

**Report to Gauteng Department of Education  
on Microsoft Partners in Learning Training  
conducted by SchoolNet SA sponsored by Microsoft  
between January 2009 – January 2010**

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## Introduction

SchoolNet SA is the preferred training provider for the Microsoft Partners in Learning programme. Since the beginning of this programme, teachers in Gauteng have been the recipients of various Microsoft funded training initiatives and more recently the province has invested its own funds in offering Partners in Learning training to its teachers. This report outlines the Microsoft Partners in Learning training that has been conducted in Gauteng from 2007 until the present sponsored by Microsoft. Firstly the training that has been offered in each course is outlined, followed by a description of projects in which a range of courses have been offered.

## ICT Leadership for Education Managers

### 1 Sedibeng District – ICT Leadership for Education Managers

A round of ICT Leadership for Education Managers training was offered to school managers and district officials in the Sedibeng district of Gauteng. 26 delegates were present on all three days of training and they were prepared to work hard, despite the trainer reporting that many of them had weak ICT skills.

In addition to sessions that involved discussing styles of leadership and the challenges faced when introducing ICT into a school, the delegates also expressed a desire to learn ICT skills that they would be able to use in their leadership positions. When the trainer introduced the scenario on “writing a letter to parents” the activity took much longer than anticipated as the group asked many questions and needed a lot of assistance. The group also had an opportunity to use Excel (especially the formula functions) when they completed an activity which involved budgeting for 30 computers at the school. This activity sparked discussion around budgeting, and also resulted in managers realizing the value of Excel in completing mark schedules.

The final workshop on interpreting the school readiness story led the delegates to commit themselves to making their schools ICT ready. In conclusion the trainer reported that “the delegates were aware of the challenges they face in their particular schools but are ready to use all of the possibilities/attributes of the leadership descriptors in search of solutions and approaches to get their schools ICT ready and integrating ICT in the school curriculum and the everyday life of the staff and learners.

## ICT Skills for Teachers

### 2 120 Schools Project

The initial aim of this project was to expose 120 schools to Partners in Learning training. The departments of education in North-West, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Free State and Gauteng were requested to nominate schools to receive ICT Skills for Teachers training.

In addition to the 8000 teachers that received training through this project prior to 2007, teachers at a further 13



schools were trained in 2007 including the following schools from Gauteng:

- Isaac Mhlambi Primary
- Nkgopuleng Secondary School
- Athlone Girls High School

### **3 60 Schools Project**

Like the 120 Schools Project, the aim of the 60 Schools project was to expose as many schools as possible to the Partners in Learning ICT Skills for Teachers course. 35 schools received training through this project in 2007, including Thutong Secondary School from Gauteng.

In both the 120 Schools and 60 Schools projects, numerous problems were encountered with setting up training. The biggest problem was the teachers' industrial action in 2007 which caused a number of courses to be cancelled or rescheduled. A further challenge was teachers being reluctant to be trained over weekends or in school holidays. Despite the problems of setting up training, once the training occurred teachers found it to be very beneficial. Below are some quotes extracted from different training evaluation forms that are representative of the overall perception of ICT Skills training conducted through these projects:

*"It's a very good programme, it's more relevant to our daily activities as teachers"*

*"The training was very useful, my ICT Skills improved drastically"*

*"I wish the course can have more advancing programmes so as to make us computer gurus."*

*"Before attending this workshop I had the belief that learning computers at my age was impossible, but I am now computer literate thanks to this workshop"*

### **4 ICT Capacity Building for College Professionals**

One of the skills development objectives of the ISETT SETA is to "capacitate and skill competent FET college personnel capable of delivering requisite ICT skills for South Africa". Through this project, Microsoft's aim was to assist 18 FET colleges nationally by offering capacity building programmes for college professionals.

The following Gauteng colleges each received four days of ICT Skills for Teachers training in 2007 as part of this project:

- Ekurhuleni East FET College
- South West FET College

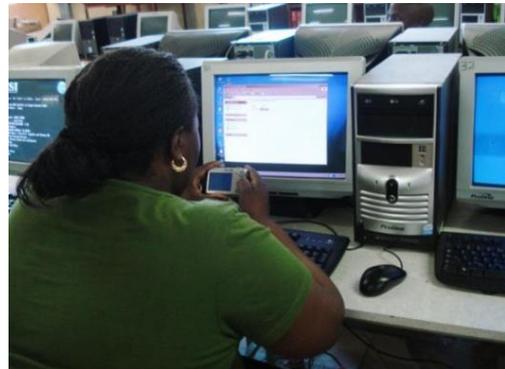
Despite battling to arrange dates for training, trainee reports indicate that the courses were successful as is indicated by these extracts:

*"There were things that I didn't know I could do but the scenario helped me a lot. I learned a lot. The trainer was so helpful she had time for every one she knew how to accommodate everyone. The pace was excellent."*

*“The course was well structured and catered for educators with varying abilities. Educators were able to work independently, at their own pace and do activities that were relevant to their needs and interests. The CD is well designed and will be very useful.”*

## **5 Microsoft Adopted School - Minerva High School**

This school is Microsoft South Africa’s adopted school and part of the Microsoft Case Study Schools project. Whilst Minerva had received ICT Skills for Teachers initial training in 2007 various attempts to organize the follow-up training had been unsuccessful until 2008 when a series of afternoon training sessions were arranged.



The trainer reported that the computer room had no internet access that that there was a network problem between server and workstations. The participants were not able to logon to the network and access the server to share resources and he therefore used individual Partners in Learning discs.

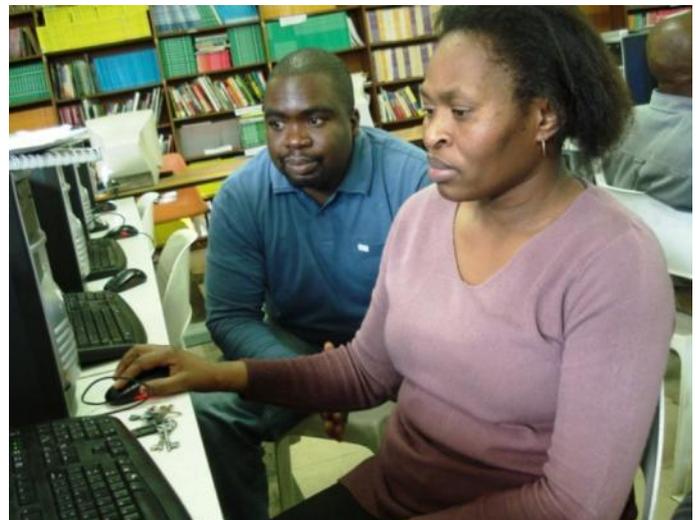
Whilst the teachers were described as “enthusiastic and willing to enjoy themselves” five of the teachers had not attended the initial training and a further three had forgotten the skills acquired in the previous session because of no practice after the initial training. On the whole the course was well received; however two teachers said they would have preferred training in the holidays as attending a course after school is tiring. Others mentioned that they would like hard-copy notes to refer to.

The following feedback was received from participants:

*“I really enjoyed the training in all sections, especially PowerPoint and excel.”*

*“It was a very interesting and important session, I did enjoy it a lot hopefully it will benefit me and my learners.”*

*“The instructor explains so well and is so patient to some of us who are very slow.”*  
*It should also be noted that two teachers from Minerva High School attended the WebQuests training that took place in Midrand.*



## **6 Rent Works Proof-of-Concept ICT Skills Training**

Rent Works, a company that provides refurbished computers to schools for rent, has launched a Corporate Social Investment initiative in partnership with ISASA (Independent Schools Association of South Africa) whereby Rent Works facilitate the IT sponsorship of underprivileged schools. To encourage Rent Works to include Partners in Learning training as part of the sponsorship when they rollout computers, Microsoft agreed to sponsor the initial training for three Gauteng schools who received computers through this initiative.

In October 2007 teachers from the following schools were trained:

- 13 teachers from Palm Ridge Secondary in Alrode
- 8 teachers from Parklands in Vosloorus
- 9 teachers from Masithwalisane Secondary School in Vosloorus



On the first day teachers battled working through the “write a letter” scenario as this involved navigating between multiple windows and many of the teachers did not know how to move the mouse. As the training progressed, however, teachers developed more confidence and started to use the CD to help themselves. By the showcase on the final day, the trainer noted:

*“most teachers were able to work with word, spreadsheets, PowerPoint, publisher and some even dabbled with database. I am very proud of these teachers. They really worked hard and were committed to learning as much as they could.”*

Based on the success of this training – RentWorks subsequently paid for other schools in Gauteng to receive training when their computer rooms were equipped.

## **7 Sci Bono - ICT Skills for Teachers Training of Trainers**

In order to train Sci Bono personnel and others who had expressed interest in becoming Partners in Learning trainers, a training of trainers session was held at the SciBono Centre on 30-31 May 2009. The computers were functional and presented no problems however the data projector was locked in a room of an absent staff member and many delegates arrived late.

The master trainer proceeded with the background and design session of the train the trainer course and reported that the discussion went well and the participants seemed to understand and appreciate the approach. It was noted that those who had attended the training before seemed to have the best appreciation of the background design principles and the master trainer noted that this would suggest that potential trainers should always have previously attended the course as participants.

Of the 21 participants who were present, some were unable to complete fairly simple tasks such as inserting a table into Word whilst others preferred to operate within their comfort zones without attempting more difficult scenarios. As the intention of a training of potential trainers is to focus on the facilitation techniques of the course – as opposed to an opportunity to develop the participant’s computer skills - it became evident that many of the potential trainers were not skilled enough in using computers to become trainers.

After lunch the master trainer structured specific intermediate scenario tasks for participants to complete. It soon became apparent that the vast majority of participants had very poor computer skills and were not able to do any of the tasks assigned. This prevented many from becoming recognized as trainers.

A total of two participants were recommended as trainers and a further three participants were able to train others after they had first attended a training session with a more skilled facilitator. Other potential trainers were asked to spend some time working on improving their own computer skills, and then to have another attempt at becoming trainers.

From the participant comments it is obvious that the potential trainers found the course to be beneficial. Unfortunately the evaluation forms also indicated that the participants' own assessment of their abilities was often higher than that of the master trainer:

*"I for one benefited from the practical approach which the trainer employed throughout the sessions. The tips are also very helpful as they step-by-step lead the trainee to the solution. It is easy for trainees to further practice on their own with such tips."*

*"Thank you ive learned a lot. You made me feel very comfortable during the course, you also made the scenarios very easy for our understanding "please keep up the good work""*

*"Wow what training! Very developing & inspirational. It has made me to be glued in my computer practising all the new skills that I got, like dynamic mark book."*

*"The course helped me assess myself and to see were I was with my computer knowledge and skills. There is a large room for improvement on my side. Thanks."*

*"The course in general was a complete eye-opener and a new learning experience. It is easy to follow and with the facilitation skills we learnt makes it much easier to take other individuals through the course."*

*"I found the course informative, well planned and useful. I've acquired new and more challenging skills eg. Pivot table and dynamic markbook."*

Whilst this training of trainers was not hugely successful in terms of adding many new trainers to the pool – it was successful in terms of exposing more people to the ICT Skills for Teachers courseware and training model. Some of the new trainers will be able to be used in the Sci-Bono project as well as other potential projects in Gauteng.

## One Step Further

### 8 One Step Further: Course Development and Training of Trainers

For some time ICT Integration (WebQuests) trainers have reported that teachers would be better equipped for the WebQuests course if they had had some exposure to basic ICT integration and information skills before embarking on WebQuests. This feedback, and a desire to encourage teachers to use the Encarta materials which are included as part of the SA Schools Agreement



software, led to Microsoft sponsoring the development of the One Step Further course.

One Step Further helps bridge the gap between the skills that are acquired through ICT Skills for Teachers training and the skills needed to successfully complete the WebQuests (ICT Integration) course. One Step Further helps teachers to find resources on the Internet and Encarta and to then turn these into learning objects for use in the classroom. The One Step Further course is

written in One Note which means that at the same time as trainees learn about information skills they become familiar with using One Note.

On the 18th and 19th of August 2008 fifteen trainers were trained in how to facilitate this new course and this group was also the first to experience the course themselves. Educational ICT Consultant, Gerald Roos, who developed the materials facilitated the training. Training was held at St Stithians Collegiate just prior to the Microsoft Innovative Teacher Awards finals. This enabled many Innovative Teacher finalists, who were already travelling to Johannesburg to attend the finals, being trained as One Step Further facilitators.



## 9 One Step Further in Ten Clusters

In 2009 three rounds of Microsoft sponsored ten rounds of One Step Further training. The intention of this project were threefold: firstly – they would provide an opportunity to implement the new course which had been developed in 2008; secondly – they would provide an opportunity for newly trained trainers to run the course and thirdly, they would give an opportunity to teachers who had had some previous Partners in Learning training through the ICT Skills for Teachers course to develop their skills further with a more advanced course. Three rounds of clustered One Step Further training took place in Gauteng, as follows:

### 9.1 *Brescia House Cluster*

Training for 20 teachers drawn from seven Johannesburg schools (all of which had participated in prior Partners in Learning training) attended the One Step Further course in July 2009. The teachers reported that the parts of the course they enjoyed most were: learning about learning objects; gathering useful resources and being exposed to new Microsoft products including Bing, Encarta and One Note. The teachers also enjoyed the learning approach of the course, remarking that they enjoyed it being a “hands on” course and that they had gained skills that “could be used over and over again”.

A suggestion for improving the course was to make an evaluation copy of One Note available to each participant so that teachers could practice what they had learnt. Of course, teachers from government schools would be able to get access to One Note as part of the Microsoft Schools Agreement and teachers with internet access would be able to download a trial version.

### 9.2 *Madlomsobo Combined School Cluster*

This training session, held in the June 2009 school holidays included 32 teachers. The training was almost derailed by the facilitator not being able to load the required software at the training venue – however eventually he was given administrative rights in time to install OneNote and Encarta.



The trainer reported that “All the teachers were seeing Microsoft

One Note for the first time. They found it fascinating. They enjoyed the training a lot. Most of them struggled a bit in the beginning but after a few hours they openly said that it was an interesting programme”.

Although the languages teachers complained that there were special resources included in the training materials for maths and science, but nothing for them, on the whole the teachers enjoyed and benefitted from the course. As one teacher said: “I am able to find appropriate resources for my learners using Encarta. I am able to use OneNote to collect all my learning objects. I can be glad if I can be trained again to improve my skills.”

### **9.3 Hoerskool Johan Jurgens Cluster**

The logistics of this round of training held in the June 2009 holidays worked extremely well. Firstly – the software that was required had been loaded on to the computers days before the training commenced and the schools computer lab manager was on hand to ensure that there were no technical troubles. Secondly – the participants had been well chosen by the trainers (who was also a district ICT Co-ordinator) to include educators who had performed well during the district ICT conference and educators who had participated in the provincial ICT policy pilot project and teachers recruited at cluster meetings.



Without having to deal with technical issues or teachers who lacked basic computer skills, the trainer was able to ensure that all the participants mastered the gathering activities and were able to produce learning objects by the end of the course. The trainer remarked that “there was a lot of collaboration and team work throughout the course” and that the showcase at the end of the second day was the highlight of the course.

## **WebQuests**

### **10 WebQuests in Schools Training - 2008**

In previous years WebQuests training offered through this project took place for teachers from individual schools. Whilst this was successful in schools where there were many ICT literate teachers, it proved problematic at schools where only a few teachers had good computer skills and the remaining teachers battled to complete the WebQuests course. To overcome this, in 2008 a decision was made to offer WebQuests training to clusters of teachers who had the necessary ICT skills, and where possible to include teachers who had already completed preliminary Partners in Learning training. Four rounds of clustered Microsoft WebQuests training took place in 2008 including two clusters of schools in Gauteng. A round of training was also run for teachers at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls.

#### **10.1 Midrand Cluster**

- Bramley Primary
- Carter Primary
- Equisweni Primary

- Hillcrest Primary
- Ivory Park Secondary
- Mikateka Primary
- Minerva High
- Penelopele Oracle

This session incorporated teachers who had already participated in ICT Skills for Teachers training, as well as representatives from Microsoft’s adopted school, Minerva. Despite this some of the participants still had weak ICT skills and the trainer had to support each participant with the exception of one teacher who created his own WebQuest “from scratch”. The training sessions were also disrupted by load shedding. The trainer promised to stay in contact with the participants via email to encourage them to implement the WebQuests that they worked on during training.

Feedback from participants included the following comments:

*“The facilitator made it easy for us to engage with each other and gave us assistance where required. Opportunities to expand were also available.”*

*“This training was very challenging to me. It was the first time I heard and learnt about the WebQuest. This is a new experience all together.”*

*“WebQuest is one of the teaching and learning tools that I think can deliver the goods required in education. Let the tool be promoted in all GDE schools.”*

## **10.2 Johannesburg Cluster**

- Veritas High School
- Johannesburg Hospital School
- Hoerskool Noorheuwel
- The Glen High School
- Parktown Boys High School
- Walter Sisulu Special School
- Leratong Primary
- Parktown Girls High School
- Johannesburg Muslim School
- Mandisa Shiceka High School
- Randfontein High School
- Mokgome High School

This WebQuests training session included teachers who were part of the Johannesburg Peer Coach Cluster and others who had completed Intel training or who were involved in the Learning Gateway Pilot project. Unfortunately only thirteen out of the twenty one expected participants arrived for training, and of these some had weak computer skills. Despite these set-backs the trainer used the three days of training to ensure that all the participants were able to grasp the concept of a WebQuest and he reported that “many indicated that they will use their WebQuest in their classes with a little further refinement”.

Some feedback from trainees appears below:

*“It is essential for educators to have a grasp of computer skills in terms of links to websites so as to make the webquest experience smooth. Fortunately I had such knowledge but the trainer was required to assist certain members of the team extensively.”*

*“I will definitely be using the webquest I made in my class in the new year and fortunately I did find some really fantastic resources in the process.”*

*“WebQuest is an interesting way of collaborative teaching – it is engaging and involves experiential learning through surfing the net.*

### **10.3 Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls – WebQuests**

In 2009 the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls was being considered as a potential Microsoft Innovative School and Microsoft requested that teachers from the school be offered as much Partners in Learning training as possible. In addition to teachers from the school participating in the Johannesburg Peer Coaching Cluster, and the school sponsoring a one day introduction to ICT Skills to Teachers, Microsoft sponsored a WebQuests course for teachers at the school. Training took place between 2 and 3 June at the Academy with a total of 31 teachers attending the training.



The trainer reported that “it was immediately evident that this was an exceptional group of teachers. The feedback and interaction was easy to facilitate.” He also noted that “for the first time ever in my experience groups were able to complete the task set for them in this workshop. The functionality of groups was good from the outset. Usually this workshop is used to highlight a lack of group collaboration and reflect in how this can be remedied. This group did not really encounter collaboration difficulties.”



concentration was intense for long periods of time.”

In the second workshop the consensus seeking discussion lasted for a long time, indicating that they were engaging deeply with the task and not seeking shortcuts. The trainer reported “The positive spirit of the teachers was once again evident as they embarked on the long and demanding task of finding and adapting WebQuests. This process is filled with a variety of challenges and they persevered. It became evident that many of the teachers had bought into the concept of the WebQuest, their

In conclusion the trainer stated that he was very confident that most of these teachers will use WebQuests in class sometime this year and that the money spent on the workshop was well-invested.

## Peer Coaching

### 11 Peer Coaching Training of Trainers

A national Peer Coaching “train the trainer” session was conducted in Gauteng in April 2007. At this session, 11 peer coach trainers were trained. Each new trainer was asked to help recruit potential peer coaches from schools in his or her vicinity to commence training.

### 12 Peer Coaching Clustered Training

To date the following clusters of Gauteng schools have participated in Peer Coaching:

#### 12.1 2007 – Soweto Cluster

- Letsibogo Secondary School
- Mokgome Secondary School
- Reasoma Secondary School
- Tsogang Primary
- Veritas Secondary School



Training for the Soweto cluster was held at Letsibogo Girls School (one of the case-study schools) for the first three sessions, however as the Internet was very slow some computers could not access the SchoolNet “Communities” website. Access to the Dell laptops from the African Schools Technology and Innovation Centre has made it possible to relocate subsequent training to a venue with better internet access.

This group has particularly enjoyed the “Classroom Strategies” workshop as it helped them to think of different ways of integrating ICT into an assessment standards-based curriculum. They also enjoyed designing lessons that actively engage students, and promote critical thinking and problem solving skills.

According to the trainer: *“These activities provided them with different strategies and they have realized what they missing in their lesson if they don’t integrate ICT. Various website were used and they can’t wait to fully use the South African websites that are provided in this session.”*

The enjoyment of the new peer coaches is evident in the following quotations:

*“Co-operation between us & the facilitator is very good; I hope this will prevail until the end.”*

*“Overall the session was great with more hands on activities that help me to greatly understand and have clarity on most topics I wasn’t sure about.”*

#### 12.2 2008 Soweto Cluster

- Letsibogo Secondary School
- Mokgome Secondary School
- Reasoma Secondary School
- Tsogang Primary School

- Veritas Secondary School



Letsibogo is one of the Microsoft case study schools and attendance of the peer coaching programme has resulted in marked improvement in the quality of lessons and integration of ICT in the classroom.

Generally the professional development levels at these schools are very low. The schools that perform better tend to have more support from school management and active and motivated staff.

Peer coaches in this group raised several issues around the role of management in the peer coach programme.

*“Before the management can nurture peer coaching, they should be trained as well. The reason being they make it difficult for others to make use of the recourses because they are afraid that teachers will know more than they know.”*

*“A period specifically for e-learning is a good idea, as well as one period per month where teachers stay after school to update their computer skills and to research the internet. The management can co-operate in this way. The computer centre can be viewed more holistically.”*

### **12.3 Johannesburg**

- Veritas High School
- Althlone Boys’ High
- Don Mattera High School
- Eldo Crest Primary School
- Johannesburg Hospital School
- Parktown Boys’ high School
- St. Ives Primary School
- Hoërskool Noordheuwel

Throughout the programme peer coaches had to change goals to reflect their changing coaching plans at their schools. This showed that their interventions with their colleagues were working and continually adapting to the needs of teachers. The lack of Internet connectivity still poses a problem as it hinders the participation of coaches with one another between sessions; however despite the challenges, peer coaches are still able to remain motivated and encouraged to continue with the programme.

Below are some coaches’ reflections

*“Today’ session, like always was great, I learned new ways of dealing with unwilling teachers, I also learned new ways of hooking unhooked teachers. “*

*“The way is becoming clearer each time we have a session. Today was more informative than the ones before. I’m able to upload a file from removable disc. I can copy and edit from the disc. I shared*

my experiences of what happened at my work place with regard to peer coaching. I learned various approaches to overcome my roadblocks.”

#### **12.4 Tshwane North**

- Makgetse High School
- Northridge High School
- Motshegofadiwa Primary
- Shoshanguve High School
- Laërskool Wonderboom
- Modilati Secondary School
- Lethabong Secondary
- Makhosini Secondary



The number of participants in this cluster reduced from 19 to 11 and this can be attributed to poor management support of some coaches. However the principals and coaches from Shoshanguve High, Northridge High and Laërskool Wonderboom should be commended for their dedication to this programme.

Participants had the following to say during their last session:

*“I find the session extremely informative and I believe that we can improve to a great extent by implementing the principles of development and coaching.”*

*“The important factors in terms of support are: communication and report to the SMT and GB, provide support to new members and to be enthusiastic and positive. It is contagious.”*

*“We had numerous workshops and continue in house training at school. Some of the teachers already use their lessons in the classroom. We also use the ideal lesson plan to evaluate lessons to ensure that it is on a high standard. In August we had a parent meeting and showed them how ICT is going to be part of the curriculum. The same presentation we then showed to the rest of the staff. The staff was also inspired to see how ICT can enlighten their lessons. The foundation was laid and from here on the circle of effective ICT use can only grow more. “*

#### **12.5 2009 – Johannesburg Cluster**

- Athlone Girls Sec.
- JHB Hospital
- Windmill Park
- Mogkome Sec. School
- Mogkome Sec. School
- Oprah W. Academy
- Polokegong Primary School
- Windmill Park
- Realeboha School
- Diepsloot Combined
- Reasuma Secondary School
- St Stithians College



This cluster involved a mix of “disadvantaged schools” as well as two “advantaged schools” namely Saint Stithian’s College and Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls. At the onset this was viewed with trepidation as this course typically recruits disadvantaged schools. Despite this, the cluster worked very well together and has displayed much comradery amongst participating coaches.

## Projects involving a range of Partners in Learning courses

### 13 Case Study Schools Project

The aim of this project was to offer ten schools in three provinces the full range of Partners in Learning training. The case study schools selected from Gauteng and the courses they received in 2007 are as follows:

ICT Skills for Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minerva High School</li><li>• Landulwazi Comprehensive School</li></ul>
ICT Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gatang High School</li><li>• Minerva High School</li><li>• Pele ya Pele High School</li><li>• Letsibogo Girls School</li></ul>
WebQuests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pele ya Pele High School</li><li>• Letsibogo Girls School</li></ul>
HelpDesk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letsibogo Girls School</li><li>• Landulwazi High School</li><li>• Gatang High School</li><li>• Minerva High School</li></ul>

In addition to receiving training, it was decided that the schools would participate in an evaluation project focusing on the implementation of Partners in Learning training over an appropriate period of time. The courses described below took place in 2007 and we plan to offer further courses to these schools as they reach the required level of ICT competency.

Below are reports on the various training courses offered:

#### 13.1 *ICT Skills for Teachers*

Whilst most of the Case Study Schools had already participated in the ICT Skills for Teachers course in 2006, two of the Gauteng case study schools received their training in 2007.

According to the trainer, the Minerva High School training “went well despite the fact that the venue was so dirty and some computers were not working, educators were sharing computers,... CD Roms were not working in most computers and also the lab was not networked...”. In addition to conducting training the trainer solved some of their technical problems and also tried to motivate teachers to take better care of their computer facilities and ensure that they are used more effectively. She reported “we spoke about forming the computer lab committee that will ensure the lab is clean and also to know how many computers were working and so on”. Despite the success of

this initial training, follow-up training has been arranged and cancelled by the school numerous times. We are now waiting for the school to let us know when they would like follow-up training.

Like the training at Minerva High School, the training at Landulwazi Comprehensive School also was beset with technical issues. Despite assurances that the lab was in good working order, during initial training the trainer reported that “the internet was not working, the computers were not networked and only two CD drives could open”. The trainer nonetheless managed to overcome these problems, load the CD and begin training. The trainee reports were very positive, including the comments:

*“I enjoyed the training. It has equipped my computer skills and I feel more independent to use ICT”*

*“Please continue supporting us with such useful ICT programmes in the future”.*

### **13.2 ICT Leadership for Education Managers**

At the Gauteng training, all four of the case study schools were represented; Gatang Comprehensive, Landulwazi Comprehensive, Letsibogo High and Minerva High. The trainer reported that participants “were aware of the challenges they face in their particular schools but are ready to use all the possibilities/attributes of the leadership descriptors... in search of solutions and approaches to get their schools ICT ready and integrating ICT.” The cluster approach also proved successful, with participants arranging to visit one another’s schools to observe one another’s practices as a result of the interaction on this course.

Below is a sample of responses from participants which indicate that this course is well received by members of school management:

*“This course has been very helpful to me and hope we should continue having such courses to enhance our computer literacy. The district coordinator should always visit schools which did the training to check with them the application part of it”*

*“A course is as good as the facilitator. If the facilitator knows his/ her staff, then everything will just flow. This was the case with our course!”*

*“I feel more confident and motivated and I can’t wait to put what I learned here into practice right away!”*

*“The course was very interesting, I’ll try by all means to implement it despite the fact that time is just so much against us as managers in schools.”*

### **13.3 WebQuests**

The Letsibogo WebQuest training had a number of challenges. The trainer reported:

*(The teachers’) “Skills, particularly surfing the web for further information and further navigation, were an obstacle to progress within the workshops... (and that) reading information on the screen was the next challenge ...because they are not used to that.”*

Despite these obstacles some of the teachers present were able to adapt or develop WebQuests and the trainer encouraged them to use the WebQuests with their learners to see how they respond.

At Pele-ya-Pele High School, the trainer reported that “these teachers were motivated to learn in general” but that “the computer skills inefficiencies on the part of the delegates always delayed progression during workshops’ activities.” The trainer also realised that “the dynamics of a school on accessing the internet for learners is a sensitive issue and we had a discussion on how to deal with resources”. The overall response of participants was very positive and this is well summed up in this quote from one of the participants:

*“The course to me was very fruitful. I learned so many things that I did not expect. I wish to have more information about the Webquest. This was very interesting and motivating. We are blessed Mr Facilitator, let God bless you.”*

The Case Study Schools, including Minerva High School, that have not yet had their WebQuest Training will receive it as soon as they have a sufficient number of teachers with the appropriate ICT skills and a stable internet connection for the whole computer room to warrant running the course.

#### **13.4 Help Desk**

The Gauteng Help Desk training session included the four Gauteng cases study schools (Letsibogo Girls School, Landulwazi High School, Gatang comprehensive and Minerva High School). In addition representatives from Pele-ya-Pele also attended as although this school is in the Free State it is situated in Sasolburg which is closer to the University of Johannesburg (where this training was held) than to the University of QwaQwa (where the Free State training took place).

Training was conducted in a classroom with enough computers for the training and there was also ample space available for demonstration purposes.

The trainer described the participants as follows:

*“All Trainees were very participative despite that it was a mix of both learners and educators and none of them had previous experience on fixing a computer except only operating it. Educators looked comfortable being taught something new together with their learners.”*

There was a request from trainees for follow up training and more training in general.

## **14 Bouquet Training in Randfontein, Bloemfontein & East London Clusters**

One of the objectives of the 60 Sessions Project was to provide the full range of Partners in Learning courses – or “bouquets” of teacher training courses to clusters of schools. The following schools in Gauteng were selected to form one of the clusters for this project:

- Bulelani Primary School
- Matlapaneng Primary School
- Dr Yusuf Dadoo Primary
- Randfontein High School
- FJ Wells Primary School
- Phahama Secondary School
- Mosupatsela High School

These schools were then offered the following Microsoft Partners in Learning Courses: ICT Leadership for Education Managers, ICT Skills for Teachers, Help Desk and Peer Coaching in 2008

The following quotations illustrate the success of this learning approach:

#### **14.1 ICT Skills for Teachers**

*"This was one of the best presentations I have attended. I hope this filters down to all other educators as it is so helpful"*

*"Level of training (is) highly rated. Please arrange for more training"*

*"The course was interesting and enlightening. More time is needed in order to enforce the knowledge I have gained"*

*"This must be incorporated in the curriculum for completion of teaching qualifications..."*

#### **14.2 ICT Leadership for Education Managers**

*"I am motivated and I want to empower other staff members as soon as 2008"*

*"The course was an eye opener, I hope many courses and workshops of this nature be organised in the future."*

*"The course was very fruitful to me and I feel improved as far as my computer skills and understanding is concerned."*

#### **14.3 Help Desk training:**

*"The training was professionally conducted using as much aids (computers) as possible. The trainees were experts in their fields and knew the subject matter very well. I consider myself not only computer literate but also technically literate."*

*"The course was relevant to problems we encountered in our school. We acquired technical skills, we also gained insight and understanding about the hardware of computers."*

*"The course was interesting because we dealt with theory coupled with practical. That made it easy."*



## **15 Learning Gateway Pilot Schools**

In 2008 Microsoft was planning to introduce Learning Gateway into two schools in Gauteng District 2, Mandisa Shiceka and Randfontein High School, in order to demonstrate how this programme can be implemented in South African schools. In order to prepare the teachers and school management for this, SchoolNet SA was approached to offer ICT Skills for Teachers and ICT Leadership for Education Managers to teachers, school managers and district officials who will be involved in this project.

In addition to the Gateway schools, Microsoft South Africa is also committed to supporting Don Mattera - a special needs school in Eldorado Park. This school has already been included in Peer Coaching training however this project allowed for teachers at this school to receive additional training. This project also aimed to include school managers from Abel T Motshoane High School.

Teachers from this school have already received ICT Skills for Teachers training; however it was believed that the ICT Leadership for Education Managers course would encourage the more effective use of their Intel Classmate PCs.

### **15.1 ICT Skills for Teachers for Don Mattera Special School**

This course took place between 12 – 26 September 2008 and involved 16 teachers.

The course was a great success – it has been well communicated to the staff and the lab administrator was available to ensure that the computer system was operational. The teachers all had some computer skills prior to the training so after an initial introductory scenario they were able to pair and share, have group discussions and progress at their own pace. A highlight of the training was ensuring that each teacher had an operational e-mail address and then using e-mail to distribute and collect the evaluation forms.

The success of the training can also be attributed to the people involved, who the trainer describes as follows:

*“The school principal and the e-learning coordinator at the school were very supportive throughout the training and the educators as well were positive.”*

The response to the training from the participants was very positive as is shown in the quotations below:

*“The training was really interesting, but I still think that the duration was too short.”*

*“I really enjoyed this computer training – I feel empowered.”*

*“I enjoyed the course – also it helped me to improve my skills.”*

Our hope is that the combination of the computer skills acquired through this course and the coaching and integration skills acquired through the Peer Coaching course will lead to increased integration of ICT into teaching and learning at this school.

### **15.2 ICT Skills for Teachers for Randfontein High and Mandisa Shiceka (combined)**



Training took place between 19 October and 1 November 2008. Although the invitation to attend training was extended to both schools, the majority of the 14 participants came from Mandisa Shiceka school as Randfontein High School teachers had already had ICT Skills training through another project.

The trainer reported that the computers were networked with good connectivity and that each participant had his or her own computer to work on. The participants were described as “committed and passionate



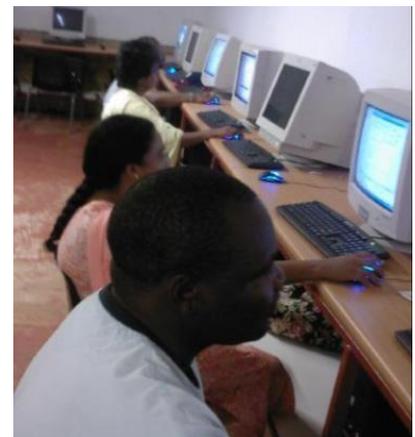
about learning and growing their ICT skills". During the initial training session, each participant was able to complete at least two scenarios and all the teachers participated actively and were open to new experiences. By the follow-up training some participants arrived with their personal laptops so that the trainer could assist them in loading the Partners in Learning software. The teachers particularly enjoyed group participation and learning about new scenarios from their peers. The training concluded with the teachers realising that "ICT is something they need to master". It is hoped that they will continue to build on the skills they have learnt by spending more time in the computer centre practicing their skills.

Some feedback from the trainees is recorded below:

*"The trainer was so helpful whenever we encountered problems. I wish I had a computer / laptop for more practice. This was an eye-opener and I'm working on acquiring one of these."*

*"The training is appropriate and useful. The workshop helped with the advanced computer skills and I am more confident with my computer skills."*

*"Before I attended the course I had no interest but I am excited to use the manual in the future."*



### **15.3 ICT Leadership for Education Managers**

This course took place on 1 and 2 October 2008 at Mandisa Shiceka Secondary School and was attended by eight district officials. Managers from both Don Mattera and Mandisa Shiceka confirmed that they would attend training but failed to arrive. The principal and one other school management team member from Abel T Motshoane initially accepted the invitation, but at the last minute said that they were unable to attend the training. Whilst the principal of Randfontein High has had previous ICT Leadership training through another project it was very disappointing that the managers from Mandisa Shiceka and Abel T Motshoane missed the opportunity to receive valuable guidance on implementing ICT policies, especially seeing that both of these schools are involved in pilot ICT initiatives (i.e. the Learning Gateway and Intel Classmates projects).

Despite the poor attendance, the trainer reported that "the participants found the workshop to be informative and would like to see many school managers going through this training." In particular the participants enjoyed the discussions and because the majority of participants came from the district office the trainer related the discussion to their work situation. According to the trainer the participants had good ICT skills which helped to fast track the training to enable participants to spend more time on the discussions around strategies for improved ICT integration at their schools.

The enjoyment of the course is reflected in the quotations below:

*"This training was worth attending. I definitely gained a lot and I enjoyed the discussions and more especially interacting with the computer itself."*

*“The facilitator seemed to know more about ICT Leadership and he was prepared.”*

*“More time required to revisit and sharpen skills acquired. This (course) at the beginning was focused more on principals but as managers in districts it brings about positive, effective and efficient performances. Good work done by Shadrack.”*

### **Conclusion**

We hope that the ICT Skills for Teachers training provided to teachers from Mandisa Shiceka and Randfontein High has better equipped them to implement the Learning Gateway pilot project. We are also pleased to report that teachers from both of these schools participated in WebQuests training as part of the Microsoft WebQuests in Schools project.

Similarly we hope that the teachers from Don Mattera will use their growing ICT confidence and enhanced computer skills to complete their administration tasks more effectively and that they will begin to integrate ICTs into their teaching and learning. Whilst it is a pity that the school management teams from the selected schools did not make use of the opportunity to attend the ICT Leadership for Education Managers course, we hope that the district officials who attended have been empowered with skills that they will be able to pass on to the managers with whom they work.

## **16 Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum**

The Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum Awards recognizes teachers who using technology to create exciting teaching and learning opportunities within their classrooms. Teachers from Gauteng have participated in this event every year since its inception – with the following Gauteng teachers being selected as finalists in the following years:

Year	Teacher	School
2007	Jacqueline Batchelor Karin Renate Horne Abdullah Sujee Neen Hollick Kubendhran Naidoo Murphy Mugabi	Cornwall Hill College Crawford Pretoria Preparatory Roshnee Islamic School Pecanwood College St. Stithians Girls' College Reasoma Secondary School
2008	Jacqueline Batchelor Lyneth Crighton Lazarus Malebana Murphy Mugabi Pauline Skosana	Cornwall Hill College St Stithian Girls' College Leitsibolo PS Reasoma Secondary School Hlolisisa Combine School
2009	Bridget Flemming John-Paul Lubbe Kongko Makau Dawn Schmitz	St. David's Marist Inanda St Johns College Mabogopedi Secondary School Montrose Primary School

In 2008 Jacqueline Batchelor won the Innovation in Content category of the South African Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum. From there she represented South Africa at the Worldwide Innovative Teachers Forum in Hong Kong where her life sciences project entitled “Dissections for All” was recognized as a semifinalist.



From 2008 Innovation Workshops have been offered to encourage more teachers to enter the competition and to expose a wider audience to innovative ways of enhancing their lessons using ICT. An Innovation Workshop has been held in Gauteng every year since 2008 and in 2010 two workshops were held. In each year, these workshops have contributed to Gauteng teachers being selected as finalists in the Microsoft Innovative Teachers Awards and we hope that this will again prove true in the 2010 competition.

## **17 University of Witwatersrand – ACE Curriculum Development**

SchoolNet SA was approached by the University of the Witwatersrand to provide support for their ACE in e-learning modules. Janet Thomson and Megan Rademeyer attended a planning meeting at which the topics for the various modules were outlined and discussed. Microsoft then agreed to provide support for the Partners in Learning materials that would be suitable for this course to be adapted. In particular, components of the ICT Skills for Teachers and the ICT Leadership for Education Managers courses were adapted by ICT consultant Gerald Roos for inclusion in the module on “Computers in Schools: Principles, Policy and Planning”. Similarly components of the WebQuests course were included in the module on “eLearning Policy and Assessment”. Copies of the enhanced Partners in Learning CD have also been provided to WITS for distribution amongst students completing this course. This contribution to the development of courseware will assist the many Gauteng teachers who are participating in this course on bursaries from the Gauteng Department of Education.

## **18 Conclusion and Recommendations**

SchoolNet SA and Microsoft are proud of the training that we have offered to teachers in Gauteng and believe that we have helped to empower teachers to begin to use ICT effectively in education. It is pleasing that in addition to the training that Microsoft has sponsored, the Free State Department of Education has sponsored the rollout of additional training sessions using the Microsoft Partners in Learning training materials. Our hope is that we will be able to continue to offer training to more teachers at more schools in this province and that we will be able to go back to schools where we have already offered some training to continue to develop skills further. We look forward to working with the Department of Education, Microsoft and other stakeholders to continue to offer professional development opportunities in Gauteng.

**Megan Rademeyer**  
**Programmes Manager**  
**SchoolNet SA – April 2010**