POLICY ▪ LEADERSHIP ▪ MANAGEMENT ▪ GOVERNANCE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

Mentoring as a means of support

Much of the content of this edition is focussed on the issue of mentoring and coaching and the contribution that this kind of support can provide for school leaders and for principals in particular. The mentoring of principals, and more especially beginner principals, has become common practice in many parts of the world and evidence from our own observations suggests that it is becoming a more common practice in our own education system, for the most part driven by NGOs working in the education sector.

One of our lead articles provides a comprehensive overview of how the mentoring and coaching of principals has developed in the USA over the past decade and is based largely on a report published by the Wallace Foundation, which set out to identify examples of best practice in the field of mentoring and coaching, and to draw lessons from these. One of the programmes that they hold up as an example of good practice is the New York City Leadership Academy (NYCLA). The NYCLA was established for the express purpose of improving the leadership expertise of the principals of the city's public schools. There was also another agenda, however, which was to develop aspirant principals to the point where they could become change agents in the schools to which they would be assigned, equipped with the knowledge and skills that they would need to tackle the challenges of the city's many underperforming schools. The challenges these principals face are similar to those found in many of this country's township schools and include poverty and the socio-economic ills that are its bedfellows. The NYCLA programme for aspirant principals includes both a theoretical component and the provision of ongoing mentoring and coaching for these principals once they have been appointed. Much of the success of the NYCLD programme and the positive influence that it has had on the New York City Public schooling system has been attributed to the personal and professional support that the mentors provide during the first few years of the principals' tenure.

The guidelines on good practice in mentoring and coaching that the Wallace Report presents provide individuals and organisations that may be involved in supporting schools and school leaders with useful advice about the processes that are involved and on how to ensure that both the mentors and the mentees gain as much benefit as possible from the process. We hope you, our readers, will find them helpful.

This edition also features a story about an executive management course for principals offered by the Graduate School of Business at UCT and which we briefly reported at the end of last year. The need for a course of this kind was championed by the Principals Academy, a trust that was founded at much the same time, and which was established with the goal of developing school leaders

Betterschools – Is mentoring and coaching of principals the answer?

Over the past few years the notion of mentoring and coaching for newly appointed principals has come to be viewed as an important contributing factor to their ability to succeed in what has become an increasingly challenging job. Although a relatively new concept in the South African education scene, this is not the case in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom where it has almost become mandatory.

In its 2007 publication 'Getting Principal Mentoring Right: Lessons from the Field'[1], the Wallace Foundation reported on research that it commissioned into both the extent and the effectiveness of principal-mentoring in the USA. Part of the research involved a review of the existing literature on mentoring, not only in the education field, but also in other fields and professions. In addition to the literature survey, the research team interviewed leading experts in the field, once again including people from outside the education establishment. The development of school leaders is one of the Wallace Foundation's core areas of interest, so it is not surprising that a significant part of the research team's efforts was directed at an evaluation of their own leadership development programmes in the 22 states and districts in which the Wallace Foundation operates. They paid particular attention to two districts in which they have been most heavily involved over a number of years. These were the districts of New York City, where their focus was directed mainly at the New York City Leadership Academy (NYCLA), and the Jefferson County KY Public Schools district, which falls within the boundaries of the state of Kentucky.

The Wallace research team identified a number of reasons for the increasing acknowledgement by education authorities across the states of the value of mentoring for beginner principals. These include an acceptance that the 'sink-or-swim' philosophy that was prevalent in the past is too haphazard an approach for a task as important as leading and managing a school. As the authors note, 'The harsh truth is that the new school leader faces a dizzying array of tasks associated with managing a highly complex organisation: from budgeting to bussing to discipline, personnel and union matters and public relations.' Other factors included the growing understanding of the vital role that school principals play in school improvement efforts, and the realisation, at least in some states, that an aging cohort of principals posed the threat of looming shortages. The need to address this particular problem meant that these states needed to grow their group of well-qualified aspirant principals.

The 'sink-or-swim' philosophy that was prevalent in the past is too haphazard an approach for a task as important as leading and managing a school.

Many states apparently see the mentoring process primarily as a way of familiarising aspirant or newly appointed principals with the workings and priorities of the system. The philosophy behind this approach is similar in many ways to the approach that appears to have been adopted by the individuals who developed the curriculum for the local ACE: School Leadership programme with its focus largely on issues of policy and policy compliance. The report notes that the NYCLA, which was established as a training institution for aspiring and new principals, appears to have adopted a rather wider view of mentoring. School leaders developed through the NYCLA are being prepared not simply to fit into the system but rather to challenge it and to drive change in ways that will ensure that the needs of all children become the priority in the schools they lead. The report lists five 'mentoring quality guidelines' that it suggests states and districts could use to strengthen their programmes and to address shortcomings. Four of these recommendations deal with issues related to the effectiveness of these programmes, while the fifth is a recommendation relating to the need for mentoring programmes to help leaders to drive school change where this may be required.

A brief summary of each of these recommendations is provided below:

1 Provide mentors with high-quality training in the mentoring process.

Education departments and other institutions that intend to introduce a mentoring programme for principals should commit to a process of mentor training. Effective mentors need knowledge and skills on goal setting, active listening and conflict management. They must also have the ability to provide feedback that encourages reflection, together with the ability to suspend judgement on issues on which they may hold strong views. The authors also make the point that mentoring is not a 'buddy' system but that it is more like a coaching process.

2 Gather meaningful data on the efficacy of mentoring and the extent to which it can change the culture of schools.

The purpose of mentoring programmes needs to extend beyond issues of compliance to issues of school change. Agencies engaged in mentoring programmes need to put mechanisms in place that can be used to assess the extent to which their intervention produced the change that they desired. While many states and districts that provide mentoring programmes gather data on these programmes, most of the data collected relates to soft issues such as satisfaction indices, with very few gathering data on the extent to which mentoring may have resulted in better teaching or improved learner performance.

3 Mentoring should be provided for at least a year and preferably for two or more years.

Research suggests that new principals pass through a series of developmental stages, which in some quarters have been labelled as 'survival', 'control', 'stability', 'educational leadership' and 'professional actualisation'. As it is unlikely that any new principal passes through even the initial phases of this process in their first year, mentoring for new principals should extend for at least two years, if not longer. In professions outside of education, where mentoring as a support process has been in operation for some time, there is general agreement that a new leader requires a period of mentoring that is sufficient to guide her/him through the initial developmental phases and that this would normally require at least two years of intensive mentoring.

'The harsh truth is that the new school leader faces a dizzying array of tasks associated with managing a highly complex organisation: from budgeting to bussing to discipline, personnel and union matters and public relations.'

4 Funding for mentoring should be sufficient to provide quality training and stipends commensurate with the importance and time requirements of the task.

The findings from the research were that budgets for mentoring programmes at state level were generally insufficient and that the stipends were 'modest'. The use of active principals as mentors was also seen as problematic because of the time constraints active principals face as a result of the demands of their own schools. This was not the case where retired principals were used as mentors.

5 Emphasis should be placed on mentoring for change.

The authors hold the view that the primary goal of mentoring should be an 'unambiguous' focus on fostering leaders who:

- Put learning first and have the ability to rally the entire school community around this goal
- Have the ability to drive change where this is needed, to address shortcomings and to ensure that quality teaching and learning become the school's number one priority
- Have the courage to focus on the needs of all children and a willingness to confront those who may become obstacles to change.

New York City's mentoring programme

When the Mayor of New York City and the Schools Chancellor learned that nearly two-thirds of the state's 1 400 principals were due to retire in the next few years they decided that it was an opportunity to do something different and to bring in a new generation of principals who had the commitment and competence that was needed to turn around the city's ailing public schools. One of the key elements of their strategy was their emphasis on providing this new breed of principals with the skills and knowledge that they would need to change schools and produce improved results from the state's lowest performing schools. The vehicle that they chose to deliver this training was the New York City Leadership Academy (NYCLA), launched in 2003 with private funding, which included funding support from the Wallace Foundation. The decision to go this route was part of a general overhaul of the school system in the district that saw the abolishment of the central school board with some aspects of its functions placed under the direct control of the Mayor and a 'Schools Chancellor' who heads the New York City

Department of Education. The current Schools Chancellor is Dennis M. Walcott, who as head of the NYC DoE oversees the City's approximately 1 700 schools that provide schooling to 1.1 million learners with a budget of US$23 billion.

The NYCLA is responsible for the provision of two major services:
- an Aspiring Principals Programme (APP), which selects, prepares and supports aspirant principals who 'want to make a difference in New York City schools'
- a mentoring programme that is directed at supporting beginner principals within the NYC Public School system.

The APP is a standards-based training programme for aspiring principals that uses experiential learning methods to teach real-world skills. It takes place over three phases:
- a six-week intensive programme during the schools' summer holiday break using a standards-based curriculum that 'simulates' the real-life challenges faced by principals who serve in the city's schools

- a 10-month school-based 'residency' period during which the aspirant principal works in a school under the mentorship of an experienced principal
- a 'transitioning' period that involves the new principal gradually taking over the reins of the school that he or she will head.

The APP candidates are evaluated on a pass-fail basis and are expected to meet rigorous performance standards at the completion of each phase of the course to be considered for the next phase. They are also expected to make a commitment to serve in the NYC Public School system for a period of at least five years. Interestingly, aspiring principals are not expected to work on their own but are joined by an aspiring assistant principal in what the academy describes as a 'team approach'. The team of two work together during the course and remain together when they are placed in their school as school leaders. They continue to be provided with intensive coaching and support as part of the NYCLA's mentoring programme during this period of internship.

Mentoring or coaching, what is the difference?

Mentoring and coaching are different both in their purpose and in their processes. We have listed below some of these differences, which are based largely on information provided in the Winter 2012 thought paper 'Coaching vs. Mentoring: 25 ways that they're different'.[2]

Coaching	Mentoring
Task oriented	Relationship oriented
Short term	Long term
Performance driven	Development driven
Can be implemented on a needs basis	Proper programme design needed to be effective
Coach may be an immediate supervisor	Immediate supervisor only indirectly involved in the process
Effectiveness can be evaluated using simple quantitative measures	Effectiveness less easy to evaluate and requires qualitative measures
Focus is more on professional issues than personal issues	Focus is on both personal and professional development
Can be done for remedial purposes	Never remedial
Internal political issues avoided	Internal politics unpacked
Mostly transactional	Mostly transformational
Coach requires content expertise	Mentor requires interpersonal expertise
Coaching is mostly a one-way process	Mentoring is a two-way process
Coaching focuses on behavioural transformation	Mentoring focuses on personal transformation

The NYCLA's mentoring programme differs from most of the mentoring programmes provided by other states and districts in that all of the Academy's mentors are full-time Academy employees with each mentor working with 11 to 15 new principals. The NYCLA has also replaced the term mentor with that of 'coach' as it considers the process that is involved to be more aligned to coaching than to mentoring. Another way in which the NYCLA's programme differs from other programmes is in its focus on change and the need to develop school leaders who have the capacity to turn around underperforming schools and schools where learner performance has stagnated. The NYCLA is also committed to ensuring that it meets its own high standards and makes extensive use of data gathering and analysis, and of self-reflection as key elements of this self-evaluation process. Mentor-coaches are evaluated in a six-monthly cycle based on feedback from participating principals who are invited to evaluate their mentor-coaches on a number of different dimensions. Each of these focuses on the extent to which the principal's effectiveness in that dimension has been enhanced by the interaction with their mentor-coach.

The early reviews of the performance of the mentor-coaches resulted in some changes to the programme and reinforced the need for regular feedback to coaches, not only on their own performance but also to keep them abreast of the city's changing goals and policies. The mentor-coaches were also given a greater degree of freedom in the way in which they operated and in deciding how best to meet the needs of individual principals.

One of the interesting and fundamental elements of the Wallace report from a South African perspective is the extent to which 'quality instruction' is viewed as a principal's core responsibility. Some of the quotations that they have used highlight the emphasis that is placed on the principal's crucial role as instructional leader. These include:
'It is easy to have a mediocre school. Having high expectations for all children takes courage.'
'The constant challenge is how do you continue to highlight that instruction is key?'

Proper mentoring and coaching is seen as critical to driving this agenda of high-quality instruction focussed on ensuring that all children succeed. Perhaps it is time for the education authorities in this country to adopt a similar view and to inject a measure of accountability into a system that appears to be more focussed on serving its own selfish needs than on providing quality instruction for all children. The proper mentoring and coaching of principals has the potential to help drive this

agenda provided the mentor-coaches are people with experience and integrity and who themselves are committed to a schooling system that considers the delivery of teaching and learning of the highest possible quality as its number-one priority. ■

The benefits of mentoring[3]

Mentor
- Exposure to new ideas and approaches through conversations with the mentee
- A sense of accomplishment as a result of helping someone else professionally
- The ability to share experience and successful practice with a new generation of leaders
- An opportunity to share and use skills acquired during the mentor's own professional career, including coaching, communication and counselling skills
- An opportunity to enhance the standing of the profession.

Mentee
- An opportunity to gain new ideas, technical expertise, interpersonal and managerial skills
- Improved self-confidence and a greater willingness to make decisions, to tackle complex tasks and to take risks
- An opportunity to test ideas and share concerns with a veteran
- Improved insights into one's own thinking and behaviour and a deeper understanding of the complexities of organisational culture
- Assistance with indentifying personal and professional weaknesses and guidance on how to address these.

Organisation
- Improved organisational climate
- Better role clarification
- Improved job satisfaction
- More confident and effective leaders.

References
1 'Getting Principal Mentoring Right: Lessons from the Field', Wallace Foundation, March 2007. Downloaded from http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/principal-training/Documents/Getting-Principal-Mentoring-Right.pdf
2 'Coaching vs. Mentoring: 25 ways they're different', a thought paper by Management Mentors, Winter 2012. Downloaded from www.management-mentors.com/resources/coaching-and-mentoring/
3 Based on Lamm, A and Harder, A. 2008. *Using mentoring as a part of professional development*. Florida Cooperative Extension Service Electronic Data Information Source, Document AEC 401/WC082.

MEd in 'School Change' at the University of Free State

The candidates for the MEd in School Change following at their first meeting at the University of Free State in February 2013 gather at the entrance to the historic Main Building of the university which is a National Heritage Site. Lectures and course work took place in a boardroom in this building.

Over the weekend of 15/16 February a diverse group of some 20 individuals gathered in the boardroom of the historic Main Building of the University of Free State for the first of four contact sessions with the aim of helping them unpack the concept of 'school change' and to gain a better understanding of the theoretical framework that underpins the notion of 'school change'. What had drawn them there, from places as far afield as Diepkloof, Upington, Somerset West, Nkandla, Warden, Riebeeckstad and Roodepoort was an invitation to apply for admission to a Master's of Education in 'School Change' that appeared in an advertisement published during the latter part of 2012 in the *Mail & Guardian*. Prospective applicants were invited to 'Join Prof. Jonathan Jansen, Vice-Chancellor and Rector, and a small team of highly qualified academics and practitioners in a Master's

class on school change'. The goal of the qualification, according to the advert was to prepare 'a new generation of education specialists who are equipped to lead school change at the level of policy or planning or in the field of practice'.

The applicants who were finally selected for the course and who met for the first time on 15 February were a fascinating and diverse group, in terms of age, past experience and current occupation. The group included current and retired principals, teachers, social activists, business leaders, politicians and individuals involved in the not-for-profit sector, and their reasons for applying for admission to the course were as interesting as the group was diverse. A common thread of their reasons for being there, however, was the hope that they could make some positive change to the troubled space that public schooling occupies at present. What was enormously heartening about those discussions that explored the challenges of our public education system was the commitment and idealism that was reflected in the manner in which each candidate articulated his or her hopes for the course and the benefits that they hoped to derive from it.

We are able to report on this course because SM&L's General Editor is one of the candidates and was there to share in this discussion. The MEd in School Change

has four learning outcomes. These are to enable students to:

1. understand deeply why some schools work and others do not, given the insights from education change theory and research
2. read large-scale (achievement) databases in ways that inform strategic actions in schools
3. know the value, limits and application of comparison and comparative research on schools to local and national conditions
4. apply evidence-based knowledge of educational change in real-school settings.

We hope, in coming editions, to share some of the theory and practice of 'school change' with you as well as the perspectives of the students and lecturers as they grapple with the notion of school change as a construct and its practical application in their own particular area of interest.

Although there was some debate about these issues during this first contact session, a significant amount of the time was also devoted to providing guidance on research methodology, in the particular demands of academic writing, and in the framing and design of the research question that will form the basis of each student's final dissertation. ■

Continued from page 1

point where they have the capacity and drive to create schools that are centres of excellence. The one-year course leads to a Postgraduate Diploma in Management Practice (PGDMP) qualification, which is expected to significantly improve the executive management skills of those who qualify. Further support for these principals is provided by an experienced mentor/coach who will help them to hone their management and leadership skills for a period of up to three years should this prove to be necessary.

Other articles include a piece by former District Director Eugene Daniels who writes about a mentoring programme for District Directors that he has become involved in since his departure from the Western Cape Education Department at the end of last year and an interesting piece by regular columnist Erich Cloete in which he explores the new field of 'Neuroleadership' and the extent to which school leaders can use the latest advances in whole brain research to improve their leadership and management competencies.

All this and more, we hope you will enjoy the read. ■

New Executive Management Programme for School Leaders

Principals and other school leaders in the Western Cape can now hone their management and leadership skills thanks to a partnership between the newly established Principals Academy, CAPITEC Bank and UCT's Graduate School of Business.

It's 17:00 on the last Friday afternoon of the April school holidays, not a time when you would expect to find nearly 60 school leaders – the principals and senior members of staff from 22 schools – in intense discussion in a lecture hall at UCT's Graduate School of Business. Outside, the traffic is in gridlock as vehicles bringing jazz enthusiasts into the city for the start of the opening night of the Cape Town International Jazz Festival jostle with those heading home as part of the usual late Friday afternoon rush hour. The gridlocked traffic delays the start of the workshop because of the late arrival of some SMT members who inadvertently get caught up in it but by 17:00 the 22 principals of the schools have mostly been joined by a full complement of the members of their SMTs.

The arriving members of the schools' management teams are there to join their principals in a strategic planning exercise facilitated by Mandy Lebides, who has been largely responsible for the overall development of a new management course for principals and others involved in leadership positions within the schooling system. The driving force behind the establishment of the Principals Academy and proponent of the need for an MBA-style course for principals is businessman Rick Haw, a qualified engineer and MBA graduate of the GSB. Rick attributes much of his success in business to the knowledge and skills he developed as a result of his MBA studies in the 1970s and is convinced that a similar course, geared to the specific needs of principals and senior departmental officials, has the potential to dramatically improve their ability to execute their responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

The mentoring and coaching of inexperienced and/or newly appointed principals has become increasingly acknowledged as a vital part of their professional development in many parts of the world with the mentor/coach serving a role as sounding board and critical friend when the mentee is faced with challenging circumstances and difficult decisions.

The course that the GSB has developed falls within the framework of their Postgraduate Diploma in Management Practice (PGDMP) and those who successfully complete the course and meet all the statutory requirements will graduate with a PGDMP qualification, the equivalent of an honours-level degree. The taught component of the course takes place at the business school during four residential contact sessions – 22 days in total – and the event that we described in the first paragraph took place during the fourth day of the second of these residential periods. The residential components of this initial course were scheduled for December 2012 (seven days), April 2013 (six days), June/July 2013 (seven days) and September 2013 (two days) and all fall within the school holidays.

The 21 principals and 1 deputy-principal on this first intake have found it tough going and most have struggled with the long days of demanding lectures, the intensive interactive workshops and the need to work deep into the night to complete group tasks in preparation for presentations on the following day. This, together with their loss of holiday time, has meant that they have had little time to relax between terms. Yet despite these demands, almost all of those to whom we spoke expressed the view that their participation in the course had changed the way in which they regarded their work and executed their responsibilities.

The acquisition of a PGDMP is, however, just one of the components of the Principals Academy's executive leadership programme, which also includes an element of intensive mentoring and coaching for up to three years by an experienced principal with a successful track record. Heading this mentoring and

Bruce Probyn, head of mentoring and coaching at the Principals Academy, in discussion with the team from Lantana Primary School. Principal Vanessa Berry is on the right in the yellow top.

coaching programme is Bruce Probyn, the recently retired head of Herschel Girls School, with wide experience as a school principal in both public and independent schools. Sharing the mentoring and coaching responsibilities of this intake with Bruce Probyn is Alan Clarke, the former head of Westerford High School. Bruce and Alan shared a combined experience of more than 40 years as heads of schools. The number of mentors/coaches will need to be increased in the future as the number of principals on the programme grows and the Principals Academy wants to increase its pool of mentors/coaches to accommodate these increasing numbers in the years ahead.

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The mentoring and coaching of inexperienced and/or newly appointed principals has become increasingly acknowledged as a vital part of their professional development in many parts of the world with the mentor/coach serving a role as sounding board and critical friend when the mentee is faced with challenging circumstances and difficult decisions. The mentoring/coaching provided by the Principals Academy provides each principal with a weekly or fortnightly visit, usually of between one and two hours, with the agenda largely set by the mentee principal. A relationship of trust is a vital element of the mentoring process and the development of an open and trusting relationship may take time to develop. It is also possible that the personality types of mentor and mentee may for some reason not be compatible and where this happens it is important for both parties to acknowledge it. The possibility of this happening has been foreseen by Principals Academy which, should the need arise, is committed to providing an alternative mentor/coach to the principal.

A programme of this kind involves considerable costs and with this in mind the Principals Academy has been established as a Section 18 (a) Trust, which means that donations to the trust may be tax exempt, so that it can solicit and disburse funds to cover the costs of the work that it does. The projected costs of the programme including the PGDMP course fee and accommodation for candidates with full board at the GSB's Waterfront campus during the residential

Marcia Woolward (second from right), principal of Grassy Park High School, in cheerful discussion with members of her SMT.

components of the course, together with the mentoring, works out at approximately R60 000 per candidate per year. Businessman Rick Haw has contributed a significant sum of his own money towards these costs and has also managed to persuade a number of his colleagues from the corporate sector to contribute additional funding. Major funding support has also come from CAPITEC bank, which has agreed to sponsor a significant portion of the candidates' GSB course fee. The proposal is for an initial three-year

Vasintha Moonsamy (centre in grey pullover), principal of Pelican Park Primary, taking advice from members of her team.

Mandy Lebides from the Graduate School of Business facilitated the strategic planning session.

Rick Haw, founder of the Principals Academy, introduces Leanne Moses, representative of CAPITEC bank, to a group of principals from the first intake at a social event earlier this year. CAPITEC bank has agreed to sponsor some of the costs of the PGDMP qualification from UCT's Graduate School of Business.

pilot with an intake of 20 candidates each year but businessman Haw is a man with big ideas and his longer term vision is to grow the programme to include not only principals but also deputy-principals and district officials, including district directors, all of whom he believes could benefit from both the PGDMP qualification and the mentoring that the Principals Academy could provide. There is also talk of forming partnerships with a network of other organisations operating in the education sector, which could be called on to support schools in dealing with specific problems that may be outside of the Principals Academy area of focus. Examples of these could include subject-specific support in subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Science and Accounting; literacy and language skills development, particularly in primary schools; Early Childhood Development (ECD); and assistance with career guidance and post-school qualifications and training opportunities in both the FET and tertiary sectors.

But to get back to the late afternoon of Friday 5 April and the reason that it stood out for this observer. Most of the talk that one hears when public schooling is discussed in this country are stories of doom and gloom, of lazy and recalcitrant teachers, of incompetent principals and of obstructionist teacher unions. The

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60 or so teachers and principals who were present on that Friday afternoon exposed the dishonesty of these kinds of unfair generalisations. These individuals were there because they wanted to be there, they were there to support their principals and most importantly they were there because they wanted to do the best for the children who attend their schools. Theirs are not schools situated in the leafy middle-class suburbs of Cape Town. The majority of the schools represented serve Cape Town's poorer communities, including places like Phillipi, Khayelitsha, Grassy Park and Mitchell's Plain. Two of the teachers drove all the way from Mossel Bay to support their principal who is head of a primary school in Mossel Bay's Kwanonqaba township.

Businessman Rick Haw, UCT's Graduate School of Business and CAPITEC bank need to be commended for their vision and commitment to what we believe is one of the most exciting and potentially game-changing innovations to emerge from the schooling sector in the past few years. We are convinced that it has the potential to deliver on its promise and, that with the right support can have a significant impact on schooling in the Western Cape and perhaps even across the country. ■

New Leaders Foundation: Shifting our education leaders from compliance to support

Eugene Daniels

The New Leaders Foundation has introduced a system of coaching using immersed consultants to support district managers.

Two subject advisers visited my classroom in the early 1980s. Both of them were consummate professionals, but approached their jobs very differently. The first was support driven; whilst the second was compliance driven. I gave my very best to the first adviser. He listened to me, helped me to diagnose what was happening with regards to learning and teaching in my classroom, stretched me to strive for excellence and acknowledged my strengths. The second adviser completed his checklist, pointed out the gaps in my performance and told me he would be back to check on me. I struggled with this second approach because I felt pressured, unsupported and demotivated. Schools across our country largely feel unsupported by districts and we therefore need to do things differently.

New Leaders Foundation (NLF) was founded by two visionary individuals, Adelaide Fyffe and Giles Gillette. They moved beyond the norm and established a dynamic start-up not-for-profit company working in the education sector. NLF is committed to strengthening the capacity of district offices and supporting district managers in delivering quality service support to schools. This involves partnering with the department and coaching the system in order to leverage meaningful change in schools. They embarked on a journey of transforming the bureaucracy so that district officials would shift from compliance mode to support mode.

Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) has committed itself to implementing a district model

Schools across our country largely feel unsupported by districts and we therefore need to do things differently.

'that shifts from being mainly regulatory in nature to one that focuses on supporting schools to improve learner performance'. MEC Barbara Creecy has championed this by challenging officials to spend their time differently, where they provide 80% support to schools and give only 20% of their time to compliance-driven issues. HOD Boy Ngobeni strengthened this challenge by asking officials to shelf activities that distract schools from their core purpose, which is good teaching and learning.

To facilitate this shift from compliance to support, NLF developed a Formal Service Support Skills training for specific district managers (directors and all middle managers, which includes all IDSOs and curriculum coordinators). This enables officials to integrate the delivery of the Curriculum Management Model (CMM) into their job functions at all levels, to analyse the functioning of the CMM process in a school and to collaborate with the relevant school managers in problem solving the school's curriculum delivery challenges.

NLF took this support to another level by providing each district with an immersed consultant (IC), to ensure that district officials were given the necessary backing to implement what they had learnt. These five ICs are highly skilled in organisational development, where they facilitate and support action learning and implementation of programmes. They coach, facilitate and drive behaviour change in district officials, school managers and teachers. Their impact has already been significant in that district officials

and school managers are more focused and able to manage curriculum delivery effectively. This has translated into improvements in teacher attendance, syllabus coverage, educator coverage of school-based assessments (SBAs) and better results in common tests and the Annual National Assessments (ANAs).

This groundbreaking training and support from the gifted ICs (Adele, Anthony, Amanda, Bongani and Nezizwe) has meant that district officials are able to:

- Support the relevant school managers and their teams in setting clear curriculum delivery goals and objectives to achieve effective curriculum delivery
- Support individual school managers and their teams in designing realistic curriculum delivery action plans to achieve goals and objectives
- Hold individual school and district managers and their teams accountable to delivering on these set curriculum delivery action plans
- Have difficult conversations with underperforming schools and district managers and their teams outlining clearly defined actions for curriculum delivery remediation
- Initiate and follow through on curriculum delivery remedial action
- Coach and mentor individual school and district managers and their teams to deliver quality curriculum management
- Give and receive constructive feedback on effective curriculum delivery
- Recognise and appreciate curriculum delivery excellence and success.

These ICs are able to coach and give meaningful support to officials. The emphasis on supporting officials in action as opposed to only in preparation and reflection has been groundbreaking and produced remarkable results. Sadly, government has not caught up with the business world in terms of coaching. Bob Nardelli argues that, 'I absolutely believe that people, unless coached, never reach their full maximum capabilities.' We all understand that our soccer, cricket or rugby teams must have a coach to excel, but we fail to realise that this is especially applicable to government, our education department and our schools. Billions of rands have been invested in education but we have neglected to maximise the talents and skills of our teams of officials, principals and educators through coaching.

NLF is committed to strengthening the capacity of district offices and supporting district managers in delivering quality service support to schools. This involves partnering with the department and coaching the system in order to leverage meaningful change in schools.

Many of the district officials have been empowered to focus on coaching and supporting their own team members. 'Coaching Circles', which provide additional skills training and on-the-job learning, have provided a powerful additional forum for skills development and the sharing of best practice.

The following quotes from schools, district officials and NLF immersed consultants illustrate the impact of the programme:

- 'Schools have become more open to district support even with compliance issues because of a changed approach from the districts.'
- 'Some principals are able to focus more strongly on their role, as their systems are now in better working condition.'
- 'The relationships between my curriculum facilitators and their teachers have improved as they constantly remind one another of the Parent-Adult-Child theory.'
- 'I cannot judge if it is due to the new approach to training, or the district behaving differently, but the interest from our educators in attending development programmes is overwhelming.'
- 'Conflict handling has improved in schools as a result of the GROW coaching model I shared with my principal.'
- 'Some of my principals are forming Communities of Practice.'
- 'Pockets of principals have new hope for their profession; hope has been restored in them as human beings.'
- 'Pockets of schools are showing turnaround in cleanliness and neatness of grounds.'

Part of the training given to district officials includes initiating and supporting Communities of Practice. These Communities of Practice allow schools to share effective practices and support one another in a more sustainable manner. Michael Fullan argues that 'professional learning communities are in fact about establishing new collaborative cultures. Collaborative cultures, ones that focus on building the capacity for continuous improvement, are meant to be a new way of working and learning'.

Our partnership with departments has largely been successful because Ms Alison Bengtson-Mali, the Chief Director for five districts in the Ekudibeng Cluster, is the champion of the NLF integrated District Support Programme. Her exceptional leadership

together with her talented team has been pivotal to the success of the programme to date. The programme commenced in February 2012 and is providing the cluster with integrated, practical and on-site support to the existing change process that is being implemented in the cluster.

The impact on Ekurhuleni North, Gauteng East, Ekurhuleni South, Sedibeng East and Sedibeng West has been significant. These five districts have shifted operationally in that they are servicing and supporting schools as consultants. Instead of visiting schools with checklists, they are listening to the needs of principals and educators and supporting them more appropriately. This partnership with the department is unique and has been strengthened by focussing on curriculum management in the system and ensuring that all other business processes dovetail to support this key business process. The alignment of the NLF intervention to the GDE change processes already happening within the five districts has been imperative. The NLF programme complements and supports the current GDE change management process at the district level and at the provincial head office.

NLF has come to understand that an education system doesn't change quickly. We need time, patience,

The impact of the immersed consultants has already been significant in that district officials and school managers are more focused and able to manage curriculum delivery effectively.

resilience and ongoing support. This has taken the form of scripting support conversations. Our officials, principals and educators sometimes don't understand what 80% support looks like, so a guiding script with a set of questions helps during these support conversations between districts and schools. One of the key success factors has been the building of quality relationships within each of the districts and getting successful buy-in from district officials. This takes time and effort. It involves quarterly re-contacting with the chief director and all district managers and listening to their needs, ideas and suggestions. This has allowed NLF to evolve the intervention and provide relevant support to the system.

The NLF model and partnership with GDE has been warmly welcomed by the DBE and discussions are underway to roll out this support model to many of the districts countrywide. This bodes well for schools that urgently need meaningful support from districts, which is only possible if district officials are trained, supported and coached to shift from compliance to support mode. This will undoubtedly impact positively on learner outcomes across our country and enable them to have a future very different from our past. ◼

Eugene Daniels was a District Director in the Western Cape for 11 years and is now part of the NLF team. He is an immersed consultant to the Chief Director for Districts in the Gauteng Education Department.

The photograph shows Eugene Daniels (left) in discussion with Jonny Gevisser. Both men are registered for an MEd in School Change at the University of Free State where this photograph was taken. There is more information about this innovative qualification on page 6 of this issue.

The SCARF model

Erich Cloete

The latest research shows us how school leaders can use the brain to manage and improve performance.

Before we discuss the SCARF model and its application for school leaders, it is necessary to briefly explore the new emerging field of 'neuroleadership', a term coined in 2006 by David Rock. Neuroleadership is an emerging field of study focused on bringing neuroscientific knowledge into the areas of leadership development, management training, change management, education, consulting and coaching. It explores the processes within the brain that underlie or influence human decisions, behaviour and interactions in the workplace and beyond. Researchers focus on how individuals in a social environment make decisions and solve problems, regulate their emotions, collaborate with and influence others as well as how leaders facilitate change. In simple terms, neuroleadership takes the latest information on how the brain works, which is gained through scientific research, and applies those principles and information to leadership. It must be seen as a subfield of leadership with the sole purpose of improving leadership practices.

The study of the brain has made one thing clear: the human brain is a social organ. Although a job is often regarded as a purely economic transaction in which people exchange their labour for financial compensation, the brain experiences the workplace first and foremost as a social system. Research has shown that when people feel rejected or excluded at work this provokes the same sort of reaction in the brain as might be caused by physical pain. This means that when people feel betrayed or unrecognised

The ability to address the social brain in the service of optimal performance will be a distinguishing leadership capability in the years to come.

at work or when they are reprimanded or given an assignment that seems unworthy, their experience of it is as powerful as a blow to the head. Leaders who understand this dynamic can more effectively engage their employees' talents, support their teams and create an environment that fosters productive change and performance. Indeed the ability to address the social brain in the service of optimal performance will be a distinguishing leadership capability in the years to come.

Critical research on the social brain starts with the threat and reward response, a neurological mechanism that governs a great deal of human behaviour. A threat is usually associated with anxiety, fear and sadness, while a reward response indicates feelings of curiosity, happiness and contentment. Whenever we encounter something unexpected such as a manager calling us to his office, a meeting we have to attend to at short notice, a departmental official arriving unannounced at the school, a new colleague moving into the classroom next door or a shadow seen from the corner of our eye, the limbic system of the brain is aroused. If the perception is of danger then the response becomes a pure threat response, also known as the fight or flight response, the avoid response and, in extreme form, the amygadala hijack, named for a part of the limbic system that can be aroused rapidly and which creates a lot of emotional charge in our brains.

The threat response is both mentally taxing and deadly to the productivity of a person or organisation because it uses up oxygen and glucose from the blood that are

normally used by parts of the brain responsible for processing new information and ideas. This impairs analytical thinking, creative insight and problem solving. In other words, just when people most need their sophisticated mental capabilities, the brain's internal resources (in the the prefontal cortex) are taken away from them. This is often visible when leaders trigger a threat response in their employees. Their brains become much less efficent.

It is also true that when leaders make people feel good about themselves, communicate their expectations clearly, give employees latitude to make decisions, support people's efforts to build good relationships and treat the whole organisation fairly it prompts a reward or approach response. Employees become more effective and commited, more open to ideas, more productive and more creative. Research suggests that the following five qualities, expressed by means of the acronym SCARF, are used to minimise the threat (avoid) response and enable the reward (toward) response:

- Status
- Certainty
- Autonomy
- Relatedness
- Fairness.

The SCARF model enables people to be more adaptive by providing a clear, easy-to-remember language.
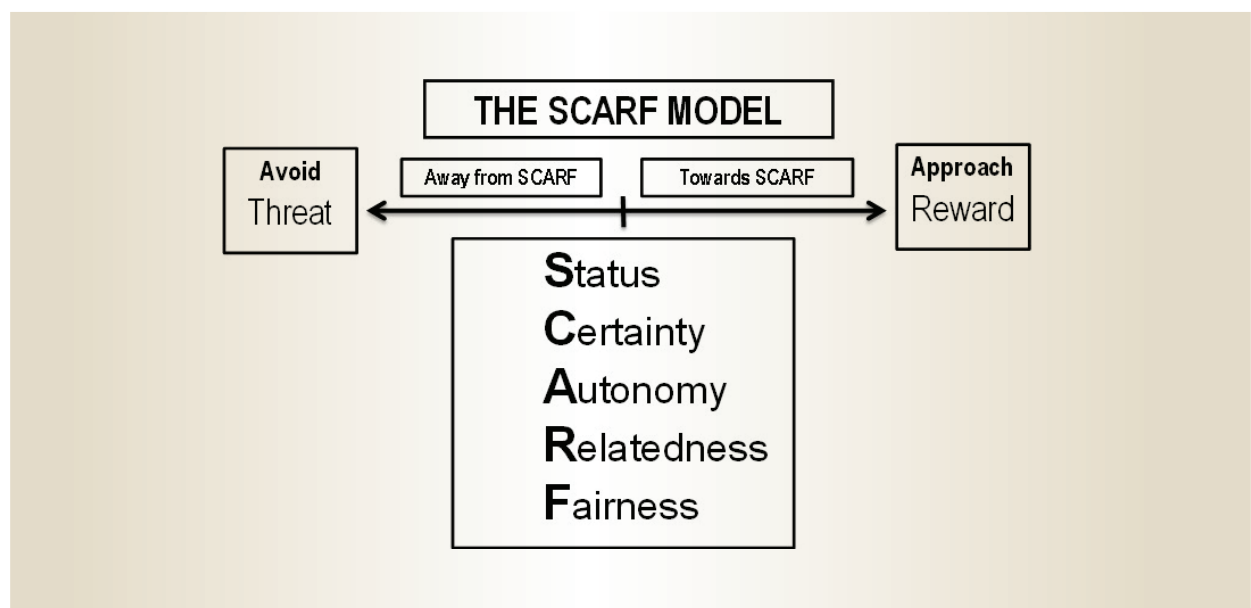
Moving towards these qualities will create a reward response, while moving away from them will create a threat response.

SCARF defines the five domains of experience that activate strong threats and rewards in the brain, thus influencing a wide range of human behaviours.

The battle for status
Your brain is constantly monitoring your status in any group. It literally assigns you a number in that group. You are always screening your relative importance and seniority to others (such as peers, co-workers, friends, line managers), as anyone who has lived in a modest house in a high-priced neighborhood would know. This is why winning an argument, or being first off the mark at the green light or even winning a board game feels so good, even if nothing is at stake. You have a perception of increased status and when you feel that you're going up in status you start to feel reward or toward emotions. In contrast, when you are left out or overlooked by your manager you will experience a threat response. If you are accused of being ineffective at a task you will perceive yourself as being 'less than others', which will trigger a threat response. This is why the words 'Can I offer you some feedback?' puts people on the defensive because they perceive the person offering the advice as

THE SCARF MODEL

Avoid
Threat

Away from SCARF   Towards SCARF

Approach
Reward

Status
Certainty
Autonomy
Relatedness
Fairness

claiming superiority. It is the same situation as hearing footsteps in the dark. You secrete cortisol, which is a stress hormone. This is why it is good to have people give themselves feedback within a safe, structured set-up. School leaders must take note that promotion is not the only way to improve teachers' status.

There are less costly ways to improve staff members' perception of status:
- Give praise and let people feel good about themselves – remember people spend a lot of time protecting and building their status.
- Encourage your staff members to master a new skill as this enhances status and gives recognition to the newly acquired skill.
- Value and respect your staff equally.
- Don't attack someone's status publicly (in front of others) or unfairly – research has shown that social pain comes back when you think about it again whereas physical pain doesn't.
- Encourage staff to play against themselves – because we perceive ourselves with the same circuits as when perceiving others, we can literally trick our brains into a status reward by playing against ourselves. It is also true that when staff members are trying to be of higher status than others there will be a decrease in relatedness.

A craving for certainty
Certainty has to do with being able to predict the future with accuracy. Any time we experience too much uncertainty we get a limbic system response. In other words, we experience more of the away emotions. It is like a flashing icon on the desktop of your computer and it will not stop until the uncertainty is resolved. Too much uncertainty is like an inability to create a complete map of a situation and with parts missing you are not as comfortable as when the map is complete. This is why people crave certainty.

Look at the following ways in which school leaders can create a perception of certainty in their schools:
- Share information freely and try to be as transparent as possible. If a new staff member

doesn't know where the coffee or the copier machine is, this will create uncertainty. This is why induction is so important.
- Let information flow freely through the school.
- Break a complex project down into small steps.
- In learning situations, tell people what you are going to tell them, tell them the information, and then tell them what you told them, all of which increases certainty.
- Give people more choices, as this also reduces stress and creates certainty.

The autonomy factor
Autonomy is about choices and control. When you sense you have choices, something that used to feel stressful feels more manageable. For example, when a child won't go to bed you might reduce the resistance by giving a choice: the child can choose whether to read a book or be told a story. This choice can have a big impact. It is the perception of choice that matters to the brain. School leaders must find ways for their staff to make their own choices as it shifts people's emotions from an away response more to a toward response. Create a broad framework from within which people can choose. For example, inform them about the timeframe of class visits but let them choose the specific date. Employees with a greater sense of autonomy report greater job satisfaction.

Further ways to improve autonomy in the school include:
- Try not to micro-manage your staff, as this creates a threat response.
- Provide them with a sense of control over events – inescapable or uncontrollable stress is very destructive.
- Grant more autonomy as a reward for good performance.
- Teach your staff to be responsible for their mental state instead of a victim of circumstances.
- Much has been made of taking responsibility in life and at work. Generating a definite toward response by making an active choice increases your ability to respond to incoming data in adaptive ways.

The language of SCARF can help us notice a threat occurring while it is happening in real time and help to regulate our emotions.

Relatedness – turn enemies into friends

In the absence of safe social interactions the body generates a threat response. This is why meeting someone unknown creates a threat response, as well as why one feels better at a new school knowing one or two educators, rather than none. Relatedness also involves deciding whether others are 'in' or 'out' of a social group, whether someone is friend or foe. People naturally like to form tribes when they experience a sense of belonging as they feel greater trust and empathy toward people who are similar to themselves. That is why there is usually a natural distinction between educators and school management teams.

Ways to improve relatedness at schools include:
- Increase safe connections between staff members.
- Set up a clearly defined buddy, mentoring or coaching programme.
- Bear in mind that smaller groups appear to be safer than larger groups.
- Increase relatedness by getting two or more groups or teams to work together, thereby fostering more social contact between them.
- Teach your staff that anytime they meet someone new, they should make an effort to connect on a human level as early as possible to reduce the threat response.

Fairness can be more rewarding than money

The perception that an event has been unfair generates a strong response in the limbic system, undermining trust. The cognitive need for fairness is so strong that some people are willing to fight and die for causes they believe are just, or commit themselves wholeheartedly to an organisation they recognise as fair. This is why so many people do voluntary work, as they feel it decreases the unfairness in the world. When we feel we have been treated fairly we experience toward emotions and are more committed and motivated. On the other hand, if we perceive somebody as unfair, we do not have empathy with them and this closes down communication. Within a school, unfairness creates an environment in which trust and collaboration cannot flourish. Fairness makes you open to new ideas and more willing to connect with people, which improves relatedness.

How to improve fairness in your school:
- Be transparent
- Have the same set of rules for everyone
- Share information and increase involvement so that people understand why some decisions are made
- Establish clear ground rules and expectations
- Don't let unfairness go unpunished.

Putting on the SCARF

School leaders should realise that every action they take, every decision they make, either supports or undermines the perceived level of status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness and fairness. This is why leading is so difficult. Every word and every glance is loaded with social meaning. Sentences and gestures are noticed and interpreted, magnified with meanings you may never have intended. The SCARF model provides a means of bringing conscious awareness to all these potentially fraught interactions. Start by reducing the threats inherent in your school and in your management team's behaviour and create a place where people are treated fairly, drawn together to solve problems, make choices, have certainty and perceive high levels of status. ∎

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Online text

With increasing use being made of laptops, smart phones and tablet computers as part of the teaching and learning process it is worth examining how best to present text on these devices.

In an article published in the online publication *Campus Technology*,[1] Scott Fredrickson, Professor of Instructional Technology, and Patricia Hoehner, Associate Professor of Educational Administration, both from the University of Nebraska at Kearney, identify eight factors that authors and publishers should consider when designing their text-based presentations. They also make the point that reading text from a computer monitor or similar device is not the same as reading paper-based text and cite studies that show that students use different strategies for screen-based and paper-based texts. Students normally scan screen-based texts while they generally read paper-based texts more slowly and with greater care. To make screen-based text more readable and to ensure that students are more thorough in their reading of the text they make the following recommendations.

Students normally scan screen-based texts while they generally read paper-based texts more slowly and with greater care.

More white space with less cluttered text
White space refers to those parts of a page or screen that are not covered by text – most of this space is found in the margins of the page, but it also includes the space between paragraphs and around diagrams and other illustrations. Evidence from research shows that students read more slowly and with improved understanding when the amount of white space relative to text is increased. Students were also shown to have preferred text where the lines of text are more widely separated. The white space between lines of text is called 'leading'. Increasing the 'leading' increases the width of this space – the distance between lines of text – thus making the text easier to read.

Less text on each page
Paper is an important cost factor in paper-based publishing and for this reason there is pressure to increase the amount of text per page in paper publications such as books and magazines, and even worksheets. This cost need not be a consideration in screen-based publishing, which therefore has the luxury of being able to limit the amount of text on each page without having to consider the influence this has on cost. Decisions about the amount of text to include on any screen page should therefore be based on factors such as readability and the idea or concept that the author or teacher is trying to convey. In general, less is better both in terms of words or lines of text and in terms of concepts and ideas.

Left justified is better
In books and magazines the text is often typeset 'fully justified', which means that the words at the left and right edges of each line of text are aligned. This creates a neat appearance but readability studies show that text that is left justified – words at the start or left edge of each line are aligned while those on the right are not – is more easily read with better comprehension than text that is fully justified. Readability should trump 'pretty' or 'neat' every time where the purpose of the text is educational.

Simpler typefaces and fewer fonts are better
Simpler sans-serif style typefaces are more legible on screen and are preferable to serif-style typefaces. Serifs are the small lines at the ends of the strokes of some kinds of typeface. A typeface is a style of text

and each typeface includes a range of font sizes and features. Some examples are illustrated in the box below. The authors of the article go on to recommend a font size of 12 points for the body of the text, that upper case should only be used at the start of sentences and for short headings and labels and that underlining and the use of bold and italic fonts should be avoided. They also make the point that people tend to respond to colour at an emotional level and because of this colour should be used with care but it does have it place.

Placement matters

Research shows that students look at very specific areas of the screen when they first enter a site, with

Decisions about the amount of text to include on any screen page should be based on factors such as readability and the idea or concept that the author or teacher is trying to convey.

the top left quarter of the screen attracting the most attention. Their attention then moves to the area immediately below and to the right of the top left quarter, then to the lower edge and finally to the extreme right-hand edge of the screen. Important information should therefore be placed in the top left-hand area of the screen. The bottom right-hand corner of the screen can be used for images because although this is the area that is most likely to be skipped if viewers are in a hurry, the presence of an image does increase the likelihood of viewers turning their attention to this area. The use of colour is also seen as a good way of attracting attention to a specific item or area of the screen.

Franklin Gothic Book is a sans serif typeface.
This is Franklin Gothic Book in 12 point font.
This is Franklin Gothic Book in 14 point font.
This is Franklin Gothic Book Heavy in 14 point font.
Kozuko Mincho Pro EL is a serif typeface.
This is Kozuko Mincho Pro EL in 14 point font.
This is Kozuko Mincho Pro B in 14 point font.
This is Adobe Caslon Pro in 12 point font.
Verdana typeface is a considered by some to be a good font for screen-based text as is Georgia as both were designed specifically for use on screen.

Computers, word processing and design software make it possible for anyone with even the most basic level of computer skills to access an enormous range of design and decorative tools that can be used to enhance the visual appeal of documents they may choose to produce, whether these are paper-based or screen-based. The challenge for schools and teachers, however, is to use these tools to create documents that are properly designed to suit their purpose, that challenge learners to think deeply about matters that

are relevant to them and to help them to master the content and skills that they need to succeed at school and in life. ∎

References
1   '8 Considerations for Online Text', available at http://campustechnology.com/Articles/2013/03/13/8-Considerations-for-Online-Text.aspx Accessed on 14 March 2013

Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding

The Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding were published in Government Notice No. 166 of 8 March 2013.

The National Norms and Standards for School funding provides very clear guidelines on the processes that should be followed in determining the annual per-learner funding allocation to schools each year based on the quintile and no-fee status of the school. The first step in this process is an annual review of the National Poverty Distribution Table that is made by the minister, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, and which is based on the Government's Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). This table provided provincial governments with funding guidelines for the per-learner allocation for each poverty quintile of school and also established the no-fee threshold.

The table of targets for the years 2007 to 2009, which was included in the original norms and standards legislation published in Government Notice 869, is set out on the following page.

In terms of Section 110 of this Schedule, 'The Minister, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, will release targets relating to years beyond 2009, and may change previously released targets, depending on circumstances.' The Minister would publish in the *Government Gazette*, on an annual basis, the new column B targets for the new outer year. For instance, in 2007 the Minister would publish the column B targets applicable to 2010. This is to promote predictability and better medium-term planning in the schooling system.

Section 119 of the Schedule included the following: 'PEDs must process enrolment data, school poverty data (as described in paragraph 101), provincial budget data and the school allocation data released by the Minister in order to determine provisional school allocations for each school for the next three years. The provisional school allocations for the next three years must be communicated to schools by 30 September of each year. This communication must include information on which national quintile individual schools find themselves in, what the national per-learner target amount applicable to that national quintile is, what the rationale is for the national targets published by the Minister, what the national no-fee threshold is and what calculations were performed by the PED to arrive at each school's school allocation amount.'

6.6% Cost of living increase for teachers

In Government Notice No. 237 of 28 March 2013, Minister of Education Angie Motshekga determined that the annual cost of living adjustment for educators employed in terms of the Employment of Educators Act, with effect from April 2013, would be 6.6%. The adjustment is made in terms of Resolution 1 of 2012 as agreed on in the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council.

The amended salary scales, which incorporate this adjustment, are attached as an Annexure to the notice, which can be downloaded from the DBE website. Go to http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zpG5n BFXGfw%3d&tabid=188&mid=2392, to download the document.

School quintile	2007	2008	2009
Quintile 1	R738	R775	R807
Quintile 2	R677	R711	R740
Quintile 3	R544	R581	R605
Quintile 4	R369	R388	R404
Quintile 5	R492	R517	R538
No-fee threshold	R554	R581	R605

The importance of proper medium-term financial planning and the need to keep schools informed is further emphasised in Section 21, which included the following: 'Due to the fact that the school year and the Government financial year are different, the final school allocation for any school year can only be determined during the course of the school year in question, after the Provincial Legislature has approved the budget for the PED. The final school allocation for the current year must be communicated to schools during the two weeks following the finalisation of the PED budget by the Provincial Legislature. In order to facilitate proper planning, PEDs should strive to ensure that the final school allocation communicated to schools in terms of this paragraph deviates as little as possible from the provisional figures provided on 30 September of the previous year.'

Of course, all of the above is based on the assumption that the Minister of Education will provide the Table of Targets in good time because none of the calculations that the Provincial Education Departments need to make and that they then need to communicate to their schools can be performed if they do not have the necessary data. So why was it that the Minister and her department only managed to publish the data for the years 2013 to 2015 on 8 March 2013 and with a last sentence that reads, 'The effective date for implementation of this amendment will be 1 January 2013'?

The updated National Targets Table from this Government Notice (Notice 166 of 8 March 2013) together with the National Poverty Distribution Table are given alongside.
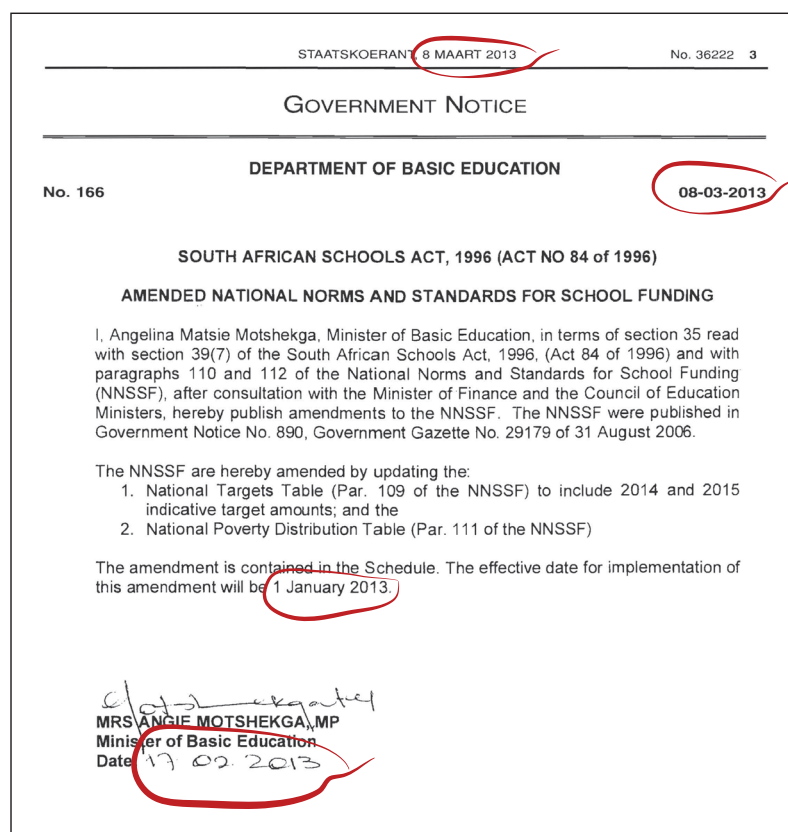
Quintile	2013	2014	2015
Quintile 1	R1 010	R1 059	R1 108
Quintile 2	R1 010	R1 059	R1 108
Quintile 3	R1 010	R1 059	R1 108
Quintile 4	R505	R530	R554
Quintile 5	R174	R183	R191
No-fee threshold	R926	R1 059	R1 108
Small schools: National fixed amount	R23 373	R24 519	R25 646

National Poverty Distribution Table					
	Quintiles				
Province	1	2	3	4	5
Eastern Cape	27.3	24.7	19.6	17.0	11.4
Free State	20.5	20.9	22.4	20.8	15.4
Gauteng	14.1	14.7	17.9	21.9	31.4
KwaZulu-Natal	22.1	23.2	20.2	18.7	15.8
Limpopo	28.2	24.6	24.2	14.9	8.0
Mpumalanga	23.1	24.1	21.5	17.7	13.5
Northern Cape	21.5	19.3	20.7	21.4	17.1
North West	25.6	22.3	20.8	17.6	13.7
Western Cape	8.6	13.3	18.4	28.0	31.7
South Africa	20	20	20	20	20

It is worth noting that the funding allocation to schools in quintiles 1, 2 and 3, all of which are no-fee schools, is exactly the same, which suggests that there is a move to abandon the quintile system and to replace it with a funding model that classifies schools as either no-fee schools or fee-paying schools. This notion is reinforced by the last paragraph of the Notice, which permits Provincial Education Departments to 'offer' Quintile 4 and Quintile 5 schools no-fee status at a threshold level of R960 but goes on to state that '[i]n declaring these fee-charging schools as no-fee schools, the PED needs to ensure that these schools are informed that they will be declared no-fee schools from 1 January 2013'. It's a pity the notice to this effect was published only in March 2013! ∎

New data on the 2012 NSC Examination results

Although neither the Department of Basic Education nor Umalusi publish detailed data on how marks in the National Senior Certificate examinations are distributed we have been fortunate to have been provided this data for some subjects courtesy of the University of Free State.

For some reason that we have been unable to fathom the Department of Basic Education no longer publishes data on how marks are distributed for individual subjects across the seven 'codes'. This, despite the fact that these 'codes' or 'levels of competence' or 'scales of achievement' as they have variously been called, have been promulgated in the DBE's own assessment policy documents, including all of the CAPS documents. For those readers who may not be familiar with these documents the seven 'achievement levels' are listed below together with their 'achievement description' and the mark range they represent.

Prior to 2011 we were able to access data on the mark distribution of candidates for each, or at least most, of the NSC subjects because this information was published either by the DBE as part of the report that they publish each year on the results of the previous year's NSC examinations or from a similar report published by Umalusi, the body responsible for quality-assuring the NSC examinations. However, the reports published by the DBE since 2010 provided data on the distribution of marks on only three levels, namely 0%–29%, 30%–39% and 40%–100%. This is entirely unsatisfactory because it makes it impossible to determine whether the number of candidates in

Achievement level	Achievement description	Marks %
7	Outstanding achievement	80–100
6	Meritorious achievement	70–79
5	Substantial achievement	60–69
4	Adequate achievement	50–59
3	Moderate achievement	40–49
2	Elementary achievement	30–39
1	Not achieved	0–29

the upper achievement levels, particularly those who score in excess of 70%, is increasing. The grouping together of marks in a band between 40% and 100% suggests a mindset that views marks in this band as being of approximate equivalent value. Information about the number and proportion of candidates who score in the upper bands, particularly those who score above 80%, is important because these candidates, particularly those who score high marks in the so-called gateway subjects of Mathematics, Physical Sciences and English (First Additional Language), are the individuals who are most likely to achieve success

in their tertiary studies and to go on to become the engineers, doctors, accountants and teachers that this country so desperately needs.

Fortunately, as we have mentioned, we have been provided with the mark distribution for some of the 2012 NSC subjects by a contact at the University of Free State and have used it to compile the following charts. Unfortunately, except in the case of Life Sciences, we do not have comparative data from previous years. We have, however, grouped the Physical Sciences and Mathematics together for

purposes of comparison, and, in the case of English and Afrikaans, have grouped the Home Language and First Additional Language together for the same reason. The fact that we were able to obtain the 2010 data for Life Sciences is fortuitous and thanks to whoever was responsible for drafting the Life Sciences subject report for the 2011 DBE publication 'National Senior Certificate Examination: National Report on Learner Performance in Selected Subjects'.[1]

Chart 1: Comparative achievement levels of Life Sciences candidates: 2010 and 2012 (Number of Candidates)

This chart illustrates the distribution of marks of Life Sciences candidates in 2010 and 2012. More candidates wrote the examination in 2010 (285 496 candidates) than in 2012 (278 350 candidates) yet there were significantly more failures in 2012 than in 2010 which suggests that candidates performed less well in 2012 than in 2010. This is confirmed in Chart 2, which presents the same data as percentages.
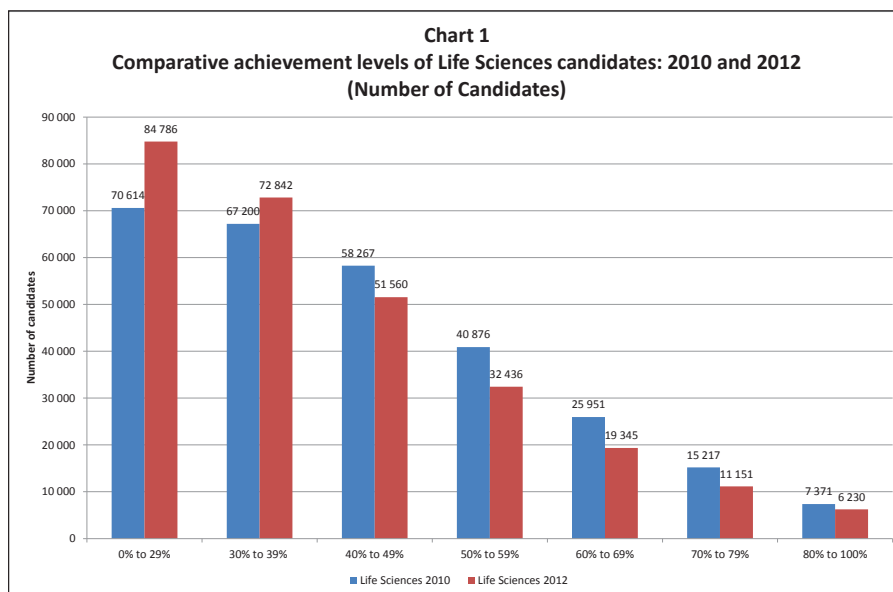
Chart 1
Comparative achievement levels of Life Sciences candidates: 2010 and 2012
(Number of Candidates)

Chart 2: Comparative achievement levels of Life Sciences candidates: 2010 and 2012 (Percentage of Candidates)

The chart shows the same data as Chart 1 but with the number of candidates in each category calculated as a percentage of the total number of candidates who wrote the Life Sciences examination. It is clear from this chart that despite the fact that fewer candidates wrote the Life Sciences examination in 2012, their performance was worse than the 2010 cohort.
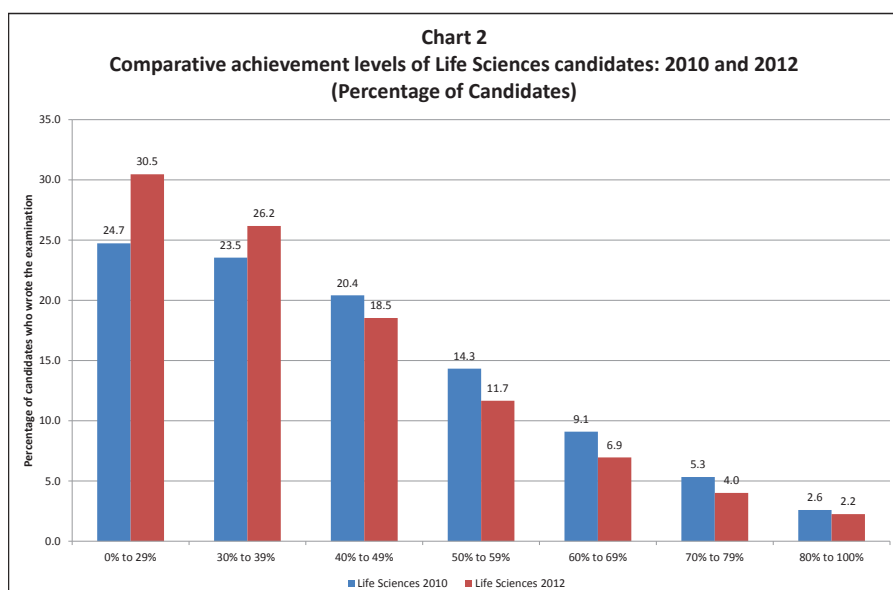
Chart 2
Comparative achievement levels of Life Sciences candidates: 2010 and 2012
(Percentage of Candidates)

Chart 3: Comparative achievement levels of Mathematics and Physical Sciences candidates (2012)

This chart illustrates the huge and unacceptable number of candidates who failed Mathematics, many of whom may well have passed Mathematical Literacy if they had been properly guided in their choice of subjects at the start of Grade 10. The majority of the 69 247 candidates who failed Physical Sciences were also likely to have been Mathematics candidates and would therefore have failed their NSC. Poor subject choices of this kind appear to contribute significantly to the persistently high NSC failure rates in many township and rural schools.

Chart 3
Comparative achievement levels of Mathematics and Physical Sciences candidates (2012)
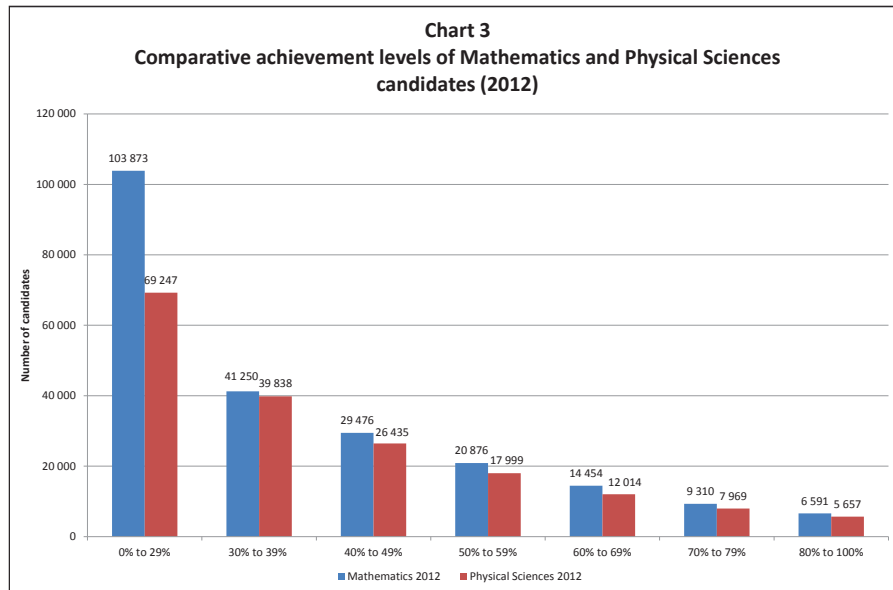
Chart 4: Comparative achievement levels for English (FAL) and English (HL) candidates.

With the exception of Life Orientation, English First Additional Language is the subject written by the largest number of candidates and although more than 9 000 candidates failed the subject this represents only about 0,1% of the 419 992 candidates who wrote the subject in 2012. It is also worth noting that the pattern of the mark distribution of the candidates in English (FAL) and English (HL) is fairly similar. The 6 047 candidates who scored 80% or more for English (FAL) represents 1,4% of the candidates who wrote the examination while the 3 006 who scored 80% or more represents 3,1% of the English (HL) candidates.
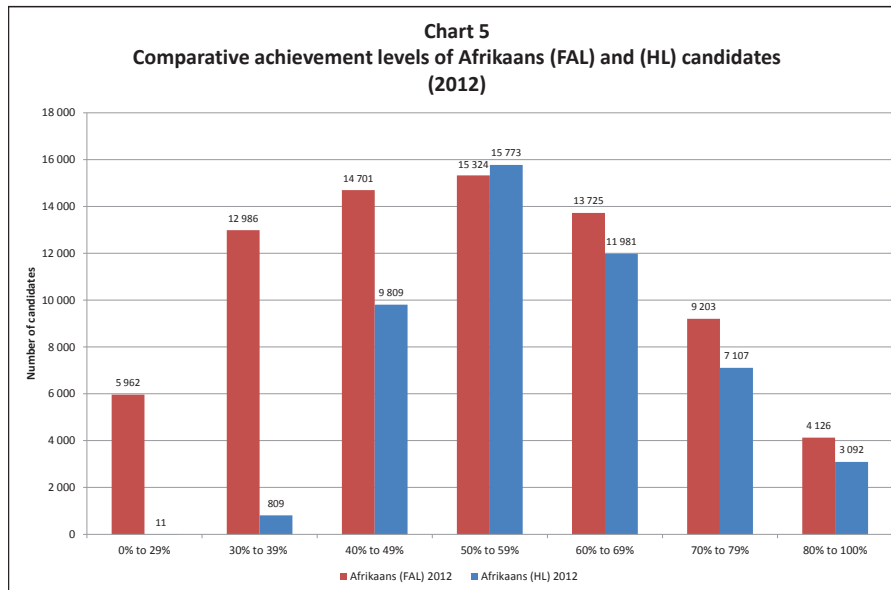

Chart 4
Comparative achievement levels for English (FAL) and (HL) candidates (2012)
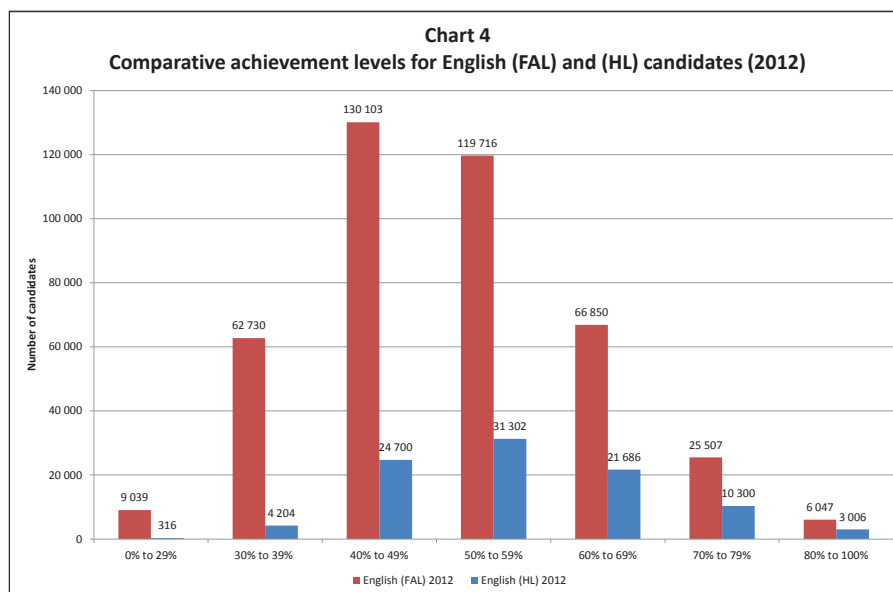
Chart 5: Comparative achievement levels of Afrikaans (FAL) and (HL) candidates

Although the 76 027 candidates who wrote Afrikaans First Additional Language is only about 20% of the number of candidates who wrote English First Additional Language, the figures suggest that Afrikaans (FAL) is still the preferred second language for a large number of candidates. The chart also suggests that candidates who choose Afrikaans at either the First Additional Language or Home Language level are able to achieve high marks, one assumes with hard work and good teaching, as the percentage of candidates scoring 80% and above is 5,4% and 6,4% for Afrikaans (FAL) and Afrikaans (HL) respectively.

Chart 5
Comparative achievement levels of Afrikaans (FAL) and (HL) candidates
(2012)

Mark range	Afrikaans (FAL) 2012	Afrikaans (HL) 2012
0% to 29%	5 962	11
30% to 39%	12 986	809
40% to 49%	14 701	9 809
50% to 59%	15 324	15 773
60% to 69%	13 725	11 981
70% to 79%	9 203	7 107
80% to 100%	4 126	3 092

As we have noted elsewhere in this article, we view the DBE's failure to provide comprehensive data on the distribution of marks for each NSC subject examined as rather odd as without it, it is not really possible to evaluate the level of performance of candidates in the NSC examinations or the quality of the passes that they may achieve. It is not as if the data is not available or even that it would be difficult to generate. Providing the data in a useable form on the DBE website would be a huge plus and would also provide clear evidence that the department that is responsible for public education is committed to transparency in its assessment policies and practices. ■

References

1   Department of Basic Education April 2011, 'National Senior Certificate Examination: National Report on Learner Performance in Selected Subjects'
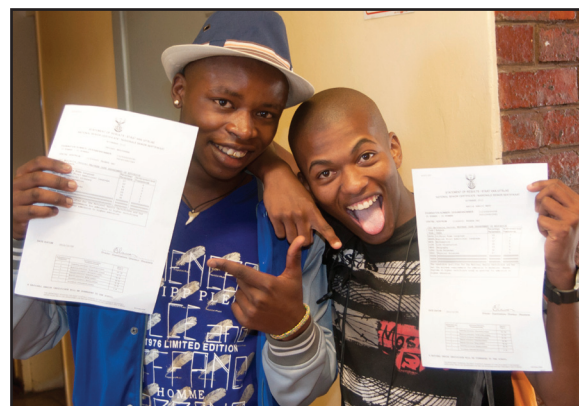
Learners at Fezeka Secondary School in Guguletu in the Western Cape celebrate passing their NSC exams.

DBE Budget Vote

On 7 May, the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, presented the Department of Basic Education's Annual Budget vote for the 2013/2014 financial year in the National Assembly. Below is our summary of the most important features of her presentation and of the 2013/2014 DBE budget.

Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga

The numbers
- Overall budget for DBE for 2013/2014 is R17.592 billion, an increase of R1.248 billion on that of the previous year. The budget allocation shared between the individual Provincial Education Departments is R173.454 billion and is expected to reach R199.624 billion by the 2015/2016 financial year.
- Umalusi is allocated R97.6 million for 2013/2014 increasing to 112.7 million in 2015/2016 to cover its expected mandate.
- Kha Ri Gude is allocated R549.37 million. This campaign, launched in 2008 to enable illiterate adults to become literate and numerate in one official language, had reached 2.9 million adults by the end of 2012. An additional R59.2 million was allocated for EPWP: Kha Ri Gude, as a contribution to job creation by recruiting and training volunteers. Kha Ri Gude volunteers comprise 44 monitors, 203 coordinators, 3703 supervisors, 38 407 volunteer educators, including 250 helpers for blind volunteers.
- R25 million is allocated in 2013/2014 to the National Initiative to improve learning outcomes, increasing to R40 million in 2015/2016.
- School participation is now nearly 100% in the 'basic compulsory band' (We assume this means

in the GET phase for children in the 7 to 15 year age group) .There were 80 000 fewer children out of school in 2011 than in 2009.
- The proportion of the population without any formal schooling has declined from 17.9% in 2001 to 8.6% in 2011 (based on data from Stats SA).
- More than 82% of public schools provide free education to the more than 8 million children who attend these no-fee schools.
- The conditional grant for the National School Nutrition Programme for 2013/2014 is R5.173 billion and this will increase to R5.704 billion in 2015/2016, while that for HIV and Aids Life Skill Education, is R213.5 million for 2013/2014.
- Infrastructure allocation for 2013/2014, which will be transferred to the Provincial Education Departments through the Education Infrastructure Grant, is R6.630 billion and this will increase to over R10 billion over the next three years (MTEF period). Expenditure of the Education Infrastructure Grant for the 2012/2013 financial year is at 96% of total. An additional R1.956 billion has been set aside in 2013/2014 for the Schools Backlog Grant.
- Access of children to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) has increased from 39.3% of Grade 1s in 2002 to 84.8% of Grade 1s in 2012.
- In the 2012/2013 school year there were 12 433 949 million children enrolled in over 25 000 schools. Inclusive education will be a priority for the 2013/2014 school year in an effort to create a more equitable education system.

Curriculum and assessment
- The NSC results have continued to improve:
  - Pass rate of 73.9% in 2012 with a targeted pass rate of 75% in 2014.
  - 136 047 candidates achieved Bachelor level passes in 2012. The target for 2014 is 175 000.
  - Number of passes in Mathematics increased from 104 033 in 2011 to 121 970 in 2012.
  - Number of Physical Sciences passes increased from 96 441 in 2011 to 121 970 in 2012.

- A Mathematics and Science task team has been established to help identify challenges in this area. Dinaledi schools were allocated R105.1 million in 2013/2014 budget.
- A detailed diagnostic analysis of NSC results has been undertaken and an intervention programme for 2013 will be based on this.
- Ministerial Committee on NSC will investigate standards and promotion requirements of the NSC, including the publication of the NSC results which has been raised as a 'passionate' concern by COSAS.
- South Africa improved 67 TIMSS' points in Mathematics between 2002 and 2011, which represents an increase on average of 7 points per year – the greatest rate of increase of any TIMSS participant. The Trends In Mathematics and Sciences Study is an international assessment system used to benchmark the Mathematics and Science results of participating nations.
- Low levels of reading and writing in the Foundation Phase are a concern which emerged from an audit of the Provincial Reading Programme commissioned in February 2013.[1]
- Senior Phase and Grade 12 CAPS orientation programmes will take place in all provinces during the course of this year.
- There will be an increased focus on Technical Secondary Schools in 2013/2014 and R220.9 million has been allocated in the budget in order to improve facilities and equipment of these schools.
- A sign language curriculum has been completed and is being piloted in two schools, one in the Western Cape and one in Gauteng.
- From 2014 a new policy will be introduced mandating the learning of an African Language in all schools.
- ANA tests were administered to 7 million learners in Grades 1 to 6 and Grade 9, in more than 20 000 schools. The performance in Literacy was reasonable, varying from 'Satisfactory' to 'Good', but the performance of learners in Mathematics was generally poor, particularly in the Intermediate and Senior Phases. In response, the DBE plans to focus interventions on teacher professional development and the provision of learning and teaching support materials (LTSMs). The allocation for this intervention is R75 million for 2013/2014, increasing to R160 million in 2014/2015 and R167 million in 2015/2016.

Workbooks
- The allocation for Workbooks for 2013/2014 is R859.3 million and will include the provision of Braille workbooks.

- Approximately 24 million copies of Workbook 1 were delivered to 23 115 schools by November 2012 for use in 2013 and by the end of 2013 approximately 114 million full-colour workbooks will have been distributed to schools. The Australian Council for Educational Research has confirmed that these books are of high quality.

Textbooks
- A 2007 SAQMEC survey showed that 45% of learners had access to literacy textbooks and 36% had access to Mathematics textbooks. A follow-up survey by the DBE in 2011 showed that this had increased to 78% for literacy and 83% for Mathematics. The DBE is committed to providing every learner with an appropriate textbook for every subject. In order to provide these books in the most cost-effective way, the department has decided to centralise the procurement of textbooks and a National Catalogue of Textbooks for all grades. This was finalised in March this year (2013).

School infrastructure
- The DBE is working with the Department of Labour and Correctional Services for the supply of school furniture.
- The DBE plans to use the Education Infrastructure Grant to replace a total of 200 'inappropriate schools' (132 in Eastern Cape, 30 in Free State, three in KwaZulu-Natal, three in Limpopo, five in Mpumalanga, one each in the Northern Cape and North West, and 25 in the Western Cape). This is a multi-year project and the DBE hopes to complete 25% of the project by the end of the 2013/2014 financial year. It also plans to provide sanitation to 873 schools, water to 448 schools and electricity to 369 schools. The new schools that have been built in the Eastern Cape are 'state of the art' and the facilities provided include fully furnished libraries, laboratories and administrative buildings.

Human resource management
- A collective agreement with teacher unions on a new integrated assessment instrument to improve performance of principals, deputy-principals and teachers has still not been concluded at the ELRC but the proposal is that it be finalised by the end of 2013.
- The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development is still to be finalised.
- More than 58 000 teachers benefitted in 2012/2013 from professional development programmes provided by their unions as part of the Teacher Union Collaboration Initiative.

- An audit of 114 district-based teacher resource centres was completed in 2012/2013 and a set of norms and standards for these centres has been developed.
- A National Education Human Resource Planning Framework to manage the demand, supply and utilisation of teachers has been developed. The DBE has also commissioned a project to develop an instrument to evaluate the implementation of post-provisioning norms.
- The issues relating to the Teacher Laptop initiative are still under discussion with the Treasury and SITA.
- The number of Funza Lushaka bursaries will be increased to 14 400 in 2013/2014 at a cost of R893.9 million. Approximately 11 500 bursaries had been awarded by the end of 2012. The Funza Lushaka bursaries are used to attract new Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Language teachers.

Systemic improvement initiatives
- The Planning and Delivery Oversight Unit, which was set up in 2011, visited more than 2 000 schools in 2012 and provided them with guidance on remedial measures that needed to be put in place in preparation for the 2013 school year. This unit is designed to complement the work of NEEDU. The Planning and Delivery Oversight Unit was also responsible for the 94+ Projects for Madiba, which attracted R40 million of private funding and benefitted 98 schools. An additional 415 schools benefitted as a result of the Nedlac Accord 'Adopt-A-School' programme.
- In addition to the above, the Planning and Delivery Oversight Unit also worked with districts, establishing quarterly Ministerial Meetings with District Directors that promote the sharing of good practice and by assisting 10 underperforming districts to develop District Improvement Plans. Evidence of the impact of these interventions includes a 19.8% improvement in results in the Libode district in the Eastern Cape.

Learner well-being
- Plans are in place to provide school-going children with access to a full range of public health and poverty reduction services in the form of the Integrated School Health Programme. This programme reached more than 650 000 learners during the course of the 2012/2013 financial year and is expected to provide health services to 750 000 learners in Grades 1, 4, 8 and 10 in 2013/2014. Also included will be learners from Quintile 1 and 2 schools who are repeating grades, as well as learners at special schools.

Education Collaboration Framework
- The Education Collaboration Framework (ECF) was established following a multi-stakeholder Education Dialogue convened in December 2012. The ECF will be responsible for implementing programmes focussed on systemic change interventions and innovative projects, particularly at district level. These will be funded by an education trust that is to be established for this purpose. The DBE has already entered into partnerships with more than 100 businesses as part of this process. ∎

The minister in her own words:
'He who has a plan is a million times better than he who pokes holes in the plans of others, without a plan.'

'We're attending to learner performance while addressing those systemic issues making it difficult for us to crack the system.'

Plans are in place to 'close once and for all the chapter on "potholes" and "hanging ceilings" in the classroom'.

'The building blocks for a high-performing system are in place.'

'As President Zuma said in the 2013 State of the Nation Address, Education is an essential service. Its health depends on collective effort and bargaining in a climate that's conducive. That's why we've engaged earnestly with organised teachers on contentious issues rendering it hard for the falcon to hear the falconer. And it is why it is very important for me that we should find an amicable way to resolve the two months' long impasse we had with SADTU.'

'When we lose sight of this fact (the best interests of the child are important), and mere instability is loosened upon the world, it is the child, the African child in particular, who suffers the most.'

Note
1   As far as we are able to ascertain this report has still to be released.
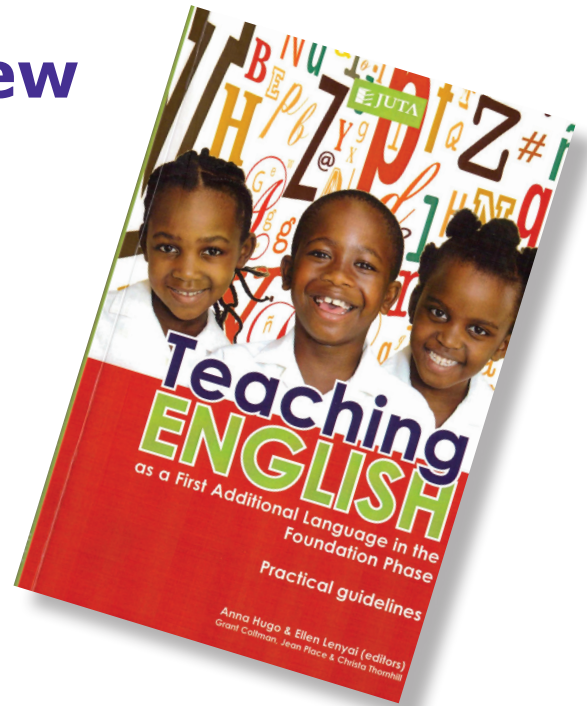
Book review

Teaching English as a First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase: Practical Guidelines
Authors: Anna Hugo (Editor), Ellen Lenyai (Editor), Grant Coleman, Jean Place and Christa Thornhill,
Published by Juta and Company, Claremont, 2013
Price: R230
224 pages
ISBN: 978 0 70218 874 9

With the teaching of English First Additional Language now being introduced into the Foundation Phase curriculum for the first time this year, this book should prove to be a boon to Foundation Phase teachers, many of whom may have neither experience nor a qualification in teaching English as a First Additional Language.

Although I have concerns about inaccuracies and questionable statements in the first chapter of the book 'Setting the scene for teaching English as a First Additional Language' including nonsensical statements such as 'Non-English-speaking children who had to use English as a LoLT were admitted to English-speaking schools which were known as Model C schools and to private schools' and 'A third category of schools at which English is taught as FAL is schools in informal settlements. These schools accommodate the great majority of children who have an African language as HL, and coloured children, in areas that are known in South Africa as townships', these are largely irrelevant to the core purpose of the book and to the quality and value of its content.

As the title of the book suggests, it sets out to provide guidance and practical advice on the teaching of English to learners in the Foundation Phase, who have a mother tongue that is not English. This it does well, with each chapter covering a different aspect of the teaching of language in the Foundation Phase with a clear distinction made between the teaching of a home language and the teaching of a first additional language.

Chapter 1: Setting the scene for teaching English as a First Additional Language is the chapter that includes the inaccuracies that I have noted but it does also provide an important overview of the various elements and processes that are involved in the teaching of language in the Foundation Phase and how and when these should be introduced. Examples of these include topics such as:
- English literacy, emergent literacy and early literacy
- Approaches and methods of teaching English
- How to introduce listening and speaking in the FAL
- How to teach reading and writing
- The role of HL in the acquisition of FAL.

Chapter 2: Theories and methods of teaching English as a First Additional Language, as its title suggests, deals with the theoretical models that underpin the approaches to language teaching that authors of the book have adopted, and which form the basis of the teaching strategies that they suggest.

Each of the remaining six chapters deals with a specific aspect of language and includes an introduction that provides further theoretical discussion on which approaches work best and why and, more importantly, a host of useful practical examples of classroom activities that Foundation Phase teachers can use in their classrooms. So, for example Chapter 4, which covers the teaching of speaking skills in English as a First Additional Language, there are sections on the development of speech including:

- Classroom factors influencing the acquisition of speech in English
- Personal factors influencing the acquisition of speech in English
- The influence of the HL on the acquisition of the FAL
- Formal instruction in the FAL.

There is also a separate section dealing with strategies for promoting the development of speaking in the FAL, which include:
- The TPR approach
- The communicative approach
- A language-rich Grade R class
- English vocabulary
- The teacher's role
- Promoting communication
- Teaching techniques
- A lesson plan to teach vocabulary related to a train.

The other chapters cover:
- Teaching listening in English as a First Additional Language
- Teaching reading in English as a First Additional Language

- Strategies for teaching reading in English as a First Additional Language
- Teaching writing, spelling and language structures in English as a First Additional Language
- Strategies for teaching writing, spelling and language structures in English as a First Additional Language.

The book also has a useful glossary and a comprehensive bibliography for those who may want to delve more deeply into the subject, and an index. It is the kind of book that should form part of the professional library of every primary school and of every dedicated Foundation Phase teacher.

The recently released NEEDU report on the state of schooling in this country paints a grim picture of the quality of classroom practice at this crucial phase of schooling and identifies poor teacher pedagogical knowledge as one of the reasons for this. *Teaching English as a First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase* offers teachers who may be unsure about what to teach and how to teach it the opportunity to improve both their knowledge and their skills. ■

Young EFAL learners develop their writing and spelling skills.