



# PSP NEWSLETTER

Keeping you up to date with PSP teacher development

2021 TERM 1

## From the Director

### PSP is optimistic

The impact on teaching and learning by the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent school shut down will be felt for many years to come. However, we believe that with innovative strategising and hard work, conditions will improve. And PSP remains committed to walking this difficult road to recovery alongside schools and teachers.

The pandemic presented us with an opportunity to modify some of our processes. We successfully integrated online teaching and learning to continue providing high quality guidance and support to teachers in need.

We are very proud of the great strides made by many teachers as they bravely navigated the Microsoft Teams platform and that over 1 000 teachers have logged in to benefit from our online Maths and Science training sessions. Going forward, we are implementing a blended model that integrates face-to-face training and support with online teaching and learning.

PSP also used other means of communication to reach a wider group of teachers, such as WhatsApp texts and voice notes to share innovative teaching strategies and activities for learners. We are in the process of developing short videos with Maths tips for parents which will be shared via Facebook and YouTube. We look forward to launching these soon.

Winston Churchill once said, "Optimists see opportunities in every difficulty." The PSP Team have adopted this mindset, and we believe in our children's wonderful potential and their amazing resilience to weather the Covid-19 storm.

We wish all schools, teachers and learners good health. Stay safe.

Dr. Zorina Dharsey

## JMP conference celebrates 'mentorship magic'

It was gratifying to experience the enthusiasm and sincere testimony of the first-time teachers who participated in the 2019/2020 cycle of the Joint Mentorship Project (JMP). The Saturday conference provided a platform for 115 teachers to share their experiences and sometimes emotional stories of how mentorship transformed their teaching lives and supported their emergence as strong and resilient educators. Originally planned for 3½ hours, the lively discussion, and engrossing testimony continued for a further two hours!

Key-note speaker, Ms Theola Phillips, an ex-mentee of the JMP, and current post-grad student at UCT inspired everyone, calling teachers to action in their schools, and giving excellent, practical tips. She emphasised how much children need teachers' emotional support saying, "PSP's mentorship is not only about schooling, but also about providing emotional support".



Florence February, project co-ordinator commented:

*"This conference showed the great successes of the JMP project. The high quality presentations, the wonderful team of mentors, the invaluable SMTs making it happen at their schools and - very exciting - the ex-mentees, who are naturally mentoring new young teachers at their schools - I thank them all!"*



### Note to all first-time teachers:

A diamond is a piece of charcoal that has handled stress exceptionally well. You are a diamond in the making!



## Monitoring & evaluation



Ongoing monitoring and evaluation, especially in this time of rapid change is an integral part of PSP's work. We are constantly reflecting critically on our work, using various tools and processes, looking to improve our offering and working more efficiently.

We evaluate both quantitative and qualitative data to identify trends, which inform the changes and / or additions to the training and support we offer. Our tools and processes are evolving as we adjust to a year of blended learning - online and face to face. This also enables us to ensure adherence to project deliverables and outputs, and gives us an insight into how the projects have benefitted in terms of the growth and development which we all hope to achieve.

ALL PSP COURSES IN 2021 ARE SACE ACCREDITED



School registrations for 2020 will be carried through to 2021



# New projects up and running



Nadiema Gamielien and Ntsiki Mahote at Noxolo Primary School Khayelitsha.

In the 2021/2022 project cycle, PSP will work with 40 new schools. Project set-up took place in February where schools were introduced to the project and facilitators, and where they were required to indicate their commitment to participating.

We welcome all new schools and look forward to working productively with the teachers over the next two years.

**New schools in the following Education Districts:**

**Counting with Coronation (Foundation Phase Maths):** 25 project schools from South, North, East and Overberg Districts.

**Cluster Project (both NS/NST component):** 10 schools from East District (Makhaza and Macassar) and 5 schools in the Overberg.

**Cluster Project (light touch component):** one year project to revisit schools from 2015 / 2016 project cycle: 5 schools from East and North Districts.

**PSP Language project (Foundation Phase and Grade 4):** 5 schools from the South District.

## BOOK FOR ONLINE COURSES



You can now book for PSP courses using the link provided when you receive course reminders.

Use the same link to update your details with the PSP, so you can be sure to receive accurate, up to date information and invitations. This will also allow you to access all the records of your course attendance as well as any classroom support you may have received. Remember, all PSP activities are accredited by SACE.

## ENVIRONMENTAL WORK CONTINUES

As with all other courses, we have adapted our environmental work to reach teachers online.

And we welcome a new part-time facilitator, Natasha Brain who will be running courses with teachers and also leading the 'train the trainer' sessions with staff from Cape Nature:



*"Working for the PSP is a dream come true. I often relied on their resources in my work as a Grade 5 teacher at Kirstenhof Primary School and later at the Centre for Conservation Education. I found their hands-on, practical activities so useful and wonderful to use. This is the kind of learning I enjoy most! My teaching philosophy is that teachers must not be seen as the 'fountain of all knowledge'. Learners should discover and construct knowledge for themselves. I love the challenge of thinking of new ways to teach, particularly in an online environment, and look forward to the teaching year ahead."*

Environmental courses to date have focused on 'nutrients in food and



Photo by Gail Bristow

nutrition', Life & Living and the stages and processes in the life cycle of a plant and an animal.

# News bytes

We were happy to provide a two-hour training session on 'how to support Maths at home' and the use of recycled materials as resources, and also to donate 50 'Practical Maths at Home' books to community members from Makhaza in Khayelitsha. The Podbrey Foundation supports the work done by the group at the community centre and reached out to us for assistance.



Little Grade R learners at ACJ Phakade Primary in Strand can still see and talk to each other safely behind a screen while learning about counting and numbers using their own set of plastic bottle tops which are kept safe in individual ice cream containers.



Sandra Rossouw, PSP Rural Co-ordinator travels many kilometers each week to reach some of the more remote schools we work with in the Overberg. Some of these schools have multi-grade classes, which requires skillful facilitation of teacher training and classroom support.



## PRIMARY SCIENCE PROGRAMME (PSP)

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