



Amandla Vinjwa advocates upskilling yourself on the Microsoft Educator Community



Amandla Vinjwa, a Social Sciences, Maths and Technology teacher from Sivile Primary School in Khayelitsha, believes in upskilling himself through professional development. Amandla makes the most of the free online courses offered to teachers on the Microsoft Educator Community and to date has earned 29 badges for activities that he has completed.

Amandla had an opportunity to be part of the South African Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert team that attended the Microsoft Education Exchange (E2) held in Toronto, Canada in March 2017. After returning from this forum, he was given the position of ICT coordinator at his school, which allows him to share his enthusiasm for integrating technology with his colleagues.

For Amandla, E2 was a life changing experience. He reports, "We had an opportunity to interact with educators from around the world, sharing views and ideas about teaching strategies, methods, teaching resources and materials. The lead teachers shared their best teaching practices and Microsoft tools that could be customized to fit your desired classroom environment."

Amandla says "ICT technology and especially the use of Microsoft tools, are like a bridge that can help you to cross a gigantic river". According to Amandla, Microsoft tools have helped him to find creative and innovative ways of teaching. Amandla was particularly interested in technology to address different learners' needs that were showcased at E2, stating "the tools that promote inclusivity and diversify learning to create dynamic and vibrant learning enable us as teachers to be champions in our teaching".

Overview

Country: South Africa
Location: Khayelitsha, Western Cape
Industry: Education

Software and services:
Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert program

Websites:
[Microsoft.education.com](https://microsoft.education.com)

Partners:
SchoolNet SA

Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts advance the conversation about improving student outcomes through innovative uses of technology in teaching and learning.





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“It seems as if most teachers know little or nothing about the Microsoft Educator Community and the rich teaching and learning resources that are found there. Therefore, I am responsible to stand tall and spread the word to create more educational awareness about that.”

Amandla Vinjwa,
ICT Technology Co-ordinator,
Sivile Primary School

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft in Education, visit:

www.microsoft.com/education/ww/solutions/Pages/index.aspx

To find out about the Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert program, see:

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/educators/miee/default.aspx>

Teacher Ambassador support

As part of the Microsoft Schools Program, Microsoft provides the services of a Teacher Ambassador to Sivile Primary. “Mr Sandile Maliwa, the Microsoft Ambassador who is connected to my school, serves as a resource person in our school giving us tips and ideas on how to use Microsoft applications. He presented several Microsoft training and information sessions to the staff in general. We have benefitted a lot from being able to call on Mr Maliwa,” reports Vinjwa.

Microsoft tools in use

Amandla uses Office 365, OneNote, Skype in the Classroom, Microsoft PowerPoint and Sway in his lessons, having learnt how to use these by doing the courses provided by the Microsoft Educator Community. He says OneNote is his favourite tool. “I like to use OneNote because it can include different forms of media such as text, videos, audio and images, and it can be used collaboratively as well.”

Amandla has been trying out Microsoft Forms and believes this tool could be very useful for assessment. “Microsoft Forms make it possible for teachers to design tests, questionnaires and quizzes. The learners can be assessed, a teacher can diversify an assessment according to learner needs, and by analyzing the results can detect the areas needing more intervention and support.”

According to Amandla, Microsoft Forms provides a useful feature that allows a teacher to select question types from multiple-choice questions, short discussion questions and the labeling of pictures and text among others. “The beauty of this application is that marking is made easier and faster. You create your own memorandum, and Microsoft Forms matches the responses and your anticipated answer or whatever input you inserted in advance. It then marks the answers. The marks are calculated automatically by the program.”

Overcoming Challenges

Sivile Primary has its challenges in terms of ICT resources and limited internet connectivity but this doesn't hold back Amandla. He likes to share his knowledge with other teachers. “I initiate both formal and informal trainings and coaching sessions. My hands, heart, and head are always open to help and assist whenever help is needed.”

Amandla would like to see all the learners in South Africa having access to ICT resources. He believes the effective use of technology can help learners develop to their full potential in spite of their socio-economic backgrounds and personal circumstances.

Key Technology

- Office 365, Microsoft Office
- Skype, PowerPoint
- Sway, OneNote, Microsoft Forms