Excellence in Primary School Teaching

Nominee: **Mrs Eugenia Paulo-Goagoses**
School: **Masiphathisane Primary**
Cluster: **West Coast**
District: **West Coast Education District**

Ms Eugenia Paulo-Goagoses is a young, energetic, respected and passionate teacher. She believes that it is her duty to enrich the minds and lives of her learners who mainly originate from an impoverished community.

In her first year of teaching at Masiphatisane Primary School, she vowed that she would teach in such a way that her learners would see hope for a better future and she would help them to understand that they would ultimately determine their success in life. She believes in creating a safe space for her learners where they will feel comfortable and where it will be conducive for quality teaching and learning to take place. She gives her learners the opportunity to build on their personal strengths, whilst nurturing and improving their weaknesses so that they would not allow these weaknesses to dictate their lives, but would feel the need to tackle them head-on.

Because the majority of her learners are at risk of failing or are suffering from an educational barrier, she includes and combines different teaching methods and resources in her lesson planning. If learners are unable to understand and follow lessons in English, she uses information and communication technology (ICT) to reach them on an audio or visual level.

Ms Paulo-Goagoses is a strong supporter of continued learning and believes that by unlocking a person's full intellectual abilities, the person will be able to better challenge and change the societal issues that plague us as a nation. She is a part-time law student and plays an active role in community development and upliftment forums, such as serving on the local Municipal Ward Committee under the Youth Portfolio. As a result, she has been nominated to serve and represent her Ward and all communities of the West Coast on the committees of the Community Works Programme (CWP) and Industrial Development Zone (IDZ), and she has also been elected as the chairperson of the Saldanha Bay Municipal Youth Forum. She motivates, creates opportunities, encourages and champions various social issues in the West Coast community at large.

As her school's eisteddfod coordinator, she took it upon herself to convince the management team of Wes-Boland eisteddfod to introduce Xhosa Home Language poetry to the list, as previously Xhosa learners were disadvantaged because they could not express themselves with the same flair as mother tongue Afrikaans and English learners.

She believes in keeping learning authentic and accessible to all learners. Ms Paulo-Goagoses believes that in general, most of the everyday issues that her learners are dealing with are also covered in the curriculum. Because she can relate to curriculum content, she keeps her lessons authentic with everyday examples from learners' communities and lives. She believes that her past experiences with different cultures and races have given her the ideal opportunity to enrich her learners' understanding and respect for diversity.

She makes the learning experience a mutual learning and teaching experience so that struggling learners can remain part thereof. Her learner-centred learning and teaching techniques as well as regular and timeous feedback to relevant stakeholders, bring out the best in each and every learner in her class.

She identifies learners who are struggling because of language barriers and she therefore uses code switching where possible or lets classmates interpret to the learner. She also breaks down and simplifies content where necessary and spends extra time with those in need of more assistance. She has proven herself capable of teaching through the use of technology and uses it to enhance teaching in the Intermediate and Senior Phases.

Ms Paulo-Goagoses does not shy away from a challenge and is by nature extremely proactive. She has an undeniable commitment to making a difference in her learners' and colleagues' lives, in and beyond the classroom.

It is therefore without reservation that Ms Paul-Goagoses is nominated as a worthy recipient of this coveted award.