Microsoft USO Western Cape Department of Education Master Training

Description of Project

In support of the Universal Services Obligation (USO) rollout of devices and ICT equipment to schools, Microsoft agreed to assist the Western Cape Education Department with facilitating a master training session for trainers from all districts. These trainers will then run 38 sessions of clustered training for teachers from schools in their districts who have received tabled as part of the USO rollout.

The intention of this training program is to ensure that the teachers are able to leverage the tools at hand to enhance teaching and learning, administration, and managing a class using ICT resources. Whilst different schools are receiving different makes of tablets, the intention of the sessions is also to familiarise teachers with the Microsoft tools and platforms that are available to all teachers, on whichever device they receive.
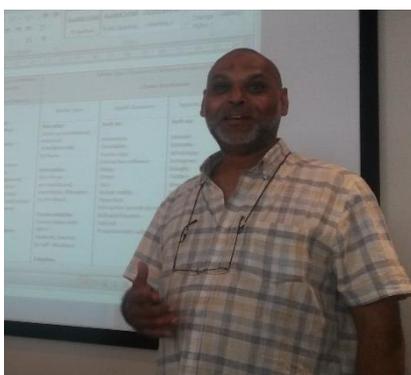

Description of Master Training

Master Training for this project took place at the Microsoft offices in Mowbray, Cape Town on the following dates:
Friday 26 February 2016 2:00pm – 5:00pm
Saturday 27 February 2016 8:30pm – 5:00pm
A total of 26 potential trainers attended the train the trainers' workshop, representing each of the eight Western Cape Department of Education districts.

The first afternoon of training was facilitated by Western Cape Department of Education Chief Education Specialist for eLearning, Osman Sadeck. The following topics were covered:

Needs of the teachers
o   Determine category of needs
o   What is the expected outcome of this?
o   What do we do and what do we expect to happen?

Element of Planning
o   Plan the use of ICTs for lessons
o   Provide opportunities for learners to use technology to learn
o   Be creators of content / assessment

WCED Program - Preparation
- o TPACK
- o Use sound pedagogies in the choice of technology to teach and for learners to learn
- o LMS

Unfortunately the set of devices that the participants were meant to use during this session were not available for demonstration purposes, but fortunately the participants were still able to access the courseware using the Western Cape Department of Education Moodle learning management system. Because of the limited duration of this session, Sadeck worked through the main points of the materials and simultaneously gave the potential trainers tips for facilitating this course.

The second day of training lasted a full day and was facilitated by SchoolNet's Programmes Manager and Microsoft Fellow, Megan Rademeyer. The following topics were covered:

Introduction activity
- o What is a Sway?
- o Create and share a Sway to introduce yourself

Microsoft Educator Community
- o A tour of what is on offer
- o Complete your profile
- o Online courses and Learning Pathways

Introduction to the Teaching with Technology course
- o Navigating through the course
- o Trying out one module of the course

Other tools that can be leveraged through the USO Devices
- o OneNote
- o Skype in the Classroom
- o Yammer
- o Excel Online Survey

TeachMeet sharing session
- o An opportunity for willing trainers to share (in under 3 minutes each!) a tool which can be accessed on the USO devices that can be used to enhance teaching

Planning for the training rollout
- o Training documentation: trainer contract, registers, reports, participant evaluations
- o Providing support to teachers completing Teaching with Technology rollout
- o SACE accreditation process
- o Microsoft Certified Educator Certification through CTU Centres

Participants enjoyed the opportunities given during this session to try out some of the newer Microsoft tools. For example, the introductory activity involved making a Sway to introduce yourself and the courseware for the workshop was put into a OneNote which all

participants were given access to. Delegates were all encouraged to join the Microsoft Educator Network and to complete their profiles. They were then each given a session promotion code to enter into the Microsoft Educator Community so that they would receive recognition for attending the training event.

The main focus of the training session was to provide potential trainers with an experience of working through the online Teaching with Technology course as delegates as this is the course which they will be expected to introduce teachers to in their districts.
After an orientation to the new 2016 Teaching with Technology Online course was provided delegates began working through the courseware. Whilst there were some connectivity challenges, those delegates who were able to connect were able to navigate through the course quite easily.

Training Evaluation

At the end of the second day of training, participants were asked to complete an online training evaluation. Summarised below is the feedback submitted by 25 participants, which indicates that on the whole the course was well received, with participants finding the materials, networking and discussions to be useful:

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
I enjoyed the discussions about innovative use of ICT in education	12	12	
I enjoyed the materials that were provided	15	9	
I enjoyed the opportunity to meet and network with other innovative teachers/participants	15	9	
I would recommend this course or resources to other teachers	15	9	
I feel that the course has helped me to become more innovative	15	9	
The trainer supported me when I needed help	15	8	1
I have gained understanding and insight into ICT innovations that can be used at schools	15	9	
I will revisit these materials and work further on them soon	20	4	

When participants were asked to state which part of the course was great eight participants made specific reference to Sway, noting that they enjoyed "working with Sway – creating stories" and "playing around with various apps e.g. Sway" and "Creating a Sway that I could use with my learners". The delegates appreciated the course materials being made available to them via a OneNote document, and thought that this was a valuable way of using this tool. As one delegate remarked: "It is a practical way of demonstrating to teachers why they need to start using technology and the various forms of it". The interactive nature of the course, and the instructional approach which included providing participants with time to use the tools for practical sessions was also mentioned by seven participants. One delegate stated "I enjoyed every part of the event because it was very hands on and practical" whilst another listed "Introduction to new tools that can be used and showcased. Enjoyed practical application" as the part of the course she most enjoyed. Three delegates found working through the Teaching with Technology course to be a highlight, with one commenting "I love the idea of working through the teaching with Technology course so as to be better informed about the changes. I also loved the pedagogy stressed in the training so that everything works on all devices".

When asked to report on what parts of the course were not great, twelve participants did not state any problems with the course or indicated that they had enjoyed the whole experience. Of those who reported problems with the course, seven people indicated problems with the wifi or connecting to the internet at the Microsoft offices as being problematic. One delegate in particular was concerned that if we were battling to all connect to an online course at the Microsoft offices, this will be even more challenging when the course is rolled out at schools She noted "concern that issues we will encounter in poorly resourced schools (was) not adequately addressed". One person felt that too much time had been spent "playing around" during the sessions; another did not enjoy "the reading part because of too many distractions". One delegate did not enjoy "The part of doing the online course, I feel it could have been communicated to me that I can finish this course beforehand online to understand exactly what the session was about as well as how it links in." Whilst delegates were asked to join the Microsoft Educator Community prior to training the 2016 Teaching with technology courseware only became available two days prior to training. Nonetheless this point will be considered for future master training sessions.

Conclusion

On the whole the delegates selected by the Western Cape Department of Education to attend this master training session were enthusiastic about the opportunity to train teachers in their districts. The sound computer skills of the group also meant that they relished the opportunity to learn new tools and to showcase their work.

We look forward to receiving CVs, trainer contracts and proof o completion of the online Teaching with Technology course so that SchoolNet can add successful trainer candidates to the SchoolNet SA trainer database to be used for the USO training rollout.

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Programmes Manager
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