






# 2017 Annual Report to AGM

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# 1. Overview

In 2017, SchoolNet SA was successful in turning around a previously quiet year and engaged in a number of new impactful initiatives. As usual many projects continued with our long-term partners, Microsoft, Intel, Vodacom, Telkom and the Commonwealth of Learning. Projects with the Telkom Foundation were extended and enlarged and the D G Murray Trust awarded a second grant to extend the Learning Gains through Play research into a fourth year. Sun International proved to be a most supportive partner in 2017 with their generous contribution to the work of teachers of Hospitality Studies through a partnership with the national Department of Basic Education.

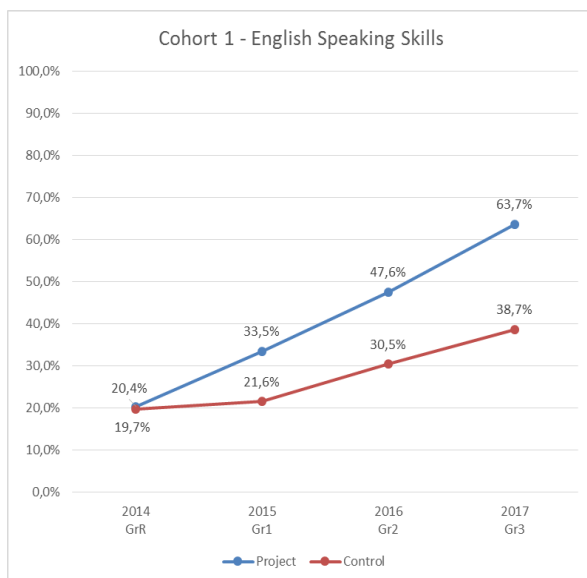
National policy development for digital learning took a giant leap forward in 2017 with the release of the Professional Development Framework for Digital Learning. SchoolNet hosted a most successful conference in 2017 where teacher delegates were treated to some of the most innovative presentations by digital learning experts and SchoolNet had the opportunity to celebrate 20 years of making a difference.

## 2. Project highlights in 2017

### 2.1 Learning Gains through Play – 2017 grant



The three year research project funded by the D G Murray Trust into Learning Gains through Play using digital apps and Xbox games came to an end in March 2017. In July, the DG Murray Trust awarded a new grant to SchoolNet to extend the research for one more year in order to evaluate the performance of learners in their final year of the Foundation Phase. There had been noticeable gains in all of the literacies that were measured as part of the three year project but the most significant increases had been in the area of oral English acquisition.

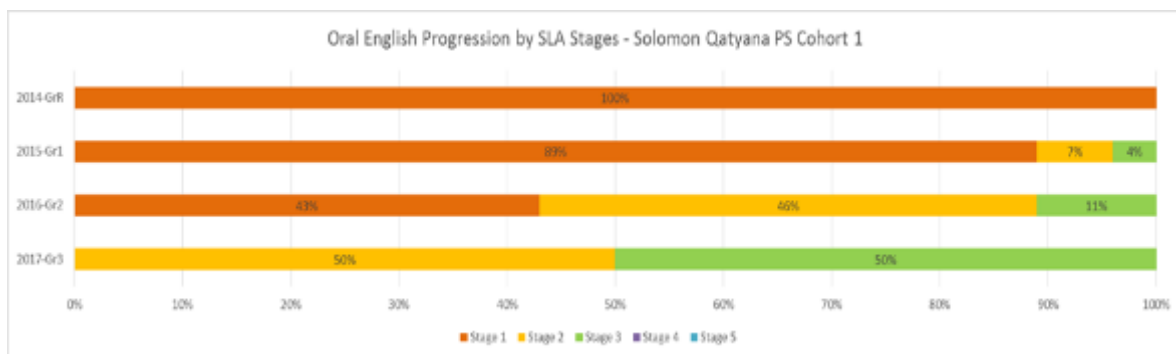


The focus of this year's research was on acquired oral English skills testing which measured both listening skills and speaking skills. Speaking results of LGP Project learners tripled over the successive grade measures far out stripping the control schools, even though learners in the control school started at almost the same level.

The Krashen theory of Second Language Acquisition stages was the basis of the data analysis. When learners were assessed on these Second Language Acquisition Stages the extraordinary progress made by project learners became more apparent. The graph

above shows the comparison of learning gains in Cohort 1 between the project and the control groups of learners from 2014 to 2017.

When analysing the data, the results from one school stood out from the rest, achieving progress that was markedly greater than all other schools. This school was Solomon Qatyana Primary School in the informal settlement of Asanda Village in the Western Cape. The SchoolNet LGP implementation team had already noted that teachers and school leaders at Solomon Qatyana Primary School had demonstrated the most successful adoption and use of digital learning of all the schools in the LGP Project. The 2017 evaluation report considered the acquired second language skills of learners at this school separately. The graph below shows that all Cohort 1 learners had progressed off the silent stage by the end of the project.



The SchoolNet team had noted in classroom visits over the course of the LGP project that SQPS teachers had embraced the use of the digital tools and resources with greater enthusiasm and faster growing expertise than any of the other schools. For a number of SQPS teachers their own tablet in their classroom had become an essential teaching tool.

What is most encouraging is that during 2017 the LGP project had been concluded with peer coaching with no further project inputs provided. The Foundation Phase teachers at SQPS achieved this final year progress by applying their new pedagogies while sustaining their peer collaboration approach to digital learning.



Hlengiwe Mfeka and Tracey Butchart presented the findings from the research at the international EDUlearn conference in Barcelona in July. UNICEF and the Department of Education hosted a workshop

on mobile learning to which the Learning Gains through Play team were invited to present the research design and findings. The learnings were met with great interest by the National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development (NICPD), UNICEF and other invited guests.

## SchoolNet SA Change Leadership Programme (for Technology Integration)

Another increase in performance, evident from the analysis of data in the Learning Gains through Play project, was the improved school administration which was clearly due to the effectiveness of SchoolNet's Change Leadership for Technology Integration course. A direct correlation was found between learner performance and school functionality. At Solomon Qatyana, the school's Senior Management team and in particular, the principal, demonstrated their commitment and their willingness to adapt to the changes espoused in the Change Leadership course. Although the LGP programme targeted Foundation Phase only, the SMT at the school decided to share the learnings and the course materials with the whole school, including teachers in all grades. At the start of the project, learner academic performance across a range of Foundation Phase literacies was recorded as being the lowest. By the end of the project there was a robust learning culture at the school with a mutually supportive community of practice. An optimistic, purposeful air had developed, contrasting sharply with the impoverished informal settlement next door. The learner performance measured at the end of the project had improved so much that this school finished the programme as the highest-performing school.

The overall findings concluded that the learners in the project schools had received an advantage which prepared them for the Grade 4 change in language of learning, *"It is clear from these results that providing isiZulu- and IsiXhosa-speaking Foundation Phase learners with tablet apps and Xbox games in the classroom that use English as the medium of communication, considerably advances learners' oral English communication skills."*

## 2.2 Microsoft Partners in Learning

### Microsoft Philanthropies - Hour of Code and YouthSpark

Microsoft Philanthropies is committed to providing young people from underserved schools with opportunities to learn digital skills and basic computer science concepts. Over the past year, SchoolNet SA was commissioned by Microsoft Philanthropies to facilitate a number of interventions to help achieve this aim.

At the end of 2016, SchoolNet SA facilitated a series of 50 workshops to get as many learners as possible coding using the materials available at [code.org/Minecraft](http://code.org/Minecraft). These workshops were well-received, and a number of Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert and Teacher Centre Managers were able to expose youth in their communities to simple coding activities.



On Friday 23 June 2017, over 260 learners, in nine venues, in eight provinces participated in a YouthSpark Live event. The first part of the event involved a panel of IT professionals talking about how they got into the IT industry. This panel discussion took place at Brescia House School, which hosted the Gauteng event, but learners from eight other venues were able to watch the session via Skype broadcast. The panel were able to answer questions and provide insight on topics such as how to go about getting an internship, what studies a high school learner should pursue, how it feels to be a woman in a male-dominated industry, and what the value of certification is in a fast-paced industry. Following the panel discussion, learners experienced basic coding using the [code.org/Minecraft](https://code.org/) tutorials.

### **Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts and Showcase Schools**



Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts (MIE-Experts) are part of an exclusive Microsoft program created to recognize global educator visionaries who are using technology to improve teaching and learning. In 2017, SchoolNet SA was involved in recruiting teachers who are using technology to apply to become MIE-Experts, we shortlisted candidates, and we encouraged teachers to remain actively involved in the programme in order to be eligible to attend the E2-Africa and Global E2 Forums.

SchoolNet SA also supported teachers and school leaders from schools that applied to be Microsoft Schools. As part of this process we developed training materials which were used by Microsoft Teacher Ambassadors when visiting schools and training teachers. In the case of both Microsoft Schools and MIE Experts, we helped to develop and sustain a community or practice through newsletters, blogposts, webinars and case studies highlighting some of these teachers and schools.

The Education Exchange (E2) Africa Forum took place at the Microsoft offices in Bryanston on 29 and 30 May 2017. The event brought together 55 MIE Experts and representatives of Microsoft Schools for two days of learning about Microsoft technology, networking with other innovative teachers, and trying out some of the latest Microsoft tools. In addition to

the South African teachers who attended, Ghana, Kenya and Rwanda were also represented.

Highlights of the event included a group work project that involved coming up with a South African problem and then modelling a solution in a Small South Africa Minecraft world. Microsoft Teacher Ambassadors were on hand to guide teachers through using Office Mix and Microsoft Sway to present their group work projects and delegates were encouraged to use Microsoft OneNote as a platform for brainstorming their ideas and keeping their event notes. MIE Experts also enjoyed trying their hand at coding using Micro bits – which involved programming a small digital display to flash a message by the end of a session.

Stephen Reid from Immersive Minds presented a keynote address on Problem Based Learning and introduced teachers to the basics of Minecraft in the context of developing a project. Microsoft's Worldwide Senior Education Manager, Sonja Delafosse presented an inspirational keynote on #MakeWhatsNext which highlighted some of what Microsoft is doing to encourage girls to get involved in technology. During the Give One- Get One networking session, teachers had an opportunity to share what they were doing about getting learners to use technology to #MakeWhatsNext. The networking and sharing continued at the Networking Cocktail Function at the Hyde Park Sun.



## Curriculum Mapping and SACE Accreditation

All South African teachers are expected to keep a Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) as a personal record of their professional development journeys. They must achieve at least 150 South African Council of Educator Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD)

development points every three-year cycle. SchoolNet SA, an approved SACE professional development provider, was accredited by SACE in 2017 to award continuing professional development points for certain activities and online courses that teachers have completed through the Microsoft Educator Community and administered awarding these points on behalf of Microsoft.

## Microsoft Social Media



SchoolNet SA continued to produce content for [Microsoft South Africa's Facebook page](#) and @MicrosoftEduSATwitter until the end of June 2017 – when Microsoft took a global decision to manage these accounts in-house. This project also involved creating Microsoft focused content for the [SchoolNet SA blog](#) as well as developing a series of [case studies](#) focusing on South African teachers and schools who are using Microsoft technology.



As part of this project, SchoolNet SA continued to produce webinars for the Microsoft Virtual Academy platform. These webinars were aimed at teachers from Microsoft Schools, local MIE Experts as well as teachers in general who wanted to learn more about various Microsoft tools. Megan Rademeyer hosted the sessions, and interviewed various Microsoft experts and teachers via Skype or in studio to provide

local context and practical examples of how teachers are using Microsoft technologies in their classrooms.

## KwaZulu-Natal Teacher Ambassadors



KwaZulu-Natal schools benefitted from free “Redefining learning with Microsoft Office 365 for Education” training offered by Microsoft between January and June 2017, conducted by Microsoft Teacher Ambassadors and SchoolNet trainers namely Senzo Ngcobo and Hlengiwe Mfeka. During the workshops, teachers explored various Office 365 tools and they were introduced to the Microsoft Educator Community and Mahala (Microsoft software for students under the age of 25).



## Capacity Building other training organisations on behalf of Microsoft



SchoolNet SA conducted two capacity building workshops in 2017, with the intention of upskilling other training organisations to be able to effectively facilitate the Microsoft ICT Skills for Teachers course.

The first of these workshops took place for part-time trainers that had been appointed by the Lone Pearl Group to offer training and support to schools in Botswana. The workshop took place between 3 – 7 July, 2017, at Tshwarango Primary School, in the Naledi township of Gaborone, Botswana. At their training of trainers' workshop, Megan Rademeyer introduced potential trainers to the instructional design of this course; and trainees had an opportunity to present the artefacts they had created to the group.



On 11 and 12 July 2017, trainers for Parrot Products were trained as facilitators for the ICT Skills for Teachers course so that they will be able to offer this workshop at schools they support. Whilst all four trainees had good technical skills, only one had a background in education. The group therefore particularly enjoyed seeing how computer skills can be used to streamline classroom administration and to create engaging teaching resources.



## Office 365 – Proof of Concept projects



SchoolNet SA was commissioned to run two O365 Proof of Concept projects for Microsoft. The first of these, at Meyerspark Primary School in Pretoria, was curtailed after the initial training session as the school lacked sufficient internet connectivity to fully utilise the online O365 platform. The second school, Founders Hill College in Modderfontein, Gauteng,



successfully trialled O365 with a view to expanding this to other schools in the Advtech group. Teachers at this new school received training in the various O365 tools as well as classroom based support and mentorship from Megan Rademeyer for the first two terms of 2017. During these sessions, teachers were encouraged to save and share lesson preparation on OneDrive, they set up departmental OneNote files and learnt how to use other tools such as Forms and Sway to help make their lessons more engaging.



### Western Cape Showcase Schools



The intention of this training programme was to provide professional development and support to teachers from five Western Cape Education Department (WCED) schools that had received a full Windows/Office 365 solution. These schools were: Worcester Gymnasium, Heideveld Secondary, COSAT (Centre of Science and Technology), Settlers High School and Kerria Primary School. Each school was to receive three days of face-to-face training during which teachers were to learn how to use Microsoft tools to enhance teaching and learning, administration, and manage a class using digital tools and resources. While different schools had received different makes of tablets, the intention of the sessions was also to acquaint teachers with the Microsoft tools and platforms that are available to all teachers, on whichever devices they had received.

It was clear from the feedback on this training from both trainers and participants that the overwhelming perception was positive. Some schools felt that the training should have been Customised to their individual circumstances but even those well-established technology-using teachers, who had been sceptical at first, appreciated what they had learnt by the end of the workshops. Gamification and the awarding of badges turned out to be a great motivator – it rated at the top of the list of motivating factors in the online survey and was mentioned by most trainers as being something that excited the teachers. The second motivating factor was the fact that the course carried SACE professional development points.

Repeated laments about connectivity being either slow, unstable or absent altogether indicated that schools were not quite ready for a fully online experience of training. On the other hand the need to solve connectivity problems became urgent and in some cases was then resolved due to the imminent training. Furthermore, most schools were optimistic about their online status improving considerably in the near future, making these Microsoft tools and resources far more easily accessible and readily used.



## Change Leadership for Western Cape and Gauteng



In an attempt to emphasise its commitment to Education, Microsoft partnered with both the Gauteng Department and Western Cape Department of Education to support their school leaders with SchoolNet's Change Leadership for ICT Integration.

While educators are sometimes reluctant to integrate technology into their teaching, they can readily adopt a positive attitude when encouraged and influenced by their senior management. Strong support from senior management team (SMT) members or from the principal, can provide the necessary impetus for technology integration to flourish at a school, to enhance teaching and to develop a vibrant community of practice.



SchoolNet's Omashani Naidoo facilitated the workshops for delegates in both provinces, relating the content of the Change Leadership course to Microsoft's Educational Transformation Framework.

All 16 model schools from the WCED participated in the programme. Three senior leaders from each school attend the programme in two groups from March to June 2017. SchoolNet's Janet Thomson completed the school visits in the schools and wrote up the case study on the various findings.

In Gauteng, 15 schools were selected by the GDE aligned with the work Matthew Goniwe School of Governance and Leadership. These schools were the lowest performing but also part of the involved in the Department of Communications NHI pilot in Ekurhuleni South. School visits were completed and Janet once again was relied upon to write the case study.

## Minecraft: Education Edition Training Partner Summit



Between 28 February and 2 March 2017 Megan Rademeyer, had the opportunity to attend the Minecraft: Education Edition training partner summit in Dubai. Sessions included “Learning how to play Minecraft”, engaging in a “Build Battle” (where teams built structures together to try out-build other teams), and exploring “Classroom Mode in Minecraft: Education Edition”. The aim of the training session was to certify trainers from Microsoft Training Partners who will then be able to run Minecraft: Education Edition training sessions with schools.



## Kenya ICT Rollout Case Study



SchoolNet was contracted to write a case study on the national ICT rollout in Kenya. Omashani Naidoo, conducted surveys, site visits and interviews with all project stakeholders.

The case study found that one of the most impressive aspects of this national educational technology initiative was the extent of inter-ministerial collaboration. This willingness to share responsibility has characterised the programme and influenced other aspects such as establishing the Digital Content Creators’ Alliance, a far-sighted innovation. The two consortia appointed to implement the roll-out have also by their nature, been consultative and collaborative by ensuring skills transfer and cementing the expansion of revenue generating opportunities for two leading technology faculties as well as creating avenues for innovation in practice by students of JKUAT and MOI universities.



*A wooden trailer being pushed to the school*



*Fishing boats used to reach some of the islands*



*A human chain formed to make carrying easier*

The Impact of the project is immediately visible by the increase in local employment, capacity building of Kenyan manpower, improving rural access to technology and power, teacher development on skills to use digital technologies and the ongoing creation of digital resources. The next phase of research will need to measure the impact on learners, teachers,

and changes to classroom practice, the reach of digital access to community members and the result of skills transfer and capacity building of local institutions as it is these factors that will attest to the long term impact for Kenya's Vision 2030.

## E2 Educator Exchange – Toronto



The Microsoft Education Exchange (E2) is Microsoft in Education's annual event recognizing and celebrating the achievements of educators who combine content, pedagogy, and technology in exemplary ways to prepare students for success. This year, E2 took place in Toronto, Canada between 21 and 23 March 2017 and included almost 300 teachers and education thought leaders from countries around the world. SchoolNet's Megan Rademeyer, who is a Microsoft Fellow, attended E2 and presented a session entitled "It's not about the tool" in the University and Workplace Readiness track. Five Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts were selected to represent South Africa at E2 - Justin Harper (Saheti), Matthew Hains (Crawford College - Sandton) and Amandla Vinjwa (Sivile Primary School) Peter de Lisle (Hilton College) and Freddy Chireka (Vastratech). Angela Schaerer, Teacher Engagement Manager from Microsoft South Africa accompanied the group.



## 2.3 Intel Teach

In 2017, Intel Corporation underwent strategic changes in the United States. This had an effect on the budgets that were earmarked for EMEA. Despite this, Intel was still able to fund the following projects in collaboration with SchoolNet and was instrumental in guiding SchoolNet's involvement in potential projects in the Eastern Cape through UCEF and the implementation of Change Leadership course in all districts of the Northern Cape.

## Northern Cape Principals Workshop



ZF Mgcawu District Principals at Change Leadership Workshop

In March 2017, Intel in collaboration with the Northern Cape Department of Education funded SchoolNet's Change Leadership for Technology Integration for all principals in the ZF Mgcawu district. All 98 schools were invited to the four day workshop which was facilitated by Omashani Naidoo with assistance from Intel's Ms Susanna Ackermann and Mr Ryan Macquet. The programme included two modules being facilitated per day and incorporated learning strategies such as the Jigsaw Method, Role play, and Learning stations. Each module also worked through why a change leader is crucial to their school and scaffolded techniques for dealing with peer supported teacher professional development, finding solutions to adaptive challenges, and developing strategies for breaking down resistance, inculcating a culture of lifelong learning and an ethos of self-reflection.

Intel has indicated that budgets will be available in 2018 to expand this programme to all districts in the province.

## USO Master Training



SchoolNet was contracted by Intel to provide Master training on Intel's Tablets in the Classroom course. As part of the Department of Basic Education, and the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services' mandate to implement Universal Services Obligations by Telecommunication Operators in South Africa, master training was provided to Departmental officials responsible for training in four provinces namely Mpumalanga, Free State, Gauteng and Limpopo. Training in the four provinces was completed by January 2017.

The dominant themes that resonated from the workshops were issues of connectivity during and post facilitation, access to equipment for department officials to be able to master the skills required to train and support teachers and sufficient time for training and practice of skills. These and a range of additional recommendations were forwarded to the Department of Basic Education to inform the future year on year rollout of the USO.



### Intel Case Study at Durban School for the Hearing Impaired



As part of this commitment, Intel and its education partners rallied to support the Durban School for the Hearing Impaired. This project documented the experiences that teachers and learners with hearing impairments have had in implementing the TPACK model, as adapted



by Mishra and Koehler. Implementation of this programme encompassed the transformation model for student success by combining an ordinary technology solution, some initial professional development programmes, and digital content. SchoolNet’s Janet Thomson completed the case study in the hopes of informing government and its partners working in the education sector to make informed decisions around

implementations in future environments and employment strategies for differently-abled people.

## 2.4 Telkom Foundation



Over the last three years, SchoolNet has been intrinsically involved in Telkom's implementation of national ICT projects. In 2017, Telkom decided to consolidate their various provincial projects into a strategic project to see an improved return of investment in education.

In July 2017, the Telkom Foundation announced a major investment in education when it pledged more than R 200 million over the next five years to contribute towards improving the

quality of teaching and learning with a specific focus on Mathematics, Science and English in disadvantaged communities. The programme is currently being rolled out in Gauteng and Eastern Cape Provinces. SchoolNet South Africa has been involved in the programme since it started in Ga-Rankuwa, Tshwane West where five schools received high-tech infrastructure as part of Telkom's Connected Schools Programme (CSP). SchoolNet was contracted to provide teacher professional development in ICT Integration for Grade 8 teachers aligned to the other training aspects on offer, which includes technical training, Extra Marks content and learning management system



training, cloud-based tools training as well as how to integrate these into classroom activities, a learner support programme with Protec, A Community of Practice with Bridge and a range of psycho-social programmes through Childline, Retrain and Future Generation.

This project aims to increase the number of learners who explore STEM subject choices in FET, Tertiary Programmes and most importantly leverage ICT skills to become economically active in the various business sectors.

## 2.4 Sun International – DBE Hospitality Studies



In April 2017, the Minister of Basic Education Mrs. Angie Motshekga launched the Hospitality Studies Digital Curriculum Project in partnership with Sun International at Tembisa High School in Ekurhuleni North. This project aims to be implemented in approximately 300

hospitality schools in South Africa. Phase 1 of the project was implemented in 87 schools in 7 provinces. All teachers of hospitality studies received a laptop, a data projector, content access point and a magnetic whiteboard. Teacher laptops were supplied and delivered to the training venues by IT Master. Obami developed Digital multimedia curriculum content with the Department of Basic Education. The Sun International portal is hosted on the Obami platform and zero rated by Vodacom. Sun International generously offered their hotels around the country as venues for the training workshops and to accommodate both teachers and trainers for the duration of the training. The first roll out of training in 5 provinces happened simultaneously around the country during the last week of March. Only Limpopo and Eastern Cape were delayed due to the gambling board discussion of schools that could be included in the programme.

SchoolNet is also the managing partner for this project and has been a huge learning curve in terms of setting up processes for including finder's' fees, managing multiple partner payments and payments from the various Sun International Operations.



## 2.5 Vodacom



In 2013, Vodacom provided full ICT solutions to 109 schools in five provinces in South Africa. Vodacom realised that the basic technical training had not translated to the desired outcome to change teaching and pedagogical practice and asked SchoolNet to propose a project plan for teacher professional development with SACE Continuing Professional Teacher Development points to participating educators. This project aimed to provide educators with skills to ensure that the technology that was provided was used optimally. In March 2017, SchoolNet started implementation in the 109 schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Limpopo, North West and Mpumalanga. As part of the proposal, SchoolNet's Janet Thomson completed a case study in five project schools to confirm that skills learnt during training were



useful and were being implemented post training. Janet was able to further understand that these schools felt that they had been forgotten. The workshops provided schools and their teachers hope for more development.

## 2.6 Free State provincial department initiatives

In 2017, the Free State Department of Education implemented three projects in the Free State.

### ***ICT Integration Workshops for Teacher Assistants***

Seven workshops were hosted in districts across the Free State for newly appointed teacher assistants. Workshops in the Intel Getting Started course were provided to ensure that teacher assistants are adequately equipped with skills and knowledge to support teachers with ICT skills and some ideas for Integration.



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

An additional twelve workshops were organised in the various districts for teachers to gain their initial confidence using digital technology, tools and resources in the classroom. Teachers completed the programme over two weekends with portfolios of evidence being completed for SACE endorsement.



### ***Change Leadership Master training***

Mr Randall Pienaar, e-learning coordinator in the Free State, hosted a master training workshop for district e-learning and Teacher Centre Managers. This was seen as an invaluable experience and was one of the major discussion points at the e-learning summit held in September. This training increased our database by a further 15 trainers in the Change leadership course.

## 2.7 KwaZulu-Natal provincial department initiatives



The Provincial Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal made strides in 2017 to address the criticism it faced due to the 2016 Matric results announcement. Two tenders were issued, by the MST & ICT Directorate teams, one for GET and one for FET, for the provision of leveraging ICTs in education. The deliverables were focused on upskilling of subject advisors in their support of teachers in digital learning. SchoolNet was awarded the GET contract for training 85 curriculum advisors and for taking them from the entry levels of using digital tools and resources up to the higher innovative levels over a period of three months. Provincial officials from all 12 districts of KwaZulu-Natal were divided into 4 clusters and attended three sessions of training interspersed with periods for practice.

The terms of reference included a pre and a post-test to measure progress in acquired skills. Coincidentally the draft version of the national department's professional development framework for digital learning had been released by this time and therefore a self-assessment exercise could be added to the test for KZN subject advisors using the instrument in the framework for digital learning competences for subject advisors. Furthermore, the National Department of Basic Education took the opportunity of this workshop to address all subject advisors on advocacy around their Professional Development Framework for Digital Learning.



*Home group listening attentively to Jill Cadle as she is reporting what she learnt in the expert team.*

All provincial officials associated with the planning and implementation of this training, were highly complementary about the manner in which SchoolNet approached the task and were particularly impressed with the expertise of the two SchoolNet facilitators, Hlengiwe Mfeka and Senzo Ngcobo.

Another request from KZN DoE, this time from the Teacher Development Directorate is to conduct professional development of teachers/district officials in all districts with ETDPA SETA funding. Janet Thomson and Hlengiwe Mfeka were invited to present to a workshop of

provincial and district personnel in the Teacher Development Directorate as well as education resources centre staff on the range of courses that SchoolNet could offer.

SchoolNet was appointed to conduct a further initiative for KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. This time it was for the ELITS section (Education Library, Information and Technology Services). The deliverables included the development of a course for provincial media specialist officials to establish a digital library as well as delivering ten days of training around the digital learning associated with digital libraries. The training will be over two 5 day sessions one in December 2017 and the other in January 2018.

## 2.8 The Commonwealth of Learning



The education desk at the Commonwealth of Learning engaged in extensive strategic planning that adjusted their focus on teacher education. The outcome was “Teacher Futures” a new programme that is anchored in a school-based teacher development model. The Commonwealth of Learning aims to partner with one teacher education institution (TEI) per selected country to provide ICT-based professional development courses to practising teachers without displacing them from their schools. Besides the standard online learning possibilities, COL is offering support to communities of practice within and among the partner institutions. SchoolNet’s role is one of facilitation and support.

The CCTI (Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration) is viewed as meeting the immediate needs of the teachers as well as the partner TE institutions. Initially it was expected that the University of Limpopo would be selected as the partner in this initiative. However, it soon became apparent that UL was already involved a number of similar interventions and therefore with guidance from the Department of Basic Education, the University of Fort Hare was selected as the potential partner. UFH submitted a detailed motivation that was approved by Commonwealth of Learning in October 2017 with implementation planned to take place in 2018.

SchoolNet continues to work with the Commonwealth in its focus projects. In March 2017, SchoolNet was once again contracted to provide a five day workshop on Online Assessment and Learner Support to the Faculty of Education staff at Kenyatta University. SchoolNet’s Omashani facilitated and wrote the materials for the course. Here below are the participants:



## 2.9 DRDAR in Eastern Cape



Eastern Cape's Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) had a range of goals but the primary focus was developing an ICT provincial plan for rural and farm schools. Preparing for this intervention was a lengthy process with a number of preparatory stakeholder meetings in order to gain community ownership of the programme. After many months the project started as a pilot in one school, Bethania Secondary School in Mount Fletcher. In fact the school was far beyond Mt Fletcher and due to the appalling state of neglected resources at the school, many visits were undertaken by SchoolNet facilitators and technical support before the first workshops could be conducted. In this way, SchoolNet took responsibility for a range of task including repair of desks, technical support for both the technical equipment as well as the power supply and connectivity.

Through the Change Leadership programme, great attention was placed on leadership styles and relationships between staff and senior management teams. One strategy adopted by the SchoolNet technician was to conduct informal technical support training with a group of older students to at least ensure that the school could continue to function even when there were breakdowns in communication between the staff.



### 3. Advocacy and Organisational Development

#### 3.1 Interview with the Deputy Minister of Education



Mr Enver Surty, Deputy Minister of Education, generously offered his time to deliver the opening address at SchoolNet's ICT in the Classroom Conference. This was the third time that the Deputy Minister had opened a SchoolNet conference. However in 2017 he also agreed to be videoed answering any questions related to South African education and of course particularly concerned with digital learning. One of the first statements made by the DM in the interview was to thank Janet Thomson for "the enormous

contribution by SchoolNet in the ICT domain". He went on to summarise the basic elements of Operation Phakisa and the measures in place to ensure that provinces are supported in its implementation. The full interview is available on the SchoolNet YouTube Channel: <https://youtu.be/uK9xWnkxAZk> and an article about this interview is available on the SchoolNet website.

#### 3.2 National policy development

The Council for Education Ministers approved the Professional Development Framework for Digital Learning in September 2017. SchoolNet had been involved in the reference group during development and was delighted with the final version. The framework, subtitled, *'Building educator competencies in facilitating learning with digital tools and resources'* promises to impact positively on the work of SchoolNet South Africa. The new framework aligns to all current national education policies including SACE and MRTEQ. The framework is designed to support the individual needs of all stakeholders in the South African education system and includes clear plans for professional development in digital learning for learners, teachers and school leaders, government officials as well as outlining competencies for beginning teachers.

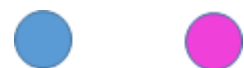
The first e-Education White Paper was published in 2004 although before then, back in 2000, SchoolNet had published a framework for teacher development. Since then there had only been the *Guidelines for Teacher Training and Professional Development in ICT* published in 2007. SchoolNet had always been apprehensive about the technical bias of the UNESCO framework which had filled a void since 2011. Hence SchoolNet is currently very excited about the release of this South African framework and its detailed contents comprising 13 broad Teacher competencies, 51 Indicators, over 200 examples of activities to illustrate those

indicators, a teacher analysis tools for individual PD needs and Lesson planning, School/District/HEI Toolkits for Digital Learning Progress and supportive e-learning apps.



Janet Thomson was invited to take part in a live radio interview on the morning of the conference – with CAPS radio <http://capsradio.co.za/> - which is a national education department initiative to play the vital role of facilitating communication within the education sector. Another CAPS radio interview was conducted the day after the conference with one of the overseas presenters, Peter Rafferty from Liverpool. The interview became somewhat side tracked by the interviewer’s interest in Google Classroom but Peter did well to convey the value of conferences for teachers using all things digital.

### 3.3 University of Limpopo



In 2015 SchoolNet completed Intel easy Steps master training with the University of Limpopo faculty of Education. This led to further discussions about SchoolNet and the University collaborating on future projects. This opportunity arrived when UL wanted to start a community of practice with Teachers in the Mankweng area. SchoolNet’s Ms Hlengiwe Mfeka presented on SchoolNet and the learning pathway for teacher professional development. A further opportunity arose when the University asked SchoolNet to present on its behalf at the SACE conference in June 2017. Omashani Naidoo presented two workshops highlighting the focus on cyber safety and use of digital tools for curriculum teaching.



### 3.4 Free State ICT Strategy Summit



In September 2017, the Free State Department of Education in collaboration with VVOB hosted a provincial Operation Phakisa event to discuss and finalise the E-learning and ICT Strategy for the Province. A number of stakeholders that had attended the National Operation Phakisa event were in attendance and these included Haroon Mahomed, Osman Sadeck, Fiona Wallace, and Roith Rajpal. SchoolNet was represented by Omashani Naidoo. After a weeklong summit, the Free State were tasked to do the next drafts and circulate for comment.



### 3.5 National Teachers Awards –March 25th 2017



1st Sara Motsitsi



2nd Esmarie Roh



3rd Cecelia Campbell

The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual National Teacher Awards were held at the Gallagher Estates in March 2017. Omashani Naidoo, Janet Thomson and Parthy Chetty represented SchoolNet at the National Teachers Awards event, where SchoolNet sponsored the winners of Excellence in Technology-enhanced Teaching and Learning category, for the second consecutive year. Mr Nathi Kunene of the Telkom Foundation joined us. The presentation of this award can be viewed on the SchoolNet YouTube channel here <https://youtu.be/lo8TmTfTQMg> The prize included attendance at an Education conference as well as training for staff at the winners' schools. SchoolNet has arranged for Ms Motsisi to attend the Google Summit in Dainfern and have scheduled a coding workshop for learners at Sara's school in Parys. Ms Campbell and Ms Rohr are still contemplating the various training opportunities for their schools.

### 3.6 NSTF Awards



The National Science and Technology Forum Awards provide national recognition to a range of contributors. The Awards are intended to recognise and celebrate individuals and organisations for outstanding contributions in science, engineering, technology and innovation, for a range of purposes including the achievement of sustainable economic growth for South Africa, improving the quality of life of its people, promoting excellence among SET and innovation practitioners and in research and development. SchoolNet South Africa was one of three finalists in the category of Non Governmental Organisations for an outstanding contribution to science, engineering and technology and innovation in South Africa over the last five to ten years. The SchoolNet staff were very pleased to be joined by Parthy and Santhani Chetty. Sadly, SchoolNet South Africa did not win the National Science and Technology (NSTF) NGO Award but we consoled ourselves by being one of the 3 finalists at the national awards ceremony at the Emperor's Palace in June.

Today's research... tomorrow's innovation



### 3.7 SchoolNet Courses

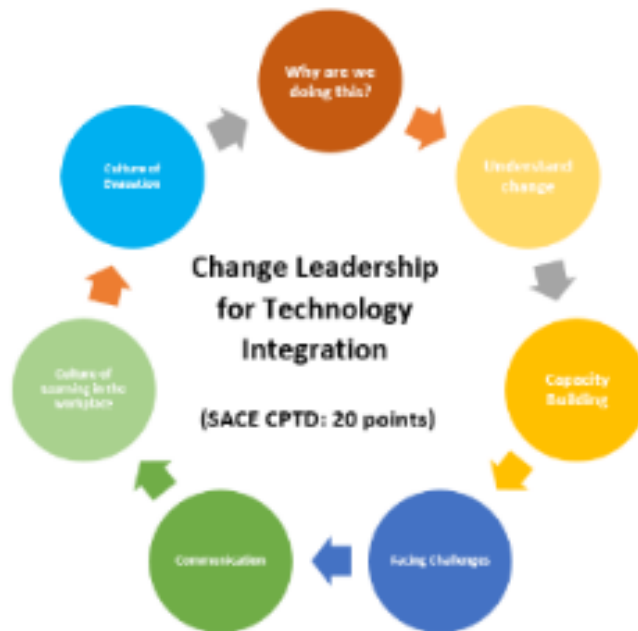


Over the years, SchoolNet has realised through its initiatives and advice from the Board that it is important for SchoolNet to develop its own professional development courses and accredit these through SACE and if possible even through the SETA.

#### ***Change Leadership for technology integration***



This course is built on the foundation of Michael Fullan’s Model for Change and aims to use pedagogical strategies, along with content to deepen learning. This course is facilitated in 7 modules and requires all participants to implement their learning in school and provide these as badge activities for assessment and award of SACE endorsement. This courses can earn participants 20 CTPD points.



#### ***School Libraries in the Digital Age***



The traditional role of a librarian as a knowledge manager has evolved to become a curator of resources and a partner in the development of online learning materials. The course was developed to equip officials who run libraries with the skills to adapt to this changing role. This five day course comprises of 10 modules that will deepen the knowledge and skills in evaluating digital tools and resources, using digital systems to enhance library services and importantly discuss issues around cyber safety and digital wellness. This course has been developed for the ELITS project in KZN, however it is hoped to have an expanding reach to other stakeholders in other provinces.



### 3.8 2017 ICT in the Classroom Conference



Over 400 delegates attended the SchoolNet SA ICT in the Classroom conference held at Brescia House School in Bryanston, Gauteng from 5 - 7 October 2017. The opening keynote speaker was Stephen Reid from Immersive Minds, based in Scotland. In his keynote, Stephen explored a variety of emerging technologies and discussed how they could be merged to create blended learning and cross-curricular experiences for students. Across the three days of the conference, Stephen presented various hands-on workshops which gave delegates practical experiences of using Minecraft, 360 Cameras, and virtual reality headsets to provide opportunities for their learners to make, create, visit and explore.

The second international presenter was Peter Rafferty – an Intel visionary and teacher from Liverpool. Peter shared his experiences of creating a class blog, and encouraged delegates to get involved a collaborative writing project by producing “Sparkly Letters”. Saretjie Musgrave, a longstanding friend of SchoolNet SA, provided the keynote presentation on the Friday. In her address, entitled “Anywhere, Anytime Learning”, Saretjie drew on her experiences of being a school teacher, a university lecturer and a student to encourage delegates to think of the possibilities that technology provides for learning in a range of different ways.

Ollie Bray, also from Scotland, a renowned speaker and past winner of the Microsoft global innovative educator, rounded off the conference with his keynote address entitled “The New Learning Landscape”. This session was thought-provoking and made delegates realise that Scotland and South Africa share similarities in terms of embracing digital learning. In addition to his keynote session, Ollie shared his experiences of being a teacher and principal in a range of sessions on social media, transforming learning in a 1:1 environment, and a highly enjoyable geo-caching activity, which he generously repeated – not a quick exercise to organise!

In addition to these featured speakers, we were grateful to the 35 other speakers – who presented one or more workshops or presentations. Many of these sessions involved practical, hands-on opportunities to try out a range of digital tools to help build the skills and confidence of delegates for when they return to school. Practical sessions included opportunities to learn the basics of coding, Minecraft and OneNote. A number of sessions also showcased teachers’ actual classroom projects, or their own success stories with digital learning – these included highlighting some projects SchoolNet has been involved in such as Change Leadership in the Eastern Cape, the Telkom Connected Schools project, and various teacher’s experiences with “going paperless”. Many of these stories were

inspirational, and it is certain that a good number of delegates would go on to try similar projects at their own schools. Some of the most popular sessions proved to be the ones where delegates got to be “learners” as they went on digital scavenger hunts, solved puzzles in a Breakout EDU session, or looked for geocache treasures. The Department of Basic Education presented a number of sessions on using SA-SAMs effectively, as well as sessions to launch the DBE Professional Development Framework for Digital Learning.

During tea times and breaks, delegates enjoyed visiting the more than 20 exhibition stands to see a range of classroom technologies on offer and to try out new tools. A number of exhibitors ran competitions at their stands, and some lucky delegates received prizes at the closing ceremony from exhibitors, which included Vastratech who presented a Kapp 84” board and Computers4Kids who awarded two Acer Cloud books. Some exhibitors also took the opportunity to present their solutions to delegates as part of the demo track. A number of these sessions proved to be very popular, with delegates enjoying hearing first-hand how tools could be used in the classroom to enhance digital learning or to build online communities.

The full opening plenary address by the Deputy Minister can be viewed here: <https://goo.gl/7E82o3>  
It was live-streamed via Facebook by Maggie Verster, the popular Maths Education and social media guru. A comprehensive album of conference photos is available here: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/k0ggFcOdEEmSpvoF2>

### 3.9 20th Anniversary Celebrations



Although SchoolNet SA has been holding an ICT in the Classroom conference biannually and in earlier days, annually for over 20 years, the 2017 conference was particularly special because it provided the opportunity to celebrate SchoolNet’s 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday at a cocktail celebration sponsored by the Telkom Foundation. Telkom was one of the very first funders of SchoolNet back in the 1990s - so it was most appropriate that they were able to attend together with delegates and friends of SchoolNet to reminisce over the past 20 years.

A great evening of networking was shared by conference delegates and other special friends of SchoolNet who joined us for the birthday celebrations. SchoolNet was fortunate to be treated to speeches at the birthday party by Nathi Kunene of Telkom, Denis Brandjes, the first CEO of SchoolNet in 1997 and the current Chairman, Mashala Kwape. Mashala summarised the congratulatory message sent from Vis Naidoo in Canada. The full message is included in this blogpost by Fiona Beal here: <https://goo.gl/ZhzxRF>



Further photos of the 20th birthday celebration as well as the rest of the 2017 Conference can be accessed on Google photos at the following link: <https://goo.gl/rcpxMX> The SchoolNet YouTube channel houses the many videos shown at the 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration - these photo stories capture the history of SchoolNet over the past 20 years. Here are the links:

- SchoolNet History from the start <https://youtu.be/gbT5aQ446LI>
- 20 years of SchoolNet Trainers <https://youtu.be/KfYbOKzMcWU>
- SchoolNet staff from 1997 to 2017 <https://youtu.be/ST3Sjh5vSZI>
- SchoolNetters 2005 to 2013 <https://youtu.be/IQblO22qmol>
- SchoolNetters the last 10 years <https://youtu.be/gZ8oK4gzeQ>
- Remembering Nomty [https://youtu.be/4ZRrfl8\\_uSs](https://youtu.be/4ZRrfl8_uSs)
- A photo story from 10 years ago <https://youtu.be/Pxhv5H59yZs>

### 3.10 SNSA online presence



The hashtag #SNSA17 for the 2017 SchoolNet conference was trending for 14 hours on the first day. SchoolNet has continued to introduce teachers to the educational benefits of using twitter and included a Twitter 101 session on the opening day of the conference, facilitated by the social media expert, Maggie Verster. The Storify of the #snsa17 conference can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/uK9xWnkAZk>

The most popular Facebook posts by SchoolNet tend to be about free webinars or free courses available for teachers. SchoolNet continues to offer webinars to teachers which are regularly and well attended. SchoolNet continues to contract Fiona Beal to maintain the SchoolNet virtual presence via [Twitter](#), [SchoolNet's Facebook page](#), [newsletter](#), [website](#), YouTube [channel](#), [Diigo](#) bookmarking site and [daily blog](#).

## 4. SchoolNet SA Staff and Board

There were no changes to the staff structure at SchoolNet during 2017. Enjoying the same team working together is a wonderful advantage to have - and an indication that SchoolNet's human resources management is in a healthy state. We must acknowledge the valuable contribution that Uta Michie makes to the SchoolNet HR.

Here below is the full staff complement snapped at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, including Uta Michie, just.



Once again SchoolNet is very thankful to Board members for the contribution they have made to the smooth-running of SchoolNet over the course of 2017. Some directors have been forced to devote time to assist with a number of issues this year; to have their support and to have them attend SchoolNet events has been much appreciated.

## 5. The Future

There appear to be an increased number of new projects on the horizon for 2017. These include Provinces that have invited SchoolNet to bid for current tenders in line with Operation Phakisa as well as extensions to existing programmes from Sun International, Microsoft, Telkom and the Commonwealth of Learning.

In his congratulatory message to the SchoolNet's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Vis Naidoo, our longest serving Board member, concluded with these words about the future of SchoolNet SA,

*This is the challenge to the SNSA Board, Janet and her staff and most importantly, all of you at this conference – the leaders in the use of ICT in education. You need to keep this ground-up edtech movement going forward and keep making a difference to the learners of South Africa – one click at a time.*

In conclusion it is clear that 2017 has been a positive year for SchoolNet South Africa when there have been increased opportunities for context-rich digital professional development in South African schools and universities. If SchoolNet South Africa was established in 1997 with an expiry date in mind, then, that time has not yet come. SchoolNet continues to evolve according to the digital learning needs of our learners, teachers, officials and communities.



Janet Thomson 2017 December