

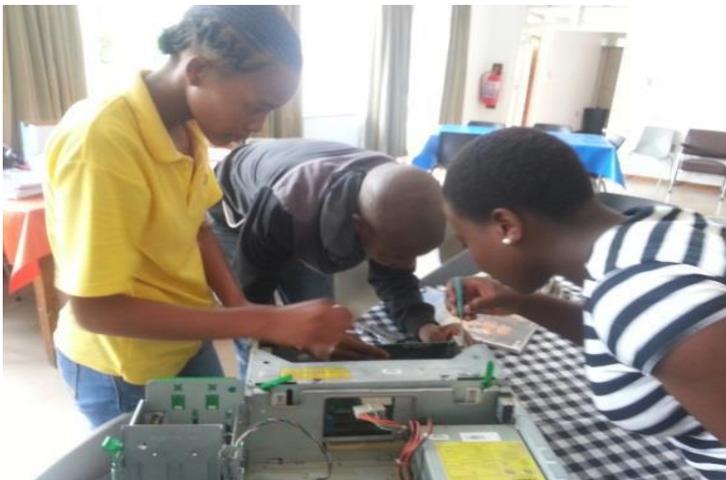
Report on FS DoE Deploying Student Technical Support Solutions (Helpdesk) in 10 Clusters 2013 -2015

Introduction

For the past 7 years FS Department of Education has been setting aside funds to provide ICT training in schools of all five districts in Free State. The aim of the Helpdesk course is for schools to establish its own Helpdesk teams and maintain their own computers. The programme assists both learners and teachers from schools to face this challenge with confidence. The Student Help Desk training programme is designed to help schools setup learner-managed technical help desks. The following modules were covered: Planning your school's Helpdesk, Understanding hardware, Installing windows XP professional, Introduction to troubleshooting, supporting hardware, performing maintenance and completing special projects.

Motheo District

The schools that participated in Motheo were Heartherdale CS, Eunice SS, Comm Tech. HS, Dr



Blok SS, Castlebridge, Jim Fouche SS, Tshepang CS, Kagisano CS, Kagisano CS, Welkom High School, Bahale SS, Seemahale SS. The course was mostly attended by CAT teachers and CAT & IT Subject Advisors. The course content was slightly adapted to address the aim of the training which was to equip the teachers with technical knowledge of hard- and software so they could have a better understanding of how computers operate and how networks are setup. The

participants were very active and dedicated. Participants were sharp and could help others that were somewhat falling behind when the trainer asked them to do so. The Networking part of the course was difficult for the trainees and took extremely long to explain especially the practical part but at the end they understood and with practice they will be okay. Participants were allowed interaction with most of the common hardware found in school computer centers. They were also shown some older technologies as well as some of the latest PC technology. The trainees liked this part of the training the most and were amazed at the various technologies that are available. Several computer components were on display for the participants to identify and to interact with. The trainer offered his assistance to setup the helpdesk data base at the schools should they need assistance.

Thabo Mofutsanyane District

Dirkie Uys HS, Iphondle SS, Intuthuko-Kahleho SS, Taung SS, Evungwini SS, Motshepua SS, Moriti wa Thuto SS, Thabisang SS. These participants had more understanding of hardware and how it works as the trainer had been introducing this chapter bit by bit during previous chapters. The trainees understood that any computer hardware should be accompanied by a device driver in order



for it to work. Learners were encouraged to make it their business to know all activities taking place in the computer room and act as lab assistance where possible. This way they will be putting what they have learnt during the workshop into practice and at the same time helping the school. They worked confidently and asked questions spontaneously as a result pair and share sessions got longer.

Lejweleputswa District

Legaritse SS, Lephola SS, Thotagauta SS, Letsete SS, Unitas SS and Lenakeng SS learners and educators attended the Helpdesk course.



These trainees were a very positive group of learners and teachers, who were actively involved throughout the course. Learners were very interested and they shared their views on how excited they were about touching and identifying different components that make up a computer and their functions. The trainer had no doubt that these learners will definitely apply the skills and knowledge acquired during the training sessions in their everyday lives especially solving problems their schools could face in future. By the end of the

chapter (Introduction to trouble shooting) already the teachers and learners had started trouble shooting some of the problems they had been having with their computers at their schools and some at home. Learners were provided with challenges to solve individually and they worked on all computers which were marked to be not working in the schools lab and by the end of the session all computers were fixed and in working conditions.

Xhariep District

Boaramelo SS, Lekhulong SS, Concordia SS and Sehunelo SS attended the course. The trainer's approach to the group was different to the way he usually conducted training as a result teachers and learners paid better attention. This also created enthusiasm and a competition amongst the groups. Understanding the hardware is the chapter that most trainees enjoyed the most because the training was conducted in a classroom and participants were allowed interaction with most of the common hardware found in the school computer center. They were also shown some older technologies as well as some of the latest PC technology. Learners were also asked to perform the following activities at their respective schools. Compile the inventory of the computers in the computer lab, to draw up a rooster for the week and to design a ticket request for their schools.



Examples were provided taken from the internet. They were encouraged to look for PCs that are not working at school and to try and identify the problems. All the learners performed the tasks and the trainer checked the work done and most of schools had done a very good job. The teachers were very excited about the information provided as it empowered them to solve problems they were already experiencing at schools. Supporting security need on the computer was explained and learners realized how they have been spreading viruses unaware at schools and at home by using memory sticks and not having proper protection for the computers. The facilitator demonstrated the installation of the database and then asked the trainees to do the installation themselves. The installations went smoothly. On the last day of the workshop about 2 hours was spent discussing and compiling an implementation plan for the individual schools.

Fezile Dabi District

The schools that benefitted from the initiative were Dr Cingo SS, Bodibeng SS, Brentpark SS, Kananelo SS, Thakameso CS, Cedar College, Sakubutsha-kahubutjha SS, Khopoleng CS and Iketsetseng-Zenzele CS. The workshop went very well in both clusters and teachers were really



excited to explore the use of the Help Desk databases. Learners and educators were encouraged to learn more about computers. The level of interest and the passion for IT of learners who were selected to attend this workshop was very pleasing. Both learners and educators were encouraged to learn more about computers. The trainer identified learners who were the best candidates for making successful help desk teams in all the schools present.

As and when a new concept was learned, learners practiced and by the end of the sessions learners were able to perform some tasks and to respond to the trainers instructions quickly that even teachers were amazed by how fast learners have learnt such difficult concepts in short space of time. The activities on how to support the operating system learners performed very well.

Comments from evaluation forms

“I am happy about the workshop, if given another workshop like this it will be a bonus. Facilitator knows what he is doing. Catering was superb.” “The training was very exciting because we were HANDS ON and really addresses the challenges we have at school.” At first I felt that I am going to give up because I didn't know that I have this knowledge to learn about the computer. I am very grateful for all the training and the opportunity to learn about CAT and I'm willing to help others as now because now I know a lot about CAT.”

“In this course I have gained so much. It really inspired me and upgraded my knowledge. Now that I have learned so much and become a member of help desk it was such an opportunity for me that I am going to use to talk my knowledge to the next level by sharing everything that have learned with others. This course saved me in many ways financially and for my own interest because in the future whenever I or someone in my family come across problem with the computer I will be able to resolve the problem, and instead of giving the money away just throw it in the pocket. I am so proud and happy for myself for coming to this course and it was magnificent knowing you and also spending time with you”

Conclusion

The training sessions have been enjoyed by teachers and they have been exposed to a wealth of new resources and gained technical skills to implement in sustaining and maintaining their own computer centers.