachable moment” and adapt their programme to maximise the learning opportunities of these moments when they arise.

- Provide places for both active and passive moments. Pupils need quiet areas where they can be away from others for moment of reflection (intrapersonal reflection)
- Provide individual pupils with personal space. Every student needs a home base (classroom, desk or locker) which is for their personal use and where they can express their unique identity.
- Make the community part of the school's learning environment by making use of the physical, natural and social resources that it provides.
- Provide enriching experiences. The brain can grow new connections at any age and development is stimulated best by challenging and complex experiences with appropriate feedback. Cognitive skills develop better with music and motor skills.

### **References**

<sup>1</sup> Dryden, G. & Vos, J. The Learning Revolution. A lifelong learning programme for the world's finest computer: your amazing brain. Accelerated Learning Systems, Aylsbury 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Caine, R. & Caine, G. Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain. Addison-Wesley (1994)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.uwsp.edu/education/celtProject/>



### Education Laws Amendment Bill (B 33B 2007)

The *Education Laws Amendment Bill (Bill 33B of 2007)* which was recently passed by the House of Assembly includes a number of measures which have important implications for schools, principals and school governing bodies. Although the Bill has not yet been signed into law, it is unlikely that the amendments that it proposes will change during the final phase of its passage through the legislative process. Principals and Governing Bodies need to take note of the following:

1 The National Education Policy Act, (1996) is amended to change the long-standing provision for the establishment of the National Education and Training Council (NETC) from a compulsory to a voluntary one. A series of National Ministers has failed to activate and populate this until now statutory advisory body. Minister Pandor has already called for nominations in expectation of the passing of the Amendment Bill.

2 Amendments to the *South African Schools Act*: There are a number of amendments affecting a range of provisions in the SASA. These include the following:

2.1 Amendment to provide a clearer definition of what is meant by:

- A dangerous object
- An illegal drug
- A school activity.

These definitions are changed to assist schools in dealing with pupils and outsiders who may be found to have dangerous objects and/or illegal drugs in their possession at school activities.

2.2 Amendment which allow the Minister to prescribe minimum uniform norms and standards for school infrastructure and capacity in public schools. In terms of these amendments the Minister may, by regulation prescribe these minimum norms and standards for:

- School infrastructure (including: classrooms, electricity, water, sanitation, a library, laboratories, recreational facilities, electronic connectivity and perimeter security)
- The capacity of a school in respect of the number of learners a school can admit (including: the number of teachers and class size, the quality of performance of a school, the curriculum and extra-curricular choices, classroom size, the utilization of available classrooms.)
- The provision of learning and teaching support materials (including: stationery and supplies, learning material, teaching material and equipment, science, technology and other apparatus, electronic equipment, school furniture.)

The amendment also requires the governing body of a school to comply with these norms and standards when it determines the Admission policy and the Language policy of the school.

2.3 Amendments which prescribe/ provide guidelines on how principals/schools/ governing bodies should deal with:

- The random searching of pupils and/or their possession in instances where there may be suspicion that they may have in their possession dangerous objects or illegal drugs; It is important that principals make sure that they are fully informed of the content of this legislation as it has very important implications for them. As an example point 14 of the amendment states that "No criminal proceedings may be instituted by the school against a learner in respect of whom-

- A search contemplated in subsection (2) was conducted and a dangerous object of illegal drug was found; or

- A test contemplated in subsection (8) was conducted, which proved to be positive." The amendments do, however, make provision for a disciplinary hearing in these instances.

2.4 Amendments which prescribe "Functions and responsibilities of principal of public school". These amendments a very prescriptive about certain functions and responsibilities of principals and include:

- That the principal of a public school represents the Head of Department in the governing body when acting in an official capacity

- A requirement that the principal submit to the Head of Department (Provincial Head of Education) an annual report in respect of:

- The academic performance of the school in terms of minimum outcomes and standards and procedures for assessment determined by the minister

- The effective use of available resources

- A requirement that principals of "underperforming schools" – these are schools that the Head of Education has identified as such – prepare an academic performance improvement plan which sets out how the academic performance at the school will be improved, and submit this to the Head of Department at the start of each year.

- A requirement that the principal undertake the professional management of a public school and carry out the duties that are prescribed. These include:

- The implementation of all educational programmes

- The management of all educators and support staff

- The management of the use of learning

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support material and other equipment

- The safekeeping of all school records
- The implementation of policy and legislation
- Attending and participating in all meetings of the governing body
- Providing the governing body with a report about the professional management of the school
- Assisting the governing body in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to learners, educators and support staff
- Informing the governing body about policy and legislation
- Providing accurate data to the Head of Department when required to do so

2.5 Amendments which deal with the identification of underperforming schools (school that is underperforming in terms of the standard of performance of the learners or where there has been a serious break down in the way the school is managed or governed or where the safety of the learners is threatened) and the actions that the Head of Department (of the PED) must take improve the performance of these schools. These actions may include:

- Implementing an incapacity code and procedure for poor work performance in terms of the Employment of Educators Act against the principal; or
- Withdrawing the functions of the governing body; or
- Appointing a person to perform the function of the governing body; or
- Appointing an academic mentor to take over the functions and responsibilities of the principal (as part of providing counselling of the principal in terms of the Employment of Educators Act).

2.6 Amendments to force the MECs and Heads of Department of the PEDs to act in compliance with:

- The norms and standards for school infrastructure, capacity and the provision of learning and teaching support materials
- The performance of learners
- Other norms and standards determined in terms of SASA and the Employment of Educators Act, amongst others.

The above is a brief synopsis of what is contained in these amendments. We will, in future issues deal with some of these amendments in more detail, particularly those which are likely to have an impact on the day to day management of schools and the duties and responsibilities of school governors. This will include a critical look at some of the amendments.



## Curriculum-related policy matters

The policy document "A National Policy On The Conduct Administration And Management Of The National Senior Certificate: A Qualification At Level 4 On The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)" was published in *Government Gazette*, No. 30048 of 6 July 2007. The document addresses the conduct of the Grade 12 end examinations in 2008, but there are some clauses that schools should take note of because they have relevance for the internal assessment of candidates during 2008. The relevant sections are listed below:

5 (1) *The compilation of the internal assessment mark must be done in accordance with the Subject Assessment Guidelines of the various subjects listed in the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10–12 (General)*

(3) *Learner evidence of performance:*

(c) *The learner's evidence of performance must:*

(i) *Consist of the assessment components as specified for each subject in the relevant Subject Assessment Guidelines; and*

(ii) *Provide evidence for moderation.*

**Note:** These clauses give policy status to the SAG's for the various Grade 10 -12 subjects, which until now have been guideline documents.

8 (2) *Full-time learners in Grade 12 may register for additional subjects for the National Senior Certificate, subject to the following conditions:*

(a) *The candidate has obtained written permission from the Head of Department or his or her nominee;*

(b) *The candidate has offered and passed the additional subject/s in Grade 10 and Grade 11;*

(c) *The candidate will meet the requirements for internal assessment for the specific subjects*

(3) *A part-time candidate is a learner who has enrolled at an institution that does not offer tuition on a full-time basis.*

Policy and regulation changes to implement a combined supplementary and end-of-year Senior Certificate examination in May/June 2008, and one main examination in May/June from 2009 until 2011.

The above mentioned changes were announced on 7 September 2007 in *Government Gazette* No. 30267.

The changes imply the following:

- The Senior Certificate supplementary examinations will be moved from February/March 2008 to May/June 2008.
- The end-of-year 2008 examination for part-time candidates will be moved from October/November to May/June 2008.
- The registration date for the 2008 supplementary examination and for the 2008 end-of-year examination for part-time candidates moves from 15 March to 31 January 2008.
- Candidates registering for the May/June 2008 examination as a supplementary examination will not be limited to a maximum of two subjects, as is currently the case.

# Good Management:

## Praising and Reprimanding

In the last issue of *SM&L* we published an article on Monkey Management based on the writings of Kenneth Blanchard. Another example of a useful management skill from Blanchard's One Minute Manager series comes from "The One Minute Manager<sup>1</sup>", which is the first book in this useful series. The book provides useful and practical advice on goal setting and the praising and reprimanding of staff. The model of how to praise and reprimand individuals is simple and effective management tool which has application in the management of staff and as a technique for managing pupil behaviour.

Typically Blanchard describes the processes as a "one minute praising" and a "one minute reprimand" as each is expected to last for not longer than one minute. The process is the same in both instances and involves four steps:

- A description of the individual's behaviour – what he or she did that was right or wrong. It is important that the description is specific and that it focuses on the behaviour not the person. "Your marking was handed in after the stipulated deadline" or "Your homework is incomplete" or "The assignment that you set your class was creative and challenging" or "Your behaviour this lesson was much improved"
- A description of how their behaviour makes you feel and how it affects the school, other members of staff or the class, or how their behaviour helped or hindered others. "What you did has frustrated/ disappointed/ annoyed me because... it has meant that I will have to do additional work after hours to meet my deadline, or "that homework was set so that you would be better able to understand what I will be teaching today", or "what you did pleased/ inspired me because it was a wonderful example for the other members of staff of what can be achieved" or "your good behaviour made it possible for all members of the class to benefit from this lesson".
- A pause, with silence, to allow the message whether positive or negative to sink in. This is an essential part of the process and should not be omitted. As experienced teachers and principals will know this is the silence when the culprit or

praiseworthy individual squirms with embarrassed remorse or pleasure.

- Finish the episode by encouraging them to do more of the same, if they have done well or, if they have been reprimanded, by reminding them of some of their positive behaviours or contributions and that you have high expectations that they will perform better in future. This should be accompanied by either shaking the person's hand or a pat on the back which ever may seem appropriate.



It is a simple but effective technique. It normally takes some practice to get it right but it can have significant benefits if it is used regularly, consistently and appropriately.

Critical to its success are the following:

- The praising or reprimanding must happen immediately following the good or poor behaviour or performance. The longer the delay the less effective the influence the praising or reprimanding will have on the future behaviour or performance of the individual.



- The focus of the praising or reprimanding must be on the specifics of the individual's behaviour or performance which were either good or poor and not on aspects of their personality or on previous events or actions.

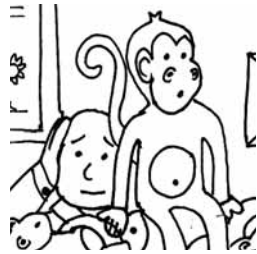
- When praising or reprimanding an individual it is essential that you are in full control of your emotions. It is also important, however, that you indicate to them that their behaviour has affected how you feel. Note that it is how you feel about their behaviour not how you feel about them as individuals. No matter what the circumstances they should always feel that you care about them as an individual

- The pause and silence make a difference and help the message about how you feel sink in. People must leave wanting to do more of the same if what they have done is good or to avoid a repeat reprimand if their behaviour or performance has been poor.

*Continued on page 12*



## More monkey business



Readers of *SM&L* who also read the *Sunday Times* may have seen the article “Don’t go ape over employees’ problems”<sup>1</sup>, in the September 16 edition of *Business Times: Careers*. The subheading read “‘Monkeys’ – the problems subordinates bring to their bosses – call for leadership techniques”. While the *Sunday Times* article addressed the same issues as the article “Monkey management” published in the previous edition of *SM&L*, it deals with it from a slightly different perspective, focussing more on the delegation process. Quoting from a number of business “advisors” author Lauren Keller Johnson notes that many managers assume that it is faster and more efficient to take on an employees problems than to teach them to handle them on their own. Managers do this she suggests because of their desire to control problem-solving and decision-making rather than to empower their employees. She suggests that people who manage in this way are focussed too much on their management responsibilities rather than on their leadership responsibilities. Leaders manage people by encouraging a sense of ownership and accountability while managers prefer to manage the detail of what their employees do. One way in which skilled leaders manage monkeys is to ask a subordinate who arrives with a monkey “What do you think should be done?” as it teaches people to arrive with a solution. Monkey problems can also be avoided or reduced by making sure that delegated tasks and problems are matched to an employee’s ability and area of interest. Generally people will find creative solutions to problems which lie within their field of interest.

One suggestion made in the article is to encourage subordinates to rate their problems using the following scale:

- 1 Manager must solve the problem
- 2 Manager tells you how to solve the problem
- 3 You propose a solution and ask for your managers approval
- 4 You take action and tell the manager about it afterwards.

Subordinates are encouraged to take ownership of their problems by making as many “level 4” decisions as possible.

The important thing to remember is that people in senior positions have a responsibility to develop their employees and that proper delegation and teaching them the skills they need to manage their own monkeys is an important element of this.

### Reference

<sup>1</sup> Johnson, L.K. *Don’t go ape over employees’ problems: ‘Monkeys’ – the problems subordinates bring their bosses – call for leadership techniques*. New York Times partner publications (2007).

## Good Management:

[Continued from page 11](#)

- The final comment statement must be positive. You want the person involved to leave with their self-respect and commitment to the organisation intact.
- When it’s over it is over. This applies particularly to a reprimand. The individual reprimanded should not feel that their mistake or poor performance is going to be an obstacle to their future progress or the way in which they may be perceived. You want the person to remain motivated and to work harder in future to avoid the situation that led to their being reprimanded.
- Catch them doing something right. It is good management practice to praise good work and performance as often as you can find it as this one of the most effective ways of motivating people. Good managers go out of their way to find examples of work and behaviour by new members of staff that are deserving of praise. They will also look for examples of good work and behaviour deserving of praise from those who have underperformed because this is the way to turn underperformers to high performers. It is a technique that can be very effective in classroom management. Teachers can improve classroom management significantly by using regular praise of good behaviour and performance to promote the expectations they have of how pupils should behave. Unfortunately there is a tendency for teacher to focus more on reprimanding than on praising an approach which research suggests is less effective in producing behavioural change than if there was more praising and less reprimanding.

### References

<sup>1</sup> Blanchard, K. & Johnson, S. *The One Minute Manager*. Collins, London (1983)

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