

## **Excellence in Grade R Teaching**

Nominee: **Ms Susanna Pietersen**

School: **Hawston Primary School, Hawston**

Cluster: **Overberg Education District**

District: **Overberg Education District**

### **Motivation:**

Ms Susanna Pietersen started out as a cook at a local crèche, but was soon drawn to becoming more involved with children as a result of the interaction she observed between the children and the teachers at the school. This led her training to become a Grade R teacher. Upon qualifying as a Grade R teacher, she obtained a post at a private English school. She was later employed at Hawston Primary School as a Gr R teacher. She has been there for several years, and is currently the Head of Grade R.

Ms Pietersen has successfully introduced CAPS in Grade R. Her lesson plans are shared with colleagues across the district. She believes in maintaining a balance between school, sport and recreation, both for herself and the learners at the school. She uses persona dolls and puppets to make her learners aware of the dangers of crime and gangsterism in her community. She has also invited an ex-poacher to the school to address the children.

Ms Pietersen uses her spare time to help close the learning gaps among needy Gr 1 learners, once they have been identified by their teacher. As part of her strategy to empower parents, she initiated classes on how to assist their own children with homework and the improvement of their literacy and numeracy. She also initiated reading sessions at the local library during school holidays, where learners are able to come and enjoy reading. Ms Pietersen believes that every child has a different learning style and is therefore unique. Accordingly, she adapts her teaching style to cater for all her learners.

As a visionary and leader, she has involved the parents in the building of play apparatus. A play park was developed at the school to improve the gross motor development of needy learners.

Ms Pietersen initiated and currently drives a shoes project at school, whereby shoes are given to those learners whose parents cannot afford to buy school shoes for their children. She also drives a second project to provide jerseys, knitted by a local group of carers, for underprivileged children. Ms Pietersen also initiated a recycling project. She has persuaded a community organisation and various NGOs to take over this project.

Ms Pietersen uses every opportunity to improve herself by attending any course that can add to her knowledge and skills. Ms Pietersen stands out as a mentor and role model at her school. Her colourful, child-centred classroom and her up-to-date records are both testimony to her ability to effectively lead her colleagues and

teachers at neighbouring schools. Her attention to detail has been noted by the district office, who have shared Ms Pietersen's lesson planning with other teachers in the district. As a dynamic teacher, Ms Pietersen has put her belief in exercise into practice by organising a very successful community sports day and talent evening, the proceeds from which were used to purchase Foundation Phase learning and teaching support material.

### **Excellence in Primary School Teaching**

Nominee: **Mr Francois Jones**

School: **De Villiers Primary School, Robertson**

Cluster: **Cape Winelands**

District: **Cape Winelands Education District**

#### **Motivation:**

Mr Jones has been teaching at De Villiers Primary School for 15 years and still demonstrates a deep love for teaching children. He shows a great deal of commitment and enthusiasm for teaching, and is a true inspiration to his learners and colleagues. He serves as Subject Head for Natural Science and is on various committees at his school, i.e. School Development Team, Safety Committee, LAN Administrator and Chairperson of the Cultural Committee.

Mr Jones possesses an excellent working knowledge of the curriculum and willingly assists his colleagues with curriculum planning for the school across the three phases. Mr Jones has been approached by both the Cape Winelands and West Coast Education District Offices to train teachers in the Natural Sciences syllabus and to share his deep love of the subject.

His lessons are fully prepared the day before presentation so as to incorporate a variety of presentation methods to suit the various levels, barriers and abilities of learners. When assessing learners, he considers the diverse learning styles of his learners and designs strategies to cover these variances. To promote the improvement of LitNum, he uses extra reading and journal writing. In teaching mathematics, he employs a variety of approaches to problem solving by teaching steps to understand the problem faced. In 2012, Mr Jones was selected as a lead teacher by the district office to perform CAPS training for the Intermediate Phase.

Mr Jones has fostered a rewarding partnership with the Science Learning Centre for Africa (SLCA) at the University of the Western Cape. Because of his enthusiasm about science, the SLCA revamped his old classroom into a modern science laboratory, supplying him with the necessary equipment, chemicals and an interactive whiteboard. He established a strong science club at the school, which over the years has won numerous science expo competitions in the district. In 2010, the SLCA awarded Mr Jones with an award for the best science club in the district.

He readily shares his knowledge, skills and practices with other teachers and schools by presenting lessons with his learners at other schools and hosting visiting teachers in the science lab. The school science lab is used by Mr Jones to teach learners from other schools after hours.

In addition, these learners are then fed and transported home at his own expense. Mr Jones has initiated many successful projects and continues to do so. He is currently piloting a "Love Science" project whereby he wishes to grow the love of science among all learners.

He obtained sponsorship to launch two "road shows" in Robertson and Worcester, to sell the love of science to learners. His target audience totalled approximately 7500 learners and 80 teachers. Mr Jones continues to work very closely with the SLCA at the University of the Western Cape's Technology Department, where the latest information is learnt and then shared with others.

Mr Jones uses science teaching as a basis for teaching about the effects of HIV/AIDS to learners.

As an accomplished artist, he uses his art and drama expertise to address cross-cultural issues, such as drug abuse amongst learners and the broader community. In 2011, the annual 110 km Cycle Tour's theme, initiated by Mr Jones to raise awareness amongst the broader community and learners on topical issues, was HIV/AIDS and its effects. He also works closely with Correctional Services, teaching art to the inmates.

Mr Jones is regarded as an excellent and inspirational teacher and is therefore a worthy candidate for this award.

### **Excellence in Secondary School Teaching**

Nominee: **Mr Ismail Teladia**

School: **Spine Road High School**

Cluster: **Metro Central and Metro South Education Districts**

District: **Metro South Education District**

#### **Motivation:**

Mr Ismail Teladia has been teaching for the past 29 years. He has been teaching at Spine Road High School since 1984. In 2007 he was seconded to the Metro South Education District Office as a Project Manager for School Sport. He returned to school in June 2009 and took up his duties there with the same vigour and enthusiasm.

In 2010, he was made Head of Life Orientation. Since 2010, the turnaround of Life Orientation as a mere 'filler subject' at the school has been phenomenal.

Mr Teladia strives to ensure that school life becomes an enjoyable, yet important, experience for all learners. Under his leadership, physical education has been made compulsory for each learner during at least one period per week. This has initiated a new culture of physical exercise that has gripped the learners, and parents have been fully supportive. He brings a number of experts to work with the learners during physical education periods, e.g. aerobics and zumba instructors.

This lead to the "High on Life" programme, wherein different classes present a physical activity (aerobic exercises, dance routines, short sketches) to the rest of the school. This has become an annual activity that also serves as a fundraiser.

To ensure that all learners will benefit from "Open Days" at tertiary institutions and other organizations like the SANDF, Old Mutual and the SAPS, Mr Teladia organised a Career Expo at the school and invited all major tertiary institutions in the Western Cape to exhibit at the expo. This has become an annual event and gives the learners the opportunity to consult with representatives from various organisations on job and study opportunities. He also initiated the first job-shadow programme at the school, focusing on Grade 11 learners. This is done during August, and for 2011 and 2012 all pupils were placed with organisations like Old Mutual, Smit- Amandla Marine, the Navy, BP SA, legal firms, the City of Cape Town, health facilities and various provincial government departments.

As the class teacher of a Grade 11 class, he has achieved a 100% pass rate for his register class and parents want their children to be in Mr Teladia's class.

Under Mr Teladia's guidance, all Grade 11 learners have an e-mail address and a green bar-coded ID books. He is currently ensuring that all Grade 11 learners have a bank account. Mr Teladia also made it possible for Grade 12 learners to submit their application to tertiary institutions online.

Mr Teladia occupies a number of leadership positions in sports committees and also serves on the Joint National Task Team on school sport. The nominee motivates learners to rise above their circumstances and achieve their full potential. He provides opportunities for learners beyond the classroom, uses ICT to enhance education and ensures that Life Orientation takes its rightful place in the curriculum.

The nominee displays an exemplary attitude, which encourages and motivates colleagues to become lifelong learners. The nominee believes that every challenge is an opportunity to make a difference in a learner's life.

### **Excellence in Primary School Leadership**

Nominee: **Mr Edward Fritz**

School: **Buffeljagsrivier Primary School, Buffeljagsrivier**

Cluster: **Overberg**

District: **Overberg Education District**

**Motivation:**

Mr Edward Fritz has been principal of Buffeljags River Primary School for the past 16 years and has brought about a major transformation benefitting both the learners and community. His passion for teaching and developing life skills in learners, via a creative and expanded curriculum, keeps the child central to his thinking and planning.

The current school building has been redesigned, adding unique tree-house-style classrooms. The four-classroom building is now a seven-classroom building, housing well-resourced Grade R to Grade 7 classes where entrepreneurial skills and future career skills are developed. This has provided an example for other schools to follow.

Mr Fritz's positive and creative leadership style has been recognized by schools in Napier and various orphanages where this style of inclusive education can be implemented.

It is very evident that Mr Fritz creatively incorporates learning experience out of the classroom into a fully integrated and expanded curriculum. This has brought about the opportunity for the learners to learn about goat farming, milking, producing and marketing cheese, developing a business plan and budgeting.

The humble beginning of two goats, given to Mr Fritz as a birthday gift, brought about his idea of creating a goat-farming and cheese-manufacturing project at the school. The original two goats are now a herd of sixty.

Mr Fritz acquired a sponsorship from the German Dentists' Association to set up a small cheese factory on the school premises. Many other sponsors contributed when they heard about the project and its successful beginning. Agriculture South Africa visited the school and publicized the successes Mr Fritz achieved on a television programme.

Mr Fritz has successfully taken the learners and the curriculum out of the classroom onto the school farm where he has integrated all learning areas with excellent results. Proof of this is his school's winning first- and second-place awards for cream cheese for two consecutive years (2011 and 2012) at the SA Dairy Championships.

The presence of the farm animals at the school has also been used therapeutically. Contact with the goats has had a calming effect on certain learners, while the animals have been used most successfully with a child on the autistic spectrum. The successes of these projects have been recognized by German Dentists' Association, which continues to show interest in the school.

Mr Fritz's leadership is evident in his obtaining of study bursaries from members of the community and business for ex-pupils of the school who cannot afford further education. An example of one such case is an ex-pupil who is still being supported at tertiary level.

Mr Fritz leads an enthusiastic team of dedicated teachers who achieved WCED recognition this year for their excellent work in LitNum.

In spite of decreasing learner enrolment in rural schools, Buffeljagsrivier Primary School attracts many learners from surrounding farms and larger towns as parents are prepared to transport their children to the school for a unique learning experience.

### **Excellence in Secondary School Leadership**

Nominee: **Mr Derick Petersen**

School: **Imizamo Yethu Secondary School**

Cluster: **Eden & Central Karoo**

District: **Eden & Central Karoo Education District**

#### **Motivation:**

Mr Petersen's teaching career spans 28 years. In January 2011, he was appointed as caretaker principal at Imizamo Yethu Secondary School, which was seen as a dysfunctional school. He accepted the challenge and turned the school around.

His strategy in turning the school around involved emphasizing class discipline and leading by example. He started by visiting classes to obtain first-hand knowledge of what was happening there. He encouraged teachers to use technology when compiling mark lists and reports.

He obtained the support of the school management team, and together they introduced numerous innovations at the school. The names and photographs of pupil achievers are displayed in the corridor of the administrative block, and, in his office, Mr Petersen has put up a photograph of each of the matric pupils, each one of whom he knows by name.

As a leader, the nominee believes in creating an environment conducive to effective education. His turnaround strategy also involved the paving of the school quad and revamping the Consumer Studies centre. Mr Petersen is of the opinion that the external appearance of the school is important and promotes a sense of worth.

Under the leadership of the nominee, the school's matric pass rate rose from a previous 27% to 82% in 2011.

The nominee believes that a good leader creates sound and reliable systems. The nominee passionately manages teaching at the school through monitoring, evaluation, measuring and analysis. He has fostered partnerships with academic institutions beyond the school. One higher education institution has guaranteed learners access to that institution for tertiary study.

The nominee's leadership style entails being a positive influence and inspiration, and having the ability to get colleagues to identify with his vision, using persuasion rather than instruction. He has also cultivated a culture of going the extra mile.

Although he describes himself as a lion that goes for the kill, his genial manner is most endearing.

In a short time, the nominee has turned a case of neglect into a thriving hub of educational activity for learners and the school community.

### **Excellence in Special Needs Teaching**

Nominee: **Ms Isabel Beckett**

School: **Bertie Barnard Primary School, Stilbaai**

Cluster: **Eden and Central Karoo**

District: **Eden & Central Karoo Education District**

#### **Motivation:**

Ms Beckett teaches a class of 14 disabled learners, some severely disabled, in a mainstream school. Her aims are to teach these children basic life skills, to enable them to care for themselves when no adults are available, and to take their place in society as valued citizens.

Conscious of the fact that "*... it is easy to teach the smart, powerful and beautiful; (but) that it is quite another thing to teach those outside the circle.*", Ms Beckett's approach is one of giving attention to each learner's emotional, physical and intellectual needs each day, and to developing their abilities as fully as possible.

As many of these learners receive little supervision and involvement from their migrant-worker parents, Ms Becket has taken it upon herself to provide for them at her own expense. She takes her learners to a clinic for hearing and sight testing and then obtains hearing aids and spectacles for them. Should the parents not be able to pay for such items, she finds some way of covering the cost.

Ms Beckett arranges medication to improve the concentration of certain of the learners. She has started visiting her pupils' homes and, as a result, has won some parents over to becoming more involved in the care, needs, and education of their children.

She has introduced approaches, such as the following, to teach the learners basic life skills:

- Visiting the supermarket to teach them how to shop and work with money
- Visiting a restaurant where they learn social etiquette
- Visiting a library, where they learn to choose, borrow and return books

- Shadowing work at an appropriately chosen and accommodating business

Ms Becket has introduced the teaching of basic cooking into her classroom. This serves two purposes: to teach her learners to survive and to provide them with a skill that may enable them to find employment. She has also developed a vegetable garden where the learners have learnt to grow food. She has taught her learners to use the computer as far as their ability allows.

She has also taught her learners to give back to the community through her "Make and Bake" project, whereby they donate their products to people in need.

She finds that she also needs to teach the learners responsibility for their own hygiene – they are taught to brush their teeth, dress themselves and keep their classroom clean and neat.

Ms Beckett uses persona dolls to deal with social ills such as drug abuse, HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse. She teaches the learners that respect for the opposite sex and people in general are of utmost importance. She adapts the curriculum for each learner individually, such as using a pegs system to teach vocabulary, speech and reading to a Down Syndrome child. Ms Beckett often uses play therapy to deal with a variety of issues with her learners.

To assess her learners, Ms Beckett works very closely with a social worker, a psychologist, an occupational therapist and a physiotherapist, thereby obtaining the best all-round assessment.

She works with a social worker, a psychologist and the SAPS to assist traumatised learners.

She also assists the Grades 1 to 3 teachers to deal with shortcomings in learners' abilities.

Ms Beckett has developed a network of retired people in community who assist with certain programmes and activities – such as the Caring Group, which brings a gift and cake to school on a learner's birthday.

To meet the cost of learners' transport to and from school, Ms Beckett's class is busy making calendars which they will sell.

Ms Beckett's belief in lifelong learning is evident in that she herself continues to study to better equip herself to manage and teach her class.

#### **Excellence in Information & Communication Technology Enhanced Teaching**

Nominee: **Mr Warren Sparrow**

School: **Rondebosch Boys' Preparatory School**

Cluster: **Metropole South & Central**

District: **Metropole Central Education District**

**Motivation:**

Mr Warren Sparrow has been a teacher for 19 years and has been teaching for 13 years at Rondebosch Boys' Preparatory School. He is currently the Head of ICT at the school. He is a qualified mathematics, physics and biology teacher. After completing his teaching qualification, he completed a Further Diploma in Computer Assisted Education, and then successfully merged his passion for both mathematics and computers.

He has been the recipient of a number of ICT Awards, i.e. Microsoft Innovative Teacher for both South Africa and Africa, finalist for the Microsoft Innovative Teacher worldwide, and winner of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classroom Project of the Year for the most innovative use of technology for enhancing learning in schools.

Mr Sparrow has built up excellent relationships with the learners and he has used his expertise to build their confidence and to choose appropriate learning strategies to help them achieve their best. He keeps comprehensive records of each learner and uses these to strengthen their weak areas. Mr Sparrow has integrated his work across the curriculum, bringing a number of different opportunities to his learners, and often actively involving them in their own assessment so that they can see their errors and improve their knowledge and abilities.

Using a learner-centred approach, he uses his knowledge and skills to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses, and this guides him in the teaching approach he will choose.

Mr Sparrow has indicated that he has been fortunate to work at a school where technology was affordable. As a result, he is trying to share his knowledge, expertise and work with teachers at schools that have fewer resources. He has developed a website, [www.wsparrow.co.za](http://www.wsparrow.co.za), on which he loads all sorts of resources for teachers that they can use free of charge in their classes.

Every year he focuses on a particular subject as a project. For 2012, he is focusing on the Grade 7 topic of HIV/AIDS. The learners had to complete a project on HIV/AIDS and, working in groups, they created videos about their HIV/AIDS-related topic. The learners covered 60 different topics from the syllabus. In 2011, he set up the "Maths is fun" Website in which the entire year's syllabus and worksheets are available for each grade. During 2010, he demonstrated how to use technology to integrate an Economic and Management Science project, called "Who wants to be a millionaire?", into the syllabus. The project won both the South African and the Pan African Microsoft Innovative Project awards, and was one of the projects considered for the Microsoft World Innovative Teacher Award. As part of the above-mentioned projects, Mr Sparrow initiated the creation of a web portal, using technology and media. This is available to any teachers as a resource for lessons.

As part of his portfolio as Head of ICT, he is responsible for implementing technology in the classrooms. He assists teachers by meeting with them to assist with planning of

their teaching programmes. He also team-teaches with teachers in their classrooms and shows them how technology can be used in their teaching. He also runs short weekly courses for the staff to demonstrate Web 2.0 tools, software, hardware and ideas for the classroom. He also conducts adult computer classes in the evenings at the school.

Through the use of ICT, Mr Sparrow has shown that teaching practices can be transformed by using 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning tools and pedagogy.

### **Lifetime Achievement Award**

Nominee: **Ms Hendrik Weideman**

School: **Swartland Primary School, Malmesbury**

Cluster: **West Coast**

District: **West Coast Education District**

#### **Motivation:**

Mr Hendrik Weideman has spent more than three decades in education. He started his teaching career as a teacher in special needs education and he has occupied various positions in education.

He believes in the holistic development of the child. He coaches sport and, as a leader, supports all extra mural activities. As a teacher he ensures that learners overcome barriers in ways that will motivate them. Throughout the nominee's teaching career, his focus has never been Mathematics only, but he has also instilled positive values in the lives of learners with the aim of making them responsible citizens.

Mr Weideman occupies various leadership roles in and beyond the school to the benefit of the school. He currently teaches Mathematics and delivers exciting lessons of a high quality with excellent results. He believes that Mathematics is the most exciting thing to have happened to teaching. His involvement in Mathematics is not limited to the classroom. He has initiated the school's successful participation in AMESA competitions and Mathematics Olympiads.

Under the leadership of this nominee, the school has received The School of Excellence Award for its academic achievements over two consecutive years. The nominee freely shares knowledge and experience with colleagues and serves on a variety of forums outside the school.

His determination ensured that the school became a full service school and, under his loving guidance and leadership, represents a true example of the inclusive education in action. As a result, learners in the unit class are successfully placed in the world of work. This is part of the schools exit strategy for learners with special needs.

The nominee says that if he had to do it all over again, he would do it in exactly the same way.