



*Community
Training*



COMMUNITY
TRAINING

Treverton Schools Educator Skills Development

Years Funded: Nine • Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Route Key: **I**



The Educator Skills Development in Environmental Learning project has, with N3TC's support, had a significant impact on teaching in the KwaZulu Natal region of the N3 Corridor.

From the initial stages of basic workshops on general environmental education to what is today a fully accredited course that is Rhodes University certified and endorsed by the South African Council of Education, the project has far exceeded all expectations.

Initially the schools and teachers were not too sure about participating in the workshops. Now there is a waiting list of teachers who would like to attend. Invitations to attend the workshops are sent from the Circuit Manager of the Department of Education who defines which teachers may attend. This gives an indication of the importance both teachers and the Department are placing on the training.

While some tweaks and adjustments have been made to the course over the years, significant changes have been implemented in 2019. Some of these changes include:

- The updated course content focuses on Indigenous and Heritage Knowledge, a first for South Africa. A Professor from Rhodes University who specialises in Indigenous Knowledge will co-facilitate the course.
- Private school teachers are paying participation costs to attend the course.
- Information on the course will be included in reports to universities in Japan and Germany.
- Resource material is presented to participants on flash drives (to reduce impact on the environment and costs).



- Evaluation of the course will be conducted by Rhodes University.
- The course has moved away from being grade and subject specific to phase specific.
- The concept of Education for Sustainable Development (not only Environmental Education) forms part of the course structure.

Of paramount importance is the subsequent benefit of the training on the schools and learners. While the quality of the course being presented needs to meet the requirements set by Rhodes University, it is equally important that teachers leave the course feeling more confident in the subject and equipped with the skills and knowledge to promote learning in their class.

Teachers personally comment on the fact that they recognise their confidence has grown and are more enthusiastic in the classroom.

It has become apparent to the facilitators of the courses that the teachers' abilities, environmental comprehension and content knowledge has improved over the years, which is benchmarked as they start the course. This is attributed to the in-service training and support which is given to teachers as part of their qualification.

A further benefit of the training has been the fact that many schools are now adopting a whole-school approach to environmental awareness and not merely a teaching and learning outcome.

The project allows for continuous growth through a formal evaluation process coupled with networking through a national programme, which is led by the Higher Education Institutions with Rhodes University overseeing the progress. The Department of Education's interest in the course not only ensures that standards are maintained but facilitates requirements within the area.





COMMUNITY
TRAINING

S.M.I.L.E Classroom Teacher Training and Support

Years Funded: Five • Province: Free State and KwaZulu-Natal

Route Key: **C** **M**



S.M.I.L.E.'s focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning in English as the core foundation for improved proficiency in community schools is making inroads throughout the N3 Corridor.

The extent of S.M.I.L.E.'s influence and support has grown and developed markedly over the past five years as a result of N3TC's funding. To date, S.M.I.L.E. is supporting 11 primary schools, 40 high schools and subsequently over 16 200 learners along the N3 Corridor.

To enhance the teaching and learning process, S.M.I.L.E. developed English Learner Books, Readers and Teacher Guides for daily use. S.M.I.L.E. more recently developed exciting new English Home Language Learners Books – designed around the social media framework to meet the needs of current Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners.

In 2018 S.M.I.L.E. extended its reach into the rural districts within the N3 Corridor as teachers in these areas receive little guidance from District Curriculum Advisors in teaching English Home Language, making it meaningful by design.

In June 2019 S.M.I.L.E.'s new Grade 8 English Home Language publication was introduced into nine N3TC-supported high schools. This publication is the foundation of critical English Home Language skills for high school learners.

Skills Training Workshops are an integral part of S.M.I.L.E.'s support for teachers and schools. In February this year, 30 Grade 8, 10, 11 and 12 teachers from eight high schools in the N3 Corridor attended S.M.I.L.E.'s Planning Workshops to enable them to embed the basics of



planning – teaching without planning is doomed to failure – and S.M.I.L.E. has provided much needed guidance in this area to boost teachers' confidence and expertise.

"I have been through your books and they are so very helpful. As a cluster co-ordinator I was asked by the Subject Advisor to represent the Ladysmith District at Provincial level at a Provincial materials development workshop in Ladysmith. I took S.M.I.L.E.'s Grades 8, 10, 11 and 12 Books to show them to the panel. The entire Province was represented at this Workshop. Everyone was mesmerised by the structure and content. A sincere and heartfelt appreciation to you and your team for revolutionising our approach to English Home Language. We are truly blessed to have been selected to use the books and have this resource at our disposal." **Ms Fathima Rassack – Teacher, Drakensberg Secondary School**

"I really want to say thank you for everything you have done in creating these incredible textbooks. The layout and content really reflect the passion of everyone involved in creating this wonderful resource and the desire to really help our students. The entire English Department at Harvest High

School are extremely grateful for all your help and support."
Mr Hagan Nash Principal, **Harvest High School**

"The Grade 8 textbook gems are such a blessing and we are SO happy with them. They are on their way to get covered and then we shall devour them! A BIG THANK YOU to all of you for your kindness and generosity." **Mr Noelin Naidoo – English HOD, Alexandra High**

The Grade 8 English Home Language Learners Textbook and Teacher Guide have been well received countrywide and the enthusiasm among teachers for the Grade 9 Learners Book for 2020 bodes well for the future of English in schools.

S.M.I.L.E.'s reputation has spread far and wide and each year S.M.I.L.E. receives requests from schools and teachers for classroom assistance. N3TC is contributing extensively to S.M.I.L.E.'s national initiative - 'One Teacher One Textbook Many Learners' - building critical English language proficiency among teachers and learners, and touching thousands of lives in the process.



Our Heroes

Nosipho Mnguni

By Nikki Brighton

Where
wisdom, love
and
understanding
abounds



When there are 72 learners in your English class, you need to ensure your lesson is well prepared. Seriously well prepared.

Nosipho Mnguni knows this and makes certain that her classes are smooth and productive by being exceptionally organised.

“Our school days start at 6.30 am, most teachers are already there at that time. We assist learners with queries and get our admin sorted before classes start at 7.30.”

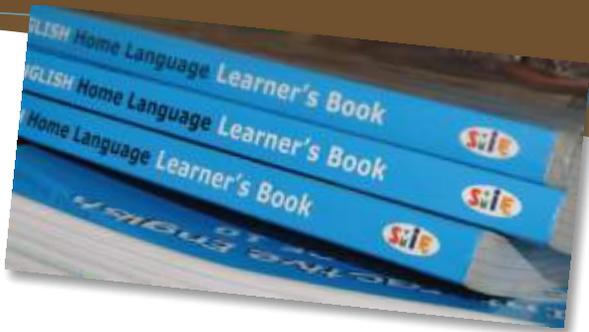
Menzi High School in Umlazi is renowned for producing good results and capable, confident learners. Principal, Ms Ntombela Muntu, is proud of the fact that they have achieved 100% pass rate in Matric for the past seven years. Amongst the many distinctions are English First Additional Language – which she puts down to the dedicated efforts of her team of teachers.

“When we needed a new English teacher, I knew I wanted Mrs Mnguni. Not only is she an excellent teacher, she soon became a Head of Department for Languages and is now one of my two female Vice-Principals. Women leadership changes a school – we are firm and disciplined but we care about the learners and make them feel at home.”

There is wisdom, love and understanding in abundance.

24 years ago, Nosipho was a young English teacher at Ndengetho High outside





Kwandengezi in Mariannhill. Here she encountered S.M.I.L.E for the first time. S.M.I.L.E provided her with user-friendly English First Additional Language Books and mentorship.

Head of S.M.I.L.E, Daniela Browne recalls "We could see her potential from the start and were delighted when she applied to become a facilitator at S.M.I.L.E. She spent 10 years with us becoming our Senior Trainer and then Coordinator of all our Classroom Teacher Training Programmes." These were very happy years for Nosipho.

Whilst at Ndengetho, Nosipho was invited to a memorable six-week writing workshop in Indiana, USA.

"As the only African in the group, I had to answer many questions and realised that I was representing my country and the continent."

On one occasion an author brought in a book she had written, which had been translated into many Nguni languages, "I was so excited and asked if I could read the isiZulu version, then the isiXhosa version

and the Ndebele as well! Everyone was amazed and I felt so proud of the diversity of South Africa."

While S.M.I.L.E was a marvellous place to work, Nosipho had a young family to care for and could not afford to spend so much time travelling. She decided to go back to teaching in Umlazi (where she grew up) and Menzi High was determined to have her.

"I hope I am making sense", Nosipho asks the 72 students riveted by her lesson on Gcina Mhlope's book '*Transforming Moments*'. Everyone is eager to volunteer their answers and does so eloquently when she calls their name. Clearly, she has built confidence along with proficiency in English.

"Good English is essential these days. Besides helping students in all other subjects, it is essential to access Google Maps, banking, mainstream movies," she smiles, being a big fan of Netflix.

"I advise my learners to keep their dictionaries close at hand, I have one next to my bed and the Oxford App on my phone, I consult it often. One should never stop learning. I am passionate about the emancipation of women, primarily through education and self-realisation."

After leaving school at 4pm, spending time with her family, finishing the day's marking and jotting down reflections in her journal, Nosipho sleeps well. She knows that she is as well prepared as possible to help learners take responsibility for their lives.

Is it any wonder that Menzi High had 4885 applications for just 250 places last year?





Midlands Community College Digital Literacy for ECD Practitioners

Years Funded: Two
Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Route Key: **J**

“The computer room at Midlands Community College, is available to students to use after class and in the evenings, to maximise their opportunities for online access and resources. We see this facility and course, as a potential game changer for learners who do not have the confidence or skills to study further in an online environment.”

Midlands Community College is in a unique position to have a fully equipped computer room, that can seat forty people, coupled with an accredited service provider for ICDL (International Computer Driver's License) Africa. An entry point into computer literacy is the Digital Citizen Plus course.

This course is ideal for Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners who have little experience of computers and the internet.

ECD Practitioners from thirty-nine ECD Centres in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands participated in the course this year. These practitioners are supported by the Solon-funded *Inspiring and Equipping ECD Practitioners*



Programme, which includes the College's mobile toy library. The ECD centres are situated in Howick, Mooi River, Mpophomeni, Estcourt, Loskop, Ntabamhlope and Hlatikulu.

Designed to establish a basic understanding of computers and the internet, the course builds the confidence of practitioners and allows them access to:

- Online higher education opportunities;
- Interactive online learning such as the PLAY SA course;
- Online applications such as Care Up, African Story Book; and
- Accessing, downloading and printing educational resources.

Upon completion of the five-day course, learners are assessed according to ICDL assessment practice, and if deemed competent, they are issued with a Digital Citizen Plus certificate.

Providing ECD practitioners with a practical skill such as this will have far reaching benefits. Young minds are always hungry for knowledge and with access to additional resources and support services, these practitioners will be able to nurture and grow young minds into well educated, thinking adults.