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PSP NEWS 1st TERM 2003

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Hullo, dear Colleagues!

Edith Stephens Wetland Park - here we come!

The PSP will finally relocate to our new offices at the end of February! The refurbishing and extension of the garage and cottage is in progress (see the picture!) and we hope to move on time. This is so exciting!

We are very grateful to our funders who have contributed to the cost, BUT our relocation is still costing more than expected - so, if you know of anyone who could lend a helping hand, please let us know and we'd be very grateful!

Please note the new contact details at the top of this PSP Newsletter.

The large crowd of teachers who attended the PSP's *Annual Mass Planning Forum* showed how serious they are about improving their teaching as they discussed their professional needs and decided on the priorities for the PSP Programme. *There was such vibrancy and energy from the whole gathering of teachers - this bodes well for this year and especially for our learners!*

Our thanks go to our guest speaker, Pam Hicks, Literacy Co-ordinator of the WCED and the other officials who attended the forum.

OUR NEXT ANNUAL MASS PLANNING FORUM WILL PROBABLY BE HELD AT THE END OF THIS YEAR - TO PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR.

Good luck to you all for this year!

Mascha for the PSP team: Nontsikelelo, Vagriuah, Rose, Gcobisa and Zowi



The new PSP offices at Edith Stevens Wetland Park will be ready soon.

PSP ANNUAL MASS PLANNING FORUM SUCCESSFUL GATHERING - ONCE AGAIN

More than 250 teachers attended the PSP's Annual Mass Planning Forum on Tuesday 4 Feb to decide on the most appropriate INSET and support that the PSP should offer this year. After the plenary, teachers gathered in Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Mathematics groups and various curriculum options were discussed and priorities decided on.

The 21 schools that participated in the **PSP Cluster Programme** in 2002 received their **PSP Masiphathisane** awards - presented by a Curriculum Advisor for each EMDC concerned.



Curriculum Advisors for Natural and Life Sciences presented the awards: Hajjera Mohamed (EMDC South), Deon Keston (EMDC Central) and Ramesh Majoraj (EMDC East)



Maths teachers at the Mass Planning Forum



Most common concern from teachers

The PSP finds the most common concern from teachers at present is the critical lack of language skills of learners. Teachers find it difficult to assess learners' Natural Sciences or Mathematics tasks because their children cannot read or write! This is becoming a crisis, which affects every learning area.

The guest speaker

We were fortunate to have Mrs Pam Hicks, the Literacy Co-ordinator from the WCED to address the teachers on this issue.



Pam Hicks: Literacy Co-ordinator, WCED Guest Speaker at the PSP Annual Mass Planning Forum

The main point of her address was to reinforce the idea that every lesson across the curriculum should be a literacy lesson. A number of strategies for use in any Learning Area were presented. She also mentioned:

- The WCED is about to launch a 7 - Year Strategy for Literacy across the province
- This plan will reach across all phases - from reception to grade 12

Key focuses will be:

- Teacher development
- Learning Support Materials on developing Literacy
- Research and Advocacy

This will be strongly tied to the new National Curriculum Statements (NCS), which provides effective benchmarks for literacy, and also to the Reading half-hour policy.

The WCED is developing a project, which will equip teachers to help learners who have difficulty in reading. Teachers will hear more about this WCED strategy in the near future.

BIRD-WATCHING FOR TEACHERS AT EDITH STEPHENS WETLAND PARK

On November 5, 2002 a group of teachers came to Edith Stephens Wetland Park (ESWP) to experience a bird-watching afternoon. The PSP and teachers trialed a series of bird-watching activities (and the booklet) that will be included into the Bird Resource Pack. They were assisted by Kirsten Louw, an extremely knowledgeable member of the Cape Bird Club, who helped teachers to identify the many different birds.

Nontsikelelo Vani from PSP provided teachers with binoculars (sponsored by BirdLife South Africa) and teachers enjoyed observing the birds and their behaviour closely from the spacious bird hide on the water.

This was the first trialling of these activities with teachers. We hope to test them with learners soon, so that it will become an essential resource booklet for use at ESWP. Thanks to all who took part.



UPDATE ON THE PSP CLUSTER PROGRAMME

The Cluster Programme (focuses on Planning & Assessing the Natural Sciences curriculum as well as managing the curriculum) unfolded very successfully last year with 21 schools in three areas. Teams of science teachers started to plan their science curriculum and its assessment together for the whole school.

The relevant EMDC's have encouraged the PSP to continue with new clusters this year. Teachers were informed about the procedure for participating in clusters and the PSP is currently setting up new ones in the South, East and Central EMDC's.

If you want to know more about this PSP support for your school, contact Nontsikelelo Vani at the PSP, tel: 6378179 (till end of Feb)



Mcebisi Mnconywa, Ish Qanya, Lunga Mda, say good-bye to Charlotte at her farewell

CONTINUING RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AT PSP

We are continuing to develop resources with teachers at PSP - in response to teachers' requests. It takes time to develop resources and so the process is ongoing. Currently we are developing cards about the planets and other objects in the solar system with some activities to go with them. We hope that this will eventually be incorporated into an Earth and Beyond Resource Pack, similar to the Bird Resource Pack. If you know about any resources that might be useful to include in such a resource pack, please let us know. Do you have any traditional stories that we could include?



We have also had requests from teachers for a video about the solar system and the universe for primary school level, and we are thinking about how to find or produce such a video. Any ideas?



MTN SCIENCENTRE invites teachers to free open days

The MTN SCIENCENTRE extends an invitation to all interested teachers to participate in a guided educational visit to the SCIENCENTRE. These visits will be scheduled in February from

14h00 to 15H00 on:

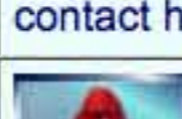
- **Monday 24 February: Senior School teachers**
- **Tuesday 25 February: Primary School teachers**
- **Wednesday 26 February: Pre-Primary School teachers**

Find out about the many exciting and innovative programmes they have for learners!

Contact tel: 021 5298100

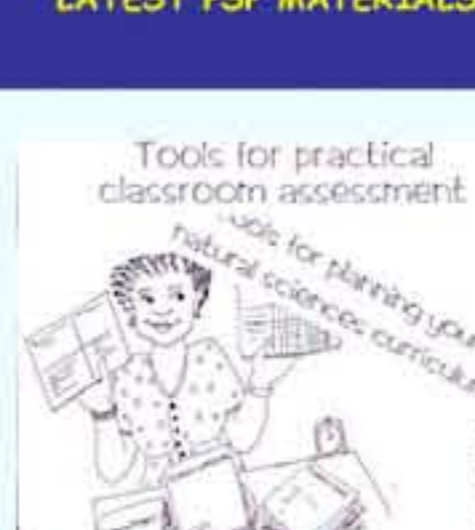
LOOKING FOR AN EXPERIENCED PERSON TO LOOK AFTER YOUR SCHOOL GARDEN AND GROUNDS?

Themba Nkwilase has been part of the Working for Water Project at the Edith Stephens Wetland Park for 18 months. Themba has expressed an interest in developing and managing school gardens and grounds. If your school has need of a person who has developed excellent skills, contact him through the PSP office.



Our thoughts go out to our colleagues in education and their families who are either living with or have died from AIDS related diseases.

LATEST PSP MATERIALS



The PSP is still looking for a new staff member.

The PSP still needs a full-time science qualified person (with a degree in science) for a new post this year. The person should:

- Have teaching experience (primary is best!)
- Be able to speak either Afrikaans and/or IsiXhosa
- Be able to identify with the communities that we work with.

If you would like to work with a dedicated team in the PSP, please send a written application with a detailed CV and three references to the PSP. See contact details at top of this PSP Newsletter.

CONTRIBUTIONS:

If you have any ideas to share with teachers for this PSP Newsletter, please hand them to the PSP by the end of every term. Teachers love to hear from other teachers!