

**NAVIGATING THE PATHWAYS TO OPENING A NEW, EFFECTIVE  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY IN THE NELSON  
MANDELA METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH AFRICA.**

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MANDELA METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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**DECLARATION:**

In accordance with Rule G4.6.3., I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise/dissertation/thesis is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The provision of low cost housing has become one of the current South African government's top priorities. With the establishment of these new housing developments comes the need for accompanying social infrastructure. This includes the provisioning of schools, police stations, clinics and sports fields.

In this study, I attempted to identify and explore the key basic elements that needed to be present when opening a new community school in one of these low income housing developments. The study gives voice to what key stakeholders thought these elements should be. The stakeholders were the teachers and community volunteers, which included parents of the learners. They actively participated in this study through the methodology of participatory action learning and action research (PALAR).

The participants identified strong, compassionate and visionary leadership as an essential element that need to be present when opening up a new school. The study further shows that this leadership must have some knowledge of effective management systems in order to support the establishment of a new school. The findings also show that leadership and the effective implementation of these management systems rely heavily on the support of a variety of internal and external stakeholders, especially when support was lacking from the Department of Basic Education. The study further shows that the roles of the various stakeholders should be clearly defined and managed, so as to avoid tensions that might arise by having a large number of people involved in a confined space like a school. Teachers and community volunteers emerged as the key stakeholders who contributed to the effective functioning of the new school. Their continued involvement in the school requires on-going professional development and support.

Although the study did not look at the quality of learning and teaching, it does provide some important insights into the enabling conditions that are required for quality learning and teaching to take place in.

Key words: community schools; effective schools; leadership and organizational management responsibilities; professional development; school culture; stakeholders

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **OVERVIEW OF STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In this study, I identify and explore the key elements that need to be present for a new community school in a low income housing development in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality to function effectively. In this chapter I will set the context for this research which will be conducted as a case study. I will also explain my role in this study as a participant and researcher. Furthermore, the statement of the problem, the research questions and sub questions, the research aim and objectives, the literature to be reviewed, the research design and methodology, the data collection techniques and the ethical considerations will be discussed. For the purposes of this study, I will be referring to the schools as School A and School B. School A is the school where I am actually appointed as a principal, with School B being the new school and the focus of this case study.

### **1.2 Background**

The legacy left by Apartheid has meant that South Africa has to redress many social challenges. Key among these is the issue of affordable housing (Unwebi, 2011). The provision of low cost housing has become one of the South African government's top priorities. With the establishment of low cost housing projects, there is a need for accompanying social infrastructure. This includes the provisioning of schools, police stations, clinics and sports fields.

In the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality (NMMM) this is evident in the number of new housing settlements that are emerging. According to the Housing Development Agency Website, more than 4000 low cost houses have been scheduled to be built in the Chatty Area



of the NMMM (Housing Development Agency, 2012), which is the geographic location of this study. The Chatty Area is a new settlement, north of the NMMM and comprises a vast area cleared of vegetation to make room for the housing project. The established neighbouring area is also characterised by low cost housing and social challenges, which include crime and inadequate social support. These new settlements are not usually accompanied by the necessary supporting infrastructure needed to support these human settlements. The residents of these developments form part of the lowest income bracket and are usually unemployed and rely on some sort of government support in the form of social grants (Housing Development Agency, 2012).

### **1.2.1 The social challenges facing education**

The majority of South African schools are located in areas that are characterised by various challenges that impact on their ability to deliver quality public education. These challenges include diseases, substance abuse, physical and mental abuse, malnutrition and unemployment (Witten, 2006; Ncobo & Tikly, 2010) The social context of schooling is thus important and schools serving poor and marginalized communities can only be successful if they focus on learning and teaching, while at the same time dealing with many of the social challenges that affect the academic development of learners. There is an argument that the success of any school depends on the growth and success of the community in which the school is located (Warren, 2005).

### **1.2.2 The community**

In Chatty 12, a new housing extension of the NMMM, a temporary new schooling structure was opened in 2012 to accommodate the families who were relocated to this housing development. Many of these families had been living in shacks and had moved into the

newly built homes at the end of 2011. There are no other social facilities in the area besides the houses. School B is the first social structure to be built there. The new school has historic, social and emotional significance for this new community. It is of historical significance because it is the first new school building that has been erected in the area. There are three primary schools and one high school located within a 10km radius of the school, and all these schools are overflowing because of the rapid housing developments that have emerged in the area. The school also has a socially liberating significance as it is regarded as a beacon of hope for many members in the community. Families hold a strong belief in education as a powerful means to transform the quality of life of families, and see the school as a means to overcome injustice, poverty and fear (De Alva, 1999). The new school is also of emotional significance to the community as it is named after a three year old boy, who died while 'swimming' in a borehole in the community. The Mayor of the NMMM, when addressing the grieving family and community, promised that the first government building to be erected in this area would carry the name of the deceased boy.

The area, Chatty 12, in which the school is located, is characterized by the integration of two different communities. Under the old Apartheid system, communities were grouped according to racial classification. With the advent of democracy the government has used low cost housing developments as a form of integrating communities from the segregated past. The majority of the people in Chatty 12 are from the black and coloured communities. The coloured community is predominantly Afrikaans-speaking and members come from the areas of Kleinskool and Moeggesukkel in the NMMM. The black community is predominantly isiXhosa-speaking and the families come from the areas of Kwazakhele, New Brighton and Zwide, in the NMMM.

The Chatty 12 area has been characterized in the past few years by community unrest. This is due to the lack of adequate educational and other social structures to accommodate the ever increasing population caused by relocation of communities (Mbabela, 2011). The school is a temporary structure that was erected in the community to address the lack of schools in the area. Its establishment occurred as a result of protests and pressures exerted by the community. The building however is not large enough to address the need of this ever expanding community as families are relocating to the area.

### **1.2.3 Starting a new school**

I recall having conflicting emotions when I was first approached, in an informal meeting, to be the acting principal of the new school. I felt both excited and daunted by the task as I was the principal of School A and ran a fairly large and effective organization (Damons & Abrahams, 2009). I was also concerned about what would happen to School A if I left. However, this notion was countered by the excitement of opening a new school and the prospect of applying the knowledge that I have gained, in particular around community schools, to the new school. School B served a very similar community to that of School A.

I was formally requested, on the 12 December 2011, by the Port Elizabeth District Director of The Department of Basic Education (DBE) to open the school on 9 January 2012. Schools were closing on the 13 December 2011, and by that time my family and I had decided that we were going to Namibia on a holiday until the 4 January 2012. At the time of this request there was only an empty building. The process of enrolling new learners and allocating staff had not even begun. The furniture, electricity, and other running costs had not been budgeted for the school. The challenges facing the opening of the new school were further compounded by the fact that there was no proper access road to the school building. On the

12 December, when I received the keys to the school, my vehicle got trapped in the mud on the 'access' road to the school. I also returned the keys to the officials of the DBE for safe keeping as I remembered that I was still focused on wrapping up the year in School A.

I accepted the offer to open the new school because of my passionate belief that a school can play a central role in the development of communities, especially communities faced with economic and social challenges. I recognized that as a result of my work in School A, the community could play a meaningful role in contributing to the development of an effective school (Appendix F). The opportunity to open the school presented me with a chance to research some of the key basic and evolving elements which need to be present when opening a new school, especially in an area faced with so many challenges. It also afforded me the opportunity to actively shape and develop the future of the school by immersing myself in the community and working with all the stakeholders of the school. I was therefore an active participant and researcher in this study.

Since the opening of the school on the 9 January 2012, the staffs, with its various stakeholders, have been able to get the school operational in spite of facing innumerable challenges. The learner population and class distribution as on the 26 January 2012 are presented in Table 1.1:

**Table 1.1: Learner Enrolment**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>No of learners</b>	<b>No of classes</b>	<b>Average class size</b>
<b>R</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>37.5</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>37.7</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>27.5</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33.5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>35.9</b>

There are 26 teachers at the school. At the time of writing this study, I was the acting principal with a deputy principal, one head of department, five teachers who were redeployed from other schools across the Eastern Cape Province and eighteen first year teachers. Three teachers had one year of teaching experience and 15 who were starting their teaching careers.

The enrolment forms of the school indicated that most of the enrolled learners rely on a social grant from government. There is however great excitement in the community because this is the first social structure, other than houses, that has opened in the area. This is evident from the fact that over 300 people have signed up, indicating their willingness to volunteer their services at the school. From the 300 we reduced these volunteers to a more manageable amount, by selecting those who first put their names on the volunteer list. Presently the school has 82 parent and community members volunteering in the following areas at the school, as presented in table 1.2 below:

**Table 1.2: List of volunteer projects**

<b>Volunteer assignments at school</b>	<b>Total number</b>
Manager of volunteers	1
Unemployed teachers in the classroom – these are teachers who could not find formal employment and wanted to remain active and therefore volunteered their services to the school	2
Unemployed grade R teachers	3
Day and night security personnel	10
Toilet managers	7
Classroom cleaners	14
Office administrators	3
Vegetable gardeners	14
Health workers	5
Teacher assistants	18
Feeding Scheme Volunteers	4
Maintenance	1

The school initially had an interim School Governing Body (SGB), which had co-opted parents, mainly from the volunteer ranks and teachers that were nominated by their peers. Many of the powers that are usually assigned to an SGB were then vested in me as leader and administrator of the school, up until a fully constituted SGB was elected in June.

There is general excitement about what the school will be able to achieve in educating the learners and bring about meaningful change in the lives of the community, in spite of the

many challenges that confront the school. The challenges we are confronted with at the school include high levels of unemployment; high incidents of HIV/AIDS; hunger; drug and alcohol abuse; physical and mental abuse and no proper access road to the community and the school. These challenges were compounded by the lack of adequate support and delivery from the DBE. After starting at the beginning of the year, thirteen of the first year teachers only received their salaries for the first time in June; four of the teachers received their salaries in September and one received her salary in October. The school received no financial support from the DBE to operationalize the school. At the time of writing this study the school had not received any textbooks and had to rely heavily on School A for academic support for the teachers. We also had to rely on various other stakeholders to survive. The school has a prepaid electricity meter system and the SGB had to charge an amount of R1, 00 per child per week so that the school could generate funds to pay for the electricity. In spite of these challenges there is a strong feeling of optimism about the school.

School B also adopts a “no school fee” policy and this ensures that no child is excluded on the grounds of having failed to pay school fees. The school, and in particular the SGB’s focus, is not only on educating learners but on the development of the community at large. They aim to achieve this goal by providing skills that would be beneficial to the individual, the school, and community as a whole. The school is therefore not only seen as a centre of academic excellence but also as a catalyst for social and economic change in a disadvantaged community. However, the school recognizes that these objectives and vision of the school can only be achieved with the assistance of various stakeholders who may include government, business, the local community, social partners and the learners of the school (Witten, 2006 ).

## **1.3 The Study**

### **1.3.1 Statement of the problem**

As formal low cost housing developments are built in the NMMM and across the country, new schools will have to be erected. Unlike schools that relocate to new buildings from an existing infrastructure like mud or dilapidated buildings, completely new schools have to be built and established in these communities. The problem I encountered was how to go about establishing a school in the absence of other infrastructure and without any previously established culture, values and systems that are inherent in an existing school. I searched for literature and documentation on how to establish a new school in areas where low-cost formal housing has been built, but could not find any on this topic. There is thus the need to better understand how to navigate the pathways for a new school to become not only an institution of academic excellence but also a beacon of hope in the community, especially in areas characterised by unemployment and poverty. This research can assist other schools that will open in similar situations and can provide the DBE with documented material to assist such schools.

### **1.3.2 Addressing the social challenges to education**

In South Africa, the efforts to improve schools do not pay sufficient attention to dealing with the social challenges that affect educational outcomes (Witten, 2010). One of the models that deal with the holistic development of children is the model of the community school. A community school is a school that recognises the interrelatedness of various factors on young people as these factors relate to their academic achievement and social, physical and emotional well-being (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2009). This definition is important in South Africa as there are multiple challenges that need to be addressed if one is to deliver quality education in such deprived schools. A high level of community



involvement is important in making schools effective in communities (Miller- Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002). Against this backdrop it thus becomes important to research the essential elements that need to be present when opening a school in such challenging conditions.

The participants for this study have all been identified based on their connection to and work done inside the school. The participants varied according to their stakeholder involvement in the school. The participants comprised teachers; the community stakeholders; and The Department of Basic Education (DBE). In addition to these internal stakeholders the studied also identified important external stakeholders. These stakeholders included various business stakeholders from both the formal and informal business sectors; local churches that use the school building for services and NGOs working with the school. The local university working in the school and a local network of schools to which this school belongs, also formed part of the study. All these stakeholders played an integral part in the shaping of the school, as the findings will show in Chapter 4.

This study will be further enhanced and supported by my work in the local school network of which I am a founding principal. This network is a coalition of fourteen community schools collaborating with the local university around school improvement initiatives. The key objective of the coalition is to work together as schools by taking responsibility for improving the quality and standard of education. The group also views schools as the catalyst for much more than just learner education in their communities. It is also looking at redefining what the new South African school, especially the school that serves low-income communities, would look like in the future. This study will present valuable information for the work of the network as well as any researcher doing work in this field of study (Appendix G). This study is also motivated by my passion for meaningful educational

change and presents an opportunity for my personal growth and development as a school leader.

## **1.4 Research Aim and Objectives**

### **1.4.1 Aim**

The main aim of this research is to identify some of the key basic and evolving elements that need to be present to establish an effective new school that focuses on the holistic development of the child in the context of the community it serves.

### **1.4.2 Objectives**

The research study has the following objectives:

- To give a voice to the various stakeholders in the community on what they perceive as the essential as well as some of the evolving elements that need to be present when opening a new school. The elements will be identified in the areas relating to organisational management; professional development; school culture; and stakeholder involvement.
- To enhance my own skills and knowledge as a school leader by actively participating with relevant stakeholders in the process of designing systems that will support the establishment of an effective school.

When opening the school, there were no guidelines or documents to guide the process in this set of challenging circumstances. This study will make a valuable contribution to knowledge on establishing schools, since I cannot find any studies that have been conducted on how to open a new school, especially in the context within which School B is located. The research will also allow authentic community voices to be heard and to contribute to the debate on

effective schooling in the country. The project will be of value to student researchers in education, communities, the DBE in South Africa, and to various institutions and organisations in developing countries that plan to open new schools in similar circumstances in the future.

### **1.5 Research question and sub-questions**

The central research question of this study focuses on identifying some of the essential aspects of an effective functioning school, especially in the context of one confronted with a number of social challenges. I formulate the main and subsequent research questions below:

#### **Main Research Question**

What are the key basic and evolving elements that need to be present when starting a new community school in order for it to function effectively? The responses to this question will be guided by the following sub questions:

#### **Sub questions:**

1. What are the key leadership and organizational management responsibilities that need to be in place?
2. What professional development needs to take place?
3. How do we establish a school culture that defines our work as a community school?
4. How does one identify and work with parents, community members and stakeholders to build an effective resource base to support the school?

## **1.6 Overview of the study**

This chapter attempted to provide a road map for the study by describing the background and context to the study, highlighting the research aims and objectives, identifying the research questions and explaining my role in in the study.

Chapter 2 will consist of the literature review. The literature reviewed focused on school effectiveness, community schools and models of the community school. I also explored the School Based Complementary Learning Framework (SBCLF) (Witten, 2006), as a theoretical framework for the study and identified four key elements to be explored by this study.

Chapter 3 will describe the methodology that was used to accomplish the aims of the study. In particular, it will focus on the research design, sampling methods, data generation methods, methods to ensure trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 reports on the findings according to the themes identified through the theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter 5 will contain a discussion of the findings and the limitations of the study. The chapter concludes with recommendations to various stakeholders and suggested areas for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature review conducted in this chapter focuses on past and present research based on the themes that are relevant to this study. A literature review is not regarded merely as a summary of literature but allows for a focus on available literature on the topic; a review of studies on the same topic and allows the researcher to identify the focus of the current research (Mongan-Rallis, 2006; Struwig & Stead, 2010; Mouton 2003). The literature review specifically centres on the definitions of school effectiveness. In the review I examine the community school as an appropriate model for dealing with the holistic development of children, and present two models that may be relevant to the South African context. I identify the school-based complementary learning framework as a useful generic conceptual framework that contains the essential elements of the community school model that have been identified in the review. I will use this as the theoretical framework to answer the research questions in my study.

#### **2.2 Effective Schools**

‘Open the doors and walk inside, you’ll know a successful school right away. Look at the hallway walls, inside the classrooms and offices, and into the meeting areas. These are the best places to see how schools are working. They show how learning happens, how professional knowledge and planning work, even the extent of community involvement. They also show how students learn effectively - or don’t. Excellent schools are schools that work well’ (Langer, 2004, p. 1).

It is within this broader definition of an effective school that I will be exploring what the literature has to say about the key elements of a well-functioning school.

### **2.2.1 Measuring effectiveness**

Effective schools in South Africa are viewed as schools that are producing good academic results (Berkhout, 2007). In order to create the enabling environment for the schools to be effective, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) introduced the whole school development model (WSD), to provide standards for school effectiveness and to provide a basis of assessment and planning in schools (Department-of-Education, 2001). The following performance standards have been identified by the DBE as key to measure school effectiveness:

- Performance Standard 1: Creation of a positive learning environment
- Performance Standard 2: Curriculum and learning programmes
- Performance Standard 3: Lesson planning preparation and presentation
- Performance Standard 4: Learner assessment
- Performance Standard 5: Professional development
- Performance Standard 6: Human relations and contribution to school development
- Performance Standard 7: Extracurricular and co-curricular activities
- Performance Standard 8: Administration of resources and records
- Performance Standard 9: Personnel management
- Performance Standard 10: Decision making and accountability
- Performance Standard 11: Leadership, communication and serving the governing body
- Performance Standard 12: Strategic planning, financial planning and EMD

In spite of these guidelines, many schools, especially in previously disadvantaged communities have been unable to achieve the degree of effectiveness required by the DBE (Christie, 2010; Moloji, 2007; Witten, 2006)

The National Ministry of Education established a Ministerial committee in 2006 to study schools that work effectively, in an attempt to determine why some schools, despite being classified as historically disadvantaged, were performing well in the National Senior Certificate Exam (Christie, et al., 2007). This committee, comprising a broad range of role players, identified the following as key characteristics that were present in these schools:

- they had management team that focused on the key tasks of learning and teaching
- they carried out their tasks with competence
- they had developed school cultures that supported work ethic, expected achievement and acknowledged success
- there were strong accountability systems in place.

MacBeath & Mortimore (2001), in addition to these findings of the committee, identified:

- professional leadership
- shared vision and goals
- a positive learning environment
- high expectations of everyone
- a positive environment with positive reinforcement
- a school culture where progress is monitored and in which learners rights and responsibilities are understood and respected
- the school as a learning organization where home-school partnerships are encouraged

However in the pursuit of this academic excellence, factors that impact on the ability of schools to deliver this academic excellence are either ignored or neglected (Berkhout, 2007).

The Ministerial report states that school effectiveness research ‘has met with strong political criticism’ because it neglects the influence of social context (Christie, et al., 2007, p. 24). The largest impact on learners’ achievement remains their home background and social conditions

(Noguera, 2003). Current policy and literature on school improvement also tend to focus on what needs to be done well inside of the school, but seem to pay little attention to the social environments that schools are located in, and to how forces in these environments impact on the effectiveness of schools (Witten 2006). Shore in (Sanders, 2003) argues that schools, especially poorer schools, are not very effective because they are overwhelmed by the many social and emotional challenges confronting them. These challenges, which impact on the academic performance of learners, include extreme poverty and health issues like HIV/AIDS, which is particularly prevalent in poor and rural schools (Berkhout, 2007; MacBeath & Mortimore, 2001; Ncobo & Tikly, 2010). In the face of this criticism of the classic definition of effective schools, a much broader definition of school effectiveness needs to be developed.

In his study of 96 schools in a township in South Africa, Prew (2009, p. 826) found that the need for schools to be 'flexible and resilient' has become increasingly important. He further argues that effective schools are those schools that are able to meet the challenges of their environment. This adaption of schools to their environment will allow principals to make better informed decisions around the structure and culture of the school. This view of the 'flexible and resilient' school is supported by Witten (2006) and Noguera, (2003). The model of the community school is one that lends itself to this.

Models of community schools offer an approach to schooling that focuses on the holistic development of the child. These models offer an approach that deals with the academic as well as the other dimensions of child development by engaging the community where the child comes from and building partnerships that support learning and development (Vince Whitman & Aldinger, 2009; Unicef, 2009). In the following section, I will be exploring two



models of community schools that I think may have particular relevance to the South African context, especially for children in South Africa's rural and township communities.

## **2.3 Community Schools**

### **2.3.1 Defining community**

Block (2008) defines community as a place of belonging. It centres around the notion of being part of something, and gives rise to the feeling of being at home. This definition is particularly relevant in the South African context, where communities are not seen as individuals operating on their own, but rather as a village acting in the common interest of everyone (Prew, 2009). This leads to the question of how we create schools to become centres where all people in the community can have this sense of belonging and can contribute to both the academic progress of the children as well as the overall development of their communities.

### **2.3.2 Defining the community school**

A community school is a school that not only focuses on learner achievement, but looks at building stronger communities, through support and partnerships with the community (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2009). The Coalition for Community Schools (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2009) states that in a community school, all stakeholders work as equal partners with the school and other institutions to develop programmes in the areas of quality education, youth development, family support, family and community engagement, and community development.

The work of community schools not only focuses on academic excellence, but also gives attention to those factors that will impact on obtaining this excellence, and in some cases serve as beacons of hope to impoverished communities (Damons & Abrahams, 2009). In

their global study of countries that implemented the Health Promoting Schools model, Vince Whitman & Aldinger (2009) found that schools were involved in a range of activities that supported the academic agenda of schools. These activities include road safety; sanitation; raising awareness of the environment and providing primary health care to learners and the community (Choudhuri, Ghoshal, & D'Souza, 2009; Odujinrin, 2009; Damons & Abrahams, 2009) .

### **2.3.3 Models of community schools**

Prew (2009) states that in pursuit of a supportive school environment, school improvement models should impact on three areas, namely: the broader system, school and community levels. The community level is regarded as an extra school domain. While there are a number of different approaches to community schools, I have identified two models that I think are relevant to schooling in the South African context and to poorer communities in particular.

The World Health Organization (WHO) introduced the Health Promoting Schools (HPS) concept in the Ottawa charter in 1986, and identified social cohesion as an important feature of the roles of schools in promoting primary health care to children (Mukoma & Fisher, 2004). The WHO points out that schools are settings where ‘communities, young people, adults and families, gather to achieve and support educational outcomes that range from work to play’ (Vince Whitman & Aldinger, 2009, p3). The HPS model advocates six pillars around which these engagements occur. They are: having school health policies in place; giving attention to the physical and social environment; developing individual health skills and action competencies; and having strong community links and support from health services (Vince Whitman & Aldinger, 2009).

Vince Whitman and Aldinger (2009) highlight 26 global case studies of successful implementation of the HPS model in various countries. These countries include India, Kenya, Barbados, Germany, Oman, China and the Cook Islands. School A mentioned in this study also features among these case studies (Damons & Abrahams, 2009).

The manual compiled by UNICEF on Child Friendly Schools (CFS), states that the school must not only be a place that children attend, but they should work in the best interest of the children that they serve (Unicef, 2009). They recognize that children are faced with different challenges across the globe and that schools might have shortcomings that would allow them to deal with these challenges. They argue that schools need to draw on the assets that children bring from their homes and communities, and should be able to compensate for these shortcomings in the home and community (UNICEF, 2009). The Safe and Caring Child Friendly School (SCCFS), a UNICEF model, was adopted by the Department of Basic Education (Department of Education and UNICEF South Africa, 2008). According to the manual the SCCFS is:

1. A rights- based and inclusive school
2. An effective school that provides quality education
3. A safe, protective and supportive school
4. A health promoting and health seeking school
5. A gender sensitive school that promotes equity and equality
6. A school that builds and has linkages and partnerships with the community.

(Education, 2008, p. 3)

By 2010, 820 of the most disadvantage schools across South Africa were implementing the SCCFS model (UNICEF, n.d.). Both models advocate that there should be enabling

conditions for them to be successfully implemented. Vince Whitman (2009) identifies 12 major factors that contribute to the successful implementation of the HPS model namely:

1. Vision and concept – the seed champion
2. National and international guidelines
3. Data driven planning and decision making
4. Champions and leaders at all levels
5. Stakeholder ownership & participation
6. Adaptation to local concerns
7. Critical mass and supportive norms
8. Team training and on-going coaching to form a learning community
9. Administrative and management support at all levels
10. Dedicated time and resources
11. Need for cross sector collaboration
12. Attention to external forces

The DBE further argues that for a school to become a SCCFS, the following should receive attention:

1. The environment (physical and social)
2. The learners, educators, community and parents
3. Peer support mechanisms for learners and educators
4. The curriculum, learning materials, norms and standards
5. The school management and the learning processes and structures
6. The outcomes for the learners, the educators, the school and the community  
(Department of Education and UNICEF South Africa, 2008)

Although both these models have been implemented across South Africa, Prew (2009) argues that there is a need for developing countries like South Africa to produce more literature around localised school improvement initiatives, especially to address the various contextual realities.

Elements of the above two models are captured in the School-based Complementary Learning Framework. I will use this framework as the theoretical lens to focus on my research question and explore this further in the next section.

#### **2.4 The School-based Complementary Learning Framework (SBCLF)**

The SBCLF is useful to use in this study in that whilst it focuses on the instructional core (teaching and learning), it allows schools to deal with the social challenges that confront these schools (Witten, 2006). The SBCLF (Appendix H) is based on the theory of ‘complementary learning’ that was developed by the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) (Bouffard & Weiss, 2008). Complementary learning focuses on the notion that the different contexts in a child’s life (the school, home, church, and so forth), should be connected to and support one another in order for children and young people to be successful (Bouffard & Weiss, 2008). Pedro Noguera supports this view in his critique of the American education system’s response to supporting children in poor inner city schools. He argues that if American education truly wanted to be effective in leaving no child behind, then the system would have to give attention to other factors that impact on the education of the learner, including nutrition and housing (Noguera, 2003).

Schools, especially those located in low income and rural communities in South Africa, should be sites that play a key role in connecting the different learning context, they have to consider and perform a broader social role in the holistic development of the learner and

become more responsive to the academic and non-academic needs of learners. Among some of these needs are nutrition, the need for primary health care and psychosocial support (Ncobo & Tikly, 2010). The key elements of the SBCLF have at its core the dynamic interaction between the learner, teacher and the curriculum. This interaction is supported by the elements that make up a school which include the management and organisational structure, the school culture, availability of resources (which include human and material resources) and the capacity of the various stakeholders to support and strengthen the core. The model further argues that the work of the school, especially in poorer communities, needs to be supported by various agencies to deal with challenges confronting them, if they are to achieve their core objective (Witten 2006; Moloji, 2007). In this framework the school thus becomes the central actor in building networks of support around children and as such offers a relevant conceptual model for this study.

The research questions of this study will thus seek to identify some of the key elements that need to be present in four aspects of the framework. These are management responsibilities, stakeholder involvement, professional development, and school culture.

#### **2.4.1 Management responsibilities**

Some scholars argue that the role of the principal should be understood as a relationship between leadership and management (Christie, 2010, Bush, 2007). Leadership is defined by John Maxwell as influence. Influence is seen as the ability to lead based on your position and values in the way that will make people want to follow you (Maxwell, 1993; Evers & Katyal, 2007). Leadership is further defined as a relationship directed to goals, influenced by vision and values that can be formal or informal and should be characterized by influence and consent, rather than compulsion (Christie, 2010; Evers & Katyal, 2007; Harris, 2003).

Management is tied to a position and looks at the structures, systems and processes that have to be in place in order for a school to function effectively (Christie, 2010; Bush & D, 2005). Management entails much more than running systems and processes; it also entails the process of making people feel that they own the entire process of growth and development. Christie (2010) argues that leadership and management come together at a school. Leadership is exercised throughout the school and management is delegated where decision making and responsibilities are shared. The challenge is to find the perfect balance between leadership and management. Effective leaders are those leaders who are able to find this balance and blend their own vision and values with those of others (Christie, 2010).

In the next section, I will explore this relationship between leadership and management. I will focus on leadership and management styles and then consider the management structures, policies and processes that need to be in place in a school in order for it to be regarded as effective.

#### *2.4.1.1 Leadership*

##### *a) Complexity of leadership*

Leadership is complex by its very nature and is made more challenging when exercised in the different contexts. Leaders are confronted and have to deal with situations and challenges in complex and constantly changing systems (Berkhout, 2007; Le Grange, 2007). This is particularly true for leaders in South Africa who, since 1994, have had to manage a range of complex issues in their schools that range from implementation and change in policies to dealing with emerging social issues (Le Grange, 2007). The leadership style and philosophical outlook of the principal is therefore important if the complexity of leadership is to be managed effectively.

*b) Role of principal in leadership*

Principals usually occupy central roles in their schools and have to provide leadership in the management teams of schools. They have a key role to play in school improvement and solving many problems that schools face (Harris, 2003). In these complex situations, the role of the principal transcends the traditional role of manager and instructional leader, and extends to one in which the principal is viewed as a transformative, cooperative agent as well as the chief executive officer of a school (Day, 2003; Wilmore, 2002; Tilman, 2005). Christie (2010) further states that these roles of leaders are not confined to any particular position in a school but are exercised across all areas of the school.

*c) Type of leadership needed*

A top down approach was the dominant leadership style that was present in the education system prior to 1994 in South Africa (Moloi, 2007). With the change to a new education department there was a need to move from this hierarchical form of leadership, where power is concentrated at the top, to a more democratic form of engaging with others. A different understanding of leadership was needed for the effective transformation of South African schools (Grant, 2006). The type of leadership that is required to lead South African schools has to be adaptable and strong (Prew, 2007). These type of leaders are able to walk the talk and be adaptable to outside changes, while realizing that nothing will change until they change (Johnson, 2000). They form part of a team, organise professional development that would include themselves, encourage and promote a collective management style, and make provision for critical reflection (Ncobo & Tikly, 2010). Principals that lead in a transformative way help shape teachers' beliefs and behaviours, change the culture of the educational environment and enhance the social, emotional and academic achievement of all students (Tilman, 2005; Evers & Katyal, 2007). This ability to lead in a transformative way



allows the leader to focus on building a vision with a moral and ethical purpose (Evers & Katyal, 2007; Bush, 2007). Transformative leadership is also linked to servant leadership. Harris (2003) further explains that the concept of servant leadership is to provide purpose to others and to give direction when uncertainty prevails. Prew(2007) however cautions that the true nature of this transformative leadership in South African schools is superficial, as many leaders, instead of incorporating others in decisions, are merely delegating responsibilities.

*d) Managing change*

The emotional intelligence of leaders plays an important part in the way they manage change. Emotional intelligence is the ability of leaders to be conscious of the emotions of others, to manage relationships and to know and manage their own emotions (Day, 2003). Change is usually accompanied by the principals having to use a lot of their personal resources and energy in order to attract support to the school (Lumby, 2003). Lumby (2003) found in her study of schools in Kwazulu Natal that the investment in change and transformation by the leader led to burn out and actually led to successful principals leaving for other professions.

It becomes imperative that leaders are thus able to blend this collaborative, transformative leadership approach into managing an effective school.

*2.4.1.2 Organisational management*

*a) How to manage?*

The way schools are managed are usually influenced by the action of leaders in specific conditions, and these actions are informed by the way they experience and see the world. (Ribbins, 2007). Grant argues that we should move away from the role of the principal as the occupier of all management responsibilities to one “in favor of the possibility of multiple,

emergent, task focused roles” (Grant, 2006, p. 513). She further argues that leadership is about pooling the expertise of the group and not the direction of one person. Grant points out that too much focus has gone into the roles of principals and has neglected the voices of the teachers in management and their role as potential leaders. This ‘distributed leadership’ approach encourages the creation of a collaborative culture in schools (Grant, 2006). She states that teachers assuming leadership roles will be critical for the transformation of South African schools. This is because of vast inequalities prevalent in many schools and the range of new policies and regulations that have to be implemented. Distributed leadership allows teachers to feel a sense of ownership and inclusivity in the running of the school. The key to effective management is thus the ability to move to this cooperative, distributive approach that allows people to form part of shaping the context that they find themselves in (Prew, 2009).

*b) What to manage?*

Key to the leadership style is the actual managerial tasks that have to be performed by the principal. The Public Administrative Measures (PAM) (Moloi, 2007), that regulates among others the job description of teachers and principals, identifies some core duties and responsibilities of the principal as:

- General Administrative
  - To be responsible for the professional management of the school
  - To give direction of official policies as it relates to instruction and general operation of the school
  - To administer finances according to regulation
  - To keep a log book of activities
- Personnel

- to provide professional leadership to the school
- To provide professional development and support to teachers
- To manage various workloads across the school
- To lead and complete the assessment process of teachers
- Teaching
  - To teach, if necessary, and make sure that learner progress is properly assessed
- Extra and Co- Curricular
  - To serve on various committees
  - To encourage and promote the holistic development of learners through engagement in extra and co-curricular activities
- Interaction with Stakeholders
  - To serve on the School Governing Body (SGB) and ensure that the SGB performs its statutory obligations
  - To play an active part in community development
- Communication
  - To work with stakeholders to establish an effectively running school
  - To engage with the relevant sections of the Department of Education
  - To meet with parents around the progress of their children
  - To be able to establish links with other government departments that can assist in the smooth running of the school
  - To establish relationships with other sectors in society that could assist with various areas of development of the school (Moloi, 2007)

Besides the key management tasks as identified in the PAM document, principals also have to manage and be part of a range of structures and processes to be able to render the school

effective (Bush & Middlewood, 2005). These include serving on various committees of the school as well as on statutory structures like School Governing Bodies.

It is important that we do not over-generalize the role of principals but rather give serious attention to the context that the principals operate in (Christie, 2010). Transformational leadership that does not take changing contexts into account will have a limited effect on how well schools function, and schools that are successful are able to form a relationship with their communities and local education offices (Prew, 2007).

The professional responsibility of running a school is the responsibility of the principal and educators of a school. The argument of how to support the complex work of the staff becomes important. The following section will explore stakeholder involvement in supporting the culture of learning and teaching.

## **2.4.2 Stakeholder involvement**

### *2.4.2.1 Social capital*

Social capital is the ability to bring together various components within social structures to achieve difficult objectives (Smylie & Evans, 2006). According to Smylie and Evans (2006), the three key components of social capital are social trust; channels of communication and norms; and expectations and sanctions. Social trust is the ability to have confidence in the the reliability and integrity of individuals and their social relations. Channels of communication relates to access of information and how information flows through the organisations to influence individual and collective behaviour. Norms, expectations and sanctions influence individual and group behaviour and can be promoted through “internal or external sanctions, both positive and negative, including the distrubruption of social support, ostracism, designation of honour and status, conferral of rewards and expression of approval and disapproval” (Smylie & Evans, 2006, pp. 190-191). The key to social capital is relationships (Warren, 2005). Warren argues that strong relationships among the various stakeholders can play an important role in improving the conditions of schools. In Prew’s study of ‘township schools’, he found a link between the community that was invovled in a school’s development process and the lower crime rate around the school (Prew, 2009). Schools grew as the community became more involved in the school. School development should therefore be linked with shared ownership and purpose, and shared leadership and management (Prew, 2009). This he argues will allow for greater ownership and allow the stakeholders to play a greater active part in the development of the school in support of its primary objective which is teaching and learning.

#### 2.4.2.2 *Why stakeholder involvement?*

The need to identify stakeholders that will contribute to the collective growth and development of the school is important. In his mini case study of successful and effective schools in South Africa, Prew(2007) found that community ownership positively contributed to the effectiveness of schools. As early as the late 1960's, the call had gone out for communities to become more active in education (Sanders, 2003). Sanders states that the concept of community involvement refers to the 'connections between schools and individuals, businesses and formal and informal organisations, and institutions in the community' (Sanders, 2003, p.162). This involvement is important for effective school functioning, student well-being, and community health and development. In a society that is changing in make-up, community involvement in the school will allow the learners to develop key relationships with various components of the community (Benson, McLaughlin, Irby, & Langman; Toffler& Toffler in Sanders, 2003). Through this stakeholder involvement schools can become areas of hope for learners, especially those from disadvantaged areas, as is the case of the school in this study.

#### 2.4.2.3 *Identification of stakeholders*

Many community stakeholders have a direct interest in the education of children. It is important that we are able to identify who these stakeholders are , why they get involved and what they can contribute to the process of learning and teaching in the school. Foskett (in Lumby, 2003) distinguishes between 'exchange based relationships' (when something is offered in exchange for something else) and 'relationship based activity' which has as its primary focus the building of relationships. The importance of managing these relationships is highlighted by Smylie and Evans (2006). This is because the various stakeholders have diverse interests for wanting to get involved in a school (Lumby, 2003). These diverse

interests have to be managed in a way that brings benefit to the stakeholder as well as the school. Prew (2009) further cautions that the recruitment of external stakeholders into the school has to take place after proper consultation with all internal stakeholders of the school.

#### 2.4.2.4 *Key school stakeholders*

The most important stakeholder group in schools are the parents. In a study conducted by Lumby (2003), principals reported that without the support and input of their parents they would not be able to raise the academic standard or protect their schools against acts of vandalism and crime. Her definition of parents stretches beyond the biological definition and includes those guardians who have stepped into the role of parents for many learners and serve as 'in loco' parents (Lumby, 2003). Parents are usually attracted to the school through activities like parent teacher conferences, home visits, newsletters, events such as sports days and volunteer activities in the school (Lumby, 2003). Greater parental involvement is impacted upon by factors like feelings of inferiority to the teaching staff; parents working long hours and who do not live near to the schools; schools that are located in the informal settlements; constantly shifting communities because of the new housing developments, and the issue of power relations between the management of the school and the broader community (Heystek, 2006). Schools that functioned effectively developed programmes that not only recruited parents to the school but also built the self esteem of the parents (Lumby 2003). This researcher further noted that community involvement depended on how structures, like churches and political parties viewed the school, as well as the relationship of the principal and teachers with these structures.

It is however evident that parents alone cannot provide all the support that schools in lower income communities would require. Schools require wider communities of support if they are

able to achieve their primary objectives of providing quality education in challenging conditions (Witten, 2006; Bouffard & Weiss, 2008). Lumby (2003) argues that schools, especially those that are under resourced have to seek relationships that will allow them to remain sustainable. She further states that private sector involvement was dependent on how successful the school was. Business wanted their brand to be associated with success and wanted to ensure that any donations would not be lost or stolen (Lumby, 2003).

#### 2.4.2.5 *Managing Stakeholders*

Sanders (2003) identifies four areas in which communities get involved in schools. These areas include the students, the families, the school itself and the community at large. It therefore becomes important to manage these external relationships. Friction among stakeholders arises because of the uncertainty of the corresponding functions of the different stakeholders involved in the school (Heystek, 2006). The management of stakeholders takes a lot of time and at times distracted the principals from their other activities (Lumby, 2003). It is therefore important to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders in the school.

#### **2.4.3 Professional development (PD)**

In this section, professional development focuses on the academic staff, namely the teachers and principal, although the argument for the support and development of other stakeholders within the school should receive attention as well.

The literature shows that the quality of teaching and the effective implementation of policies depend on the continual professional development of teachers (Steyn, 2012). Teachers learn informally by the very nature of their work and formal learning occurs through ‘professional



development courses, workshops or other activities with planned aims, objectives and pedagogical content’ (Steyn, 2012, p. 322). In addition to this Steyn (2012) states that professional development is important in helping teachers to deal with challenges that could include low morale, scarcity of resources, minimal parental involvement and a different way of undertaking the educational tasks. According to Moswela (in Steyn, 2012), continual professional development is important if we are to create effective schools. “A community of continuous learners – professional learners – is a key element of school capacity, a way of working, and the most powerful professional development and change strategy available for improving our educational system” (Huffman & Hipp, 2003, p. vii). The researchers further argue that although individual learning is important, an organization that learns together develops a network of support for each other and their professional learning.

#### *2.4.3.1 Mentoring as a tool for professional development*

Mentoring plays an important role in professional development. Tilman (2005) focused on three themes for professional development. These three themes were:

- mentoring as a tool to enhance professional and personal competence
- mentoring as a means for communicating the culture of the school environment
- mentoring as a catalyst for transformative leadership (Tilman, 2005).

Building on these themes, the following were also identified as perspectives that could be included in a mentoring programme:

- A humanistic approach - helping teachers to overcome personal problems and to feel comfortable in their profession;
- An apprenticeship approach – helping teachers move into school culture and assisting them in developing skills to survive and

- A critical constructivist perspective – challenging the existing knowledge through questioning (Tilman, 2005; Fullan, 2002).

This mentoring should also focus on helping new teachers to help learners who live below the poverty line and who require extra emotional, social and academic support (Tilman, 2005). She says new teachers should be able to understand the various contexts in which they teach.

#### 2.4.3.2 *Implementation of professional development programmes*

Citing his previous work, Steyn (2012) identifies the following factors that play a role in the effective implementation of professional development:

- The roles of principals and teachers – principals and teachers need to understand the importance of professional development and be prepared for it.
- Recognition of teachers' needs – teachers need to play a central role in determining what their developmental needs are and this planning should be done in conjunction with the principal.
- Some key components of an effective professional development programme are:
  - Choice of facilitators – identifying people that know what they are teaching. Moswela (in Steyn, 2012) says that teachers prefer working with their peers in their school because they know the context of their development.
  - Professional development focus and content – teachers have to realise the value of professional development and should be able to integrate this with the informal learning in their classroom practice.
  - Feedback and monitoring – it's important to get feedback and make the necessary adjustments for future programmes.

The role of the principal in mentoring is important, especially in the context of new teachers. Tilman (2005) notes that “new teachers come to school with a great deal of energy, it is up to the mentor and the principal to tap into that energy and let them know that they are part of the school” (p. 621). Principals must serve as developers and nurturers, and by doing so, will encourage these teachers to transfer the knowledge they have learnt to their work place. Tilman found in her study that a new teacher wanted to be recognized as an individual on a personal level as well as a professional in the school (Tilman, 2005). The study found that both principal and teacher agreed that new teachers should be socialized into the school culture and systems even before the beginning of the year, and that the interview should set the scene for the context that the teacher will be entering into (Tilman, 2005).

She further argues that the key responsibilities of principals should be “clarifying expectations for new teachers, socializing them into the school culture, making suggestions about effective teaching and discipline strategies, helping them to assess their strengths and weaknesses, providing feedback and encouragement, and providing opportunities for collaborative interactions with colleagues” (Tilman, 2005, p. 626). Mentoring can also be used for principals to share their own personal vision and what their expectations are for learners (Tilman, 2005). Tilman further states that principals should make an effort to pair new teachers with a teacher mentor that teaches the same subjects and have the same administrative workload. Professional development is therefore important not only in contributing to personal growth, but to the growth of others and the school.

The need for professional development of other stakeholders in schools, beside professional staff, should also require attention, especially in community schools that take on the roles of learning organisations (Vince Whitman C., 2009). These forms of development should be relevant to the area of stakeholder involvement in the school. An example of this is the

training of unemployed parents in health competencies in School A (Damons & Abrahams, 2009). However, there seems to be insufficient literature available on how to formally introduce other stakeholder professional development programmes into schools. Many of these programmes seem to respond to the needs as they arise and are conducted on an ad hoc basis.

The management of the school, the level of stakeholder involvement and the effectiveness of professional development will all be influenced by the culture of the school, which I will explore in the next section.

#### **2.4.4 School culture**

The school culture can be defined as what members of a school care about, what they are willing to spend time doing, what and how they celebrate, and the manner in which stakeholders speak about the matters that confront them on a daily basis (Center For Improving School Culture, 2004). These actions are governed by the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that are evident in the way people feel about one another, about how they feel included and appreciated, and the rites and conduct that reflect cooperation and collegiality (Center For Improving School Culture, 2004). These beliefs and attitudes are usually agreed to among all stakeholders in the school and apply to all stakeholders.

Saphier and King (1985) list twelve norms of school culture that will impact on school improvement, these are:

- collegiality
- experimentation
- high expectations

- trust and confidence
- tangible support
- reaching out to the knowledge base
- appreciation and recognition
- caring
- celebration and humour
- involvement in decision making
- protection of what's important
- traditions and honest, open communication

Barth (in Poore, 2005) says that school culture will have to be shaped if we are to have an impact on learner achievement. The culture of developing a continual learning organisation is important to achieve this objective. A learning organization is an organization that strives to continually acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding to bring about substantive change to the main objectives of the organization (Fullan, 2002). The learning organization is further enhanced when everyone is included and voice is given to their aspirations and awareness, and where capacity is developed (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton & Kleiner, 2000). This involvement, according to Senge et al (2000), revolves around five key disciplines for organisational learning. These are personal mastery, a shared vision, mental models, team learning and systems thinking.

The principal plays an important role in the creation and maintenance of the school's culture. It is therefore important for the principal to have an understanding of the history, culture and community norms of the students and the community that they serve when adopting a leadership style (Tilman, 2005; Ncobo & Tikly, 2010).

## **2.5 Discussion and Conclusion**

In this chapter I sought to identify what constitutes an effective school, especially in the context of schools in impoverished areas that are confronted with various challenges. The chapter further explored the theoretical framework that informed the community school model, and looked at two examples of such models. Finally, the chapter looked at the dimensions of management responsibilities, stakeholder involvement, professional development and school culture as it related to supporting teaching and learning. I could not find sufficient literature on how to open a new community school, which provides the rationale for this research.

In chapter 3 I will be exploring and discussing the research design and methodology.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the rationale for the research methodology of the study. It starts with the formulation of the problem and identifies the main research focus as it emerged from the formulation of the problem. The chapter further expands on the research setting and the research design for this study. Finally, the question of ethical considerations and trustworthiness, as it relates to the study, is discussed.

#### **3.2 Formulation of Problem**

With the increased housing development in a country like South Africa, many new schools will have to be built to accommodate the growing and relocated communities. Many of these housing developments will be occupied by communities of low income status (Housing Development Agency, 2012). The establishment of these housing developments results in the need to open new schools. Many of these schools will open up in similar social environments to the one in the study.

The main aim of the study is to determine the key elements that need to be present in order to establishing a new community school that effectively caters for the community it serves. These elements will be identified in the areas of leadership and organizational management responsibilities, professional development, school culture, and stakeholder involvement.

The secondary aim is to enhance my own skills and knowledge as a school leader by actively participating in the process of designing systems that will support the establishment of an

effective school. Based on the aims of the study, I formulated the following research questions.

### **3.2.1 Primary research question**

What are the key basic and evolving elements that need to be present when starting a new community school in order for it to function effectively? The responses to this question will be guided by the following sub questions:

1. What are the key leadership and organizational management responsibilities that need to be in place?
2. What professional development needs to take place?
3. How do we establish a school culture that defines our work as a community school?
4. How does one work with and identify parents, community members and stakeholders to build an effective resource base to support the school?

### **3.3 Research Setting**

Scholars point out that when selecting the site, the researcher should have an “eye towards simplicity, accessibility, possibility of remaining relatively unobtrusive, permissibility, assurance that the activities of interest will occur frequently and the degree to which the researcher can truly become a participant” (Savenye & Robinson, 2011, p. 1178). The site chosen for this study is located in the Northern Areas of the NMMM, a prefabricated building comprising 22 classrooms and an administrative block. My appointment to act in the position of principal in opening a school in one of the new housing developments in the city allowed me the opportunity to meet all the requirements raised by Savenyen & Robinson. However, I had to first request permission from the Department of Basic Education and the School Governing Body (SGB) to conduct the study at this school (Appendix A).



### **3.4 Research Design**

We make sense of our world by the way we interact with our context and thereby construct our own meaning in an interpretive and critical way (Struwig & Stead, 2010). This belief informed the research design for this study. Struwig and Stead (2010) argue that a research design is a framework that guides how one approaches a study. Yin (2003) further asserts that the research has to be structured in a way that will give credibility and validity to the findings (Yin, 2003).

#### **3.4.1 Philosophical foundation and paradigms**

This study is informed by a post-modernist, qualitative theoretical perspective within an interpretive and critical paradigm. It follows a participatory action learning and action research approach in the form of a case study.

The interpretive paradigm seeks to understand the emic perspective, which is information from the view of the people living the experience as well as incorporating the etic perspective or an outsider's view (Hennik, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). The interpretive paradigm values the view of both participant and researcher, which is important for this study. According to this view, a person's perspective or processing of information is influenced by their interaction with their social context (Henning, 2004). The perspective of this paradigm was appropriate for this study, as I sought to understand and explore the key elements that needed to be present, when opening a new school, from the perspectives of the various stakeholders. These perspectives were captured within the constructivist approach.

By following the constructivist approach, I allowed participants in the study to tell their stories. This allowed me to view the findings both from my perspective as well as the

perspective of the participants (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Constructivists claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective. Constructivism is strongly influenced by the interpretive paradigm. Constructivists argue that people make meaning of the world as they interact and interpret their reality (Baxter & Jack 2008; Richardson, 2003). One of the advantages of the constructivist approach is that it allows for close collaboration between the researcher and the participant, while enabling participants to tell their stories. However these interpretations and constructions need to be viewed critically. This is important as critical theory assumes that knowledge can be viewed as subjective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). As the stakeholders navigate through the various cycles in the opening of the school they are constantly constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge.

According to Ortiz-Rodriguez (2002) critical theory can be summarised as being a theory that has its origins in social justice and that research is done through “action, reflection, planning and observation.” This definition aligns with this study's aim to give a critical voice to the participants and in the process it advocates for equal power between the researcher and the participants (Henning, 2004). Various stakeholders will have different views of the role a school should play in a community. With so many people involved in the community, it is important that as a researcher I was able to critically listen to the different voices that emerged as a result of this study. The voices are diverse as they emerge from participants in the focus groups as well as from the different interactions between the various participants involved across the study.

### **3.4.2 Qualitative approach**

The qualitative research approach was adopted because it is a post-modernist approach that is interdisciplinary, multi-paradigmatic and multi-method and, because its research methods

include observation, source analysis, focus groups and content analysis (Struwig & Stead, 2010). The objective of giving voice to the participants and myself was an important part of this study and my position in the study, as acting principal ensured that the setting remained as natural as possible, with myself as the researcher attempting to ensure that no manipulation of the setting took place to suit my research agenda (Struwig & Stead, 2010; Savenye & Robinson, 2011). Suter (2012) and Marshall & Rossman (2011) claim that human behaviour occurs in a certain context and events are interrelated. Furthermore, they assert that the natural environment is favoured to determine how participants construct meaning in their own context. The setting of this study was the school and the research was conducted as part of the general day-to-day operation of the school. Context was extremely important for this study because I wanted to identify the important elements that need to be present or developed when opening a new school in such an impoverished environment.

According to Savenye & Robinson (2011) the qualitative researcher becomes part of the study by closely interacting with the subjects of the study. A key focus of qualitative research is its belief and emphasis on the importance of human interaction. The revelatory approach about knowing the social world and the researcher's understandings and information of the phenomenon being studied forms the foundation of qualitative research (Snape & Spencer, 2003). My previous knowledge of running a school in a similar context has put me in a position as researcher and leader to have some knowledge of what systems and processes need to be in place when making a school functional (Damons & Abrahams, 2009).

### **3.4.3 Case study**

A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a phenomenon in a natural setting using multiple sources of evidence suitable for the study (Yin, 2003). It is a strategy of qualitative research that allows for engagement in the context and allows for the views of the researcher and participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The case study approach uses a narrative or a 'story' to describe its findings (Savenye & Robinson, 2011; Yin, 2003). The use of narrative reporting of the findings is an attempt to capture the authentic indigenous voice through the research questions raised (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007; Yin, 2003). This study followed a case study approach and the findings are shared in the form of a narrative.

This research used a single case study which identified and described the important elements that should be present when opening a new school (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007). Data was generated through various forms of journal keeping; focus group interviews; and document analysis (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007; Yin, 2003). The methodology in this study is participatory action learning and action research (PALAR).

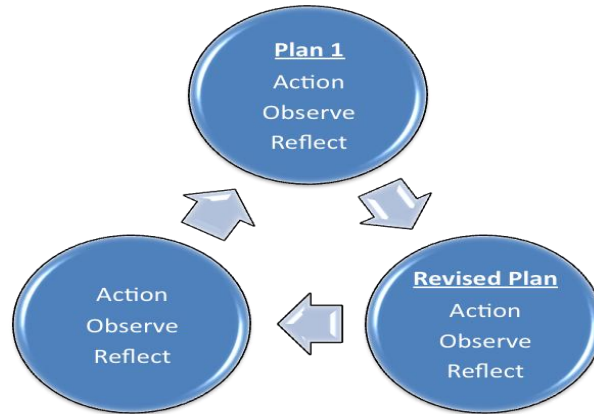
### **3.4.4 Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR)**

PALAR is described as “a proven methodology for responding effectively to complex issues in rapidly changing contexts, especially at present while we face unprecedented challenges as a consequence of economic, political, technological, social and ecological changes and natural disasters” (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011, p. 1). This methodology, she suggests, is not only useful for individuals but also for communities and groups.

PALAR is an appropriate methodology for this research study as it brings people together in a collaborative process in an attempt to learn from one another and solve their problems. It does not only require cognitive ability, but the ability to apply values, beliefs and spirituality, to solve complex problems (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011; Arcidiacono & Procentese, 2010). According to Zuber-Skerritt (2011), the term PALAR might be fairly new but the bringing together of action learning (AL) and action research (AR) is not totally new. PALAR, she argues, is the fusion of AL, AR and participatory action research (PAR) that leads to action leadership on a personal, organisational or community level (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007; Arcidiacono & Procentese, 2010). Action learning is the process where people take ownership of their problem and devise means to resolve it. This learning requires critical reflection by those involved through various forms of engagement and they gain expertise on how to solve the problem (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). Action research (AR) is cyclic and encourages collaboration, through the integration of theory and practice and research and action. AR occurs in cycles and usually includes planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). These cycles of learning cause a change of practice and then lead to an improvement of how we do things (Huffman & Hipp, 2003). The choice of this methodology is aligned to my personal belief of encouraging people to take shared ownership for our challenges as well as our victories. The study will show that the opening of the school went through many 'loops' of learning and research (Figure 3.1). My confidence to apply this approach was further enhanced when I attended a five day short learning programme (SLP), where the PALAR methodology was discussed and explained. This SLP was held from the 28 May to 1 June 2012 and was titled, "Action Research and Qualitative Research for Community Engagement". I am now part of an action research learning set whose responsibility will be to develop the methodology and use it to improve our praxis. This SLP

influenced my choice of methodology and assisted in the designing of the data generation and data analysis tools for this study.

**Figure 3.1** Action research cycle



### 3.5 Sampling

A sample is defined as a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Struwig & Stead, 2010). They assert that when dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of participants selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey. This study utilised stratified, purposeful sampling as this sampling method illustrates characteristics of particular subgroups of interest. The kind of sampling also facilitates comparisons between the different groups, and is guided by the theoretical framework of this study (Struwig & Stead, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In qualitative research, the sampling is purposive because this sampling method has the potential to produce insights that are illuminative and rich in information. (Savenye & Robinson, 2011; Suter, 2012). The population of this study are all stakeholders involved in the school. From these stakeholders a sample was purposefully selected to represent a wide spectrum of perspectives from the population.

For the purpose of confidentiality, all the participants are referred to by the stakeholder component that they represent. A teacher who attended the PALAR short learning programme and who co-facilitated the large focus group, identified who the participants would be after we developed the criteria. When we approached participants, we made it clear to them that participation was voluntary and that information would be treated confidentially. We also assured them that their names would not be used in any report and that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

### **3.5.1 Stakeholder groups**

In the first focus group (group 1), comprising of 12 members and conducted by my peer, the teacher stakeholder was represented by two new teachers and two experienced teachers. The purposeful selection of new and experienced teachers was to ensure a balanced view was obtained from this stakeholder component. The parent stakeholder was represented by two isiXhosa and two Afrikaans speaking parents. They were chosen because they are involved in the daily operation of the school and they represent the two dominant language groups of the school. The Department of Basic Education was also among the stakeholders invited. We invited the Educational Development Officer (EDO) to represent the DBE. This officer is the supervisor of the school and has been dealing with issues related to the opening of the school. Unfortunately, the DBE did not attend the focus group. Although both formal and informal businesses were invited, only one informal business vendor participated in the focus group. These business stakeholders were identified because they support the school materially and financially. One person nominated by the local churches that make use of school building for church services, participated in the focus group. A representative from the local university that does work inside the school and a representative from the local network of schools, of which school B is a member, also formed part of the focus group.

The above stakeholders were identified based on their connection to and work done inside the school. They all received formal written invitations (Appendix I), two weeks prior to the interview. The participants were given letters to explain the purpose of the study and they had to sign consent forms giving me permission to use the data generated during the study.

Three additional focus groups were also convened. These three subsequent focus groups three members of the administrative volunteers (group 2); three teachers of the school (group 3) and the five leaders of the volunteer projects (group 4). These focus groups were convened by myself and conducted at school. I convened the three administrative volunteers, because I wanted to gain more insight into how they experienced the opening of the new school. This group spent a substantial amount of time around my office and occupied a lot of time in my personal space as a leader. I conducted this focus group during a break, which had to be extended past the break time as we got to discussing the questions.

The second group were the teachers and this group comprised two new teachers and one experienced teacher. I allocated one hour after school and asked one of the teachers to randomly identify three other teachers for the focus group.

The final focus group comprised leaders of the community groups that were volunteering at the school. All the leaders of the different volunteer projects were identified for this focus group and it was conducted at the end of the school day. The main aim for including these additional groups were to add value, triangulate and validate data that emerged in the larger focus group, that was held earlier, as well as other data that was generated during the course of the study. The questions for these additional groups were much more open-ended to allow for the free-flow of discussion (Appendix K). The participants of these focus groups were



also given letters to explain the purpose of the study as all of them had to sign consent forms giving me permission to use the data generated during the study.

### **3.6 Data Generation Methods**

In qualitative research, interviews, observations and documents are the most commonly used sources of data collection (Sutton in Suter, 2012). These methods of data collection are important because “descriptions of people’s lived experiences, events or situations are often described as thick” so that insight could be given to the “meaningful social and historical context” of the area that is being studied (Suter, 2012). This is extremely important for this study as I wanted to give a meaningful voice to a part of society that is normally overlooked when it comes to contributions to educational policies and the formal processes of education.

I found it necessary to change the method of data collection as the study progressed. I initially set out to use video journaling, but discovered it to be too time consuming and intrusive. It also threatened the natural environment as the participants tended to be self-conscious of the video camera. This concurs with findings from Savenye & Robinson (2011) and Suter (2012) who concluded that the methods of data generation in qualitative research are open and depend on context. Although one might set out with an idea of using specific techniques at a start of the study, this might change as the study progresses. Data for this study was generated from both human resources (various forms of observations through journaling and focus group interviews) and non - human resources (documents from the DBE, school records and other artifacts).

### **3.6.1 The researcher as primary data collection instrument**

I have attached a curriculum vitae (Appendix E) to show my competencies in the context of this study, gained from 22 years as a teacher and 12 years as a principal. This includes my involvement in various organisations and structures, which has a strong focus on school improvement (Appendix E). My full participation in the study is also confirmed in my role as acting principal of the school (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Yin, 2003). In qualitative research, the researcher is regarded as the main data gathering instrument (Savenye & Robinson, 2011; Suter, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The researcher relies on his skills and experience to discover information required to answer the questions that are being posed. I was very mindful of the personal biases and power relations related to my role as the principal of the school which might influence the validity of the study and methods to counter this will be discussed later in this chapter.

As participant observer who moved into a new community, to open a new school, I will reflect in my findings on how I moved from the outsider, at the start of the study to being part of a team at the conclusion of the study. I had to be patient and tolerant to allow the community to gain my trust as we worked together and navigated through the pathways of opening the school. Marshall and Rossman (2011) says patience, tolerance and the building of trust are very important as the researcher and participant become more comfortable with one another over time.

### **3.6.2 The researcher as participant observer**

As the acting principal of this newly established community school and in the role of researcher, the role of participant observer was a natural fit for the study. This role involves the researcher getting involved in the social context by being a participant and an observer

(Marshall & Rossman, 2011). According to Marshall and Rossman (2011) this involvement in the setting allows the researcher to experience the world through the eyes of the participants and a relationship is developed through trust. As the participant observer, the researcher actually forms part of the events being studied (Yin, 2003).

Yin (2003) however identifies the following three concerns in relation to the bias of the researcher that has relevance to the study: Firstly, the researcher will play an advocacy role and has to actively participate in the study, which goes against the interest of ‘good science.’ The methodology being followed in this study permitted for active participation. Therefore I had to ensure that I allowed the voices of other stakeholders to come through. At times, these voices replaced my own voice as the findings will show. I also ensured when reporting that I capture in the first voice as much as possible so that originality will not be lost.

Secondly, the researcher might follow one pattern and not be open to new experiences. I avoided this in the study by ensuring that I engaged across multiple contexts with multiple stakeholders. This moved me along unfamiliar paths, which provided myself with excellent learning experiences.

Finally, Yin (2003) cautions that the role the participant plays in the study might overshadow the observer role that the researcher has to play in the study. This was a particular challenge in this study as I was appointed the acting principal of the school. My journaling, in particular my reflective journal, always assisted to restoring the balance between researcher, and participant and acting school principal.

### **3.6.3 Journal**

I kept a journal throughout the study to create a reflective and descriptive record that I could go back and re-read as my ideas took off in new and sometimes different directions. Journaling helps to facilitate the formation and construction of new knowledge and assists researchers to make inferred knowledge more clear (Savenye & Robinson, 2011; Commonwealth Training Manual, 2004). Descriptive journaling is explained as being “detailed descriptions of the subjects and settings, the actual dialogue of the participants, description of events and activities, as well as descriptions of the observer’s behaviour, to determine how they may have influenced the participants behaviour” (Savenye & Robinson, 2011, pg1186). This allows for the researcher to reflect. The reflective part can be regarded as the researcher’s analysis (Savenye & Robinson, 2011). For this study I used ordinary note pads and exercise books for my descriptive observations and bought a special note book to record the reflective part of my data collection. The descriptive recording was part of my daily operation as participant and principal of the school and provided rich sources of information. The reflective journal allowed me to explain what type of learning I was engaged in and at certain stages assisted in restoring the balance between researcher and principal.

### **3.6.4 Focus groups**

Focus groups were an essential component of this study. A focus group is a form of group interview that gains data from communication between research and a larger group of participants in order to generate data (Kitzinger, 1995, p 299; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). This method was used because it allowed me get the views of various stakeholders through group interaction that forms the lifeblood of focus groups (Marshall and Rothman, 2011). During these interviews the participants were able to share their experiences and points of

view, which according to Marshall and Rothman (2011) is an important feature of the focus group. In this study the focus groups were an important instrument in ensuring that no voices were omitted. It also served as a tool for triangulating other data that emerged during the course of the study.

Savenye & Robinson, 2011 citing Fontana and Frey, raise concerns about the researcher's involvement in such interviews and point out that this might inhibit the responses of participants. There was also the issue of power that is prevalent in any group dynamic (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). This was true in this study as it related to my role as principal and researcher in the study. In order to address these concerns and lend credibility to the data that would emerge from the interviewer, I excluded myself from the main focus group (group 1) to which all stakeholders were invited. I used two colleagues who form part of the PALAR set and who are familiar with my study and the methodology, to facilitate the main focus group. My role in facilitating this focus group was to ensure that all logistics around the focus group were taken care of. I collaborated with the facilitating peers, to generate a guiding document for the interview that was used by the participants during the interview (Appendix J). I was also aware of the power relations between the different stakeholder groups and how this may inhibit some of the participants from speaking. I addressed this issue by dividing the participants into three groups comprising members of their own stakeholder group. This is reflected in the seating arrangements that were organised for the focus group (Appendix J). The interview was recorded and the nominal group technique (NGT), was used to generate data.

In the three subsequent focus groups (groups 2, 3 and 4) that I facilitated I made use of voice recording, which I later transcribed (Appendix K). I also kept written notes of these interviews.

### **3.6.5 The nominal group technique (NGT)**

I used the NGT to gather data with the broad stakeholder focus group 1. The NGT technique has been proven to be effective in generating data from a group of people through the guidance of a focal question (CDC, 2006). This technique is described as a technique for eliciting data for evaluation and needs analysis. As one of its core principles, the NGT process allows for a balanced participation of all involved. Through this process, group agreement and purpose are quickly achieved in a climate that encourages creative and innovative thinking (CDC 2006).

The process of NGT involves five basic steps:

Step 1: Participants have a few minutes to brain storm on the focal question.

Step 2: The listed responses of individuals are then compiled into a public list, visible for all to see without any discussion.

Step3: The facilitator leads the subsequent discussion and clarification of the compiled list and collates any overlapping statements on the list.

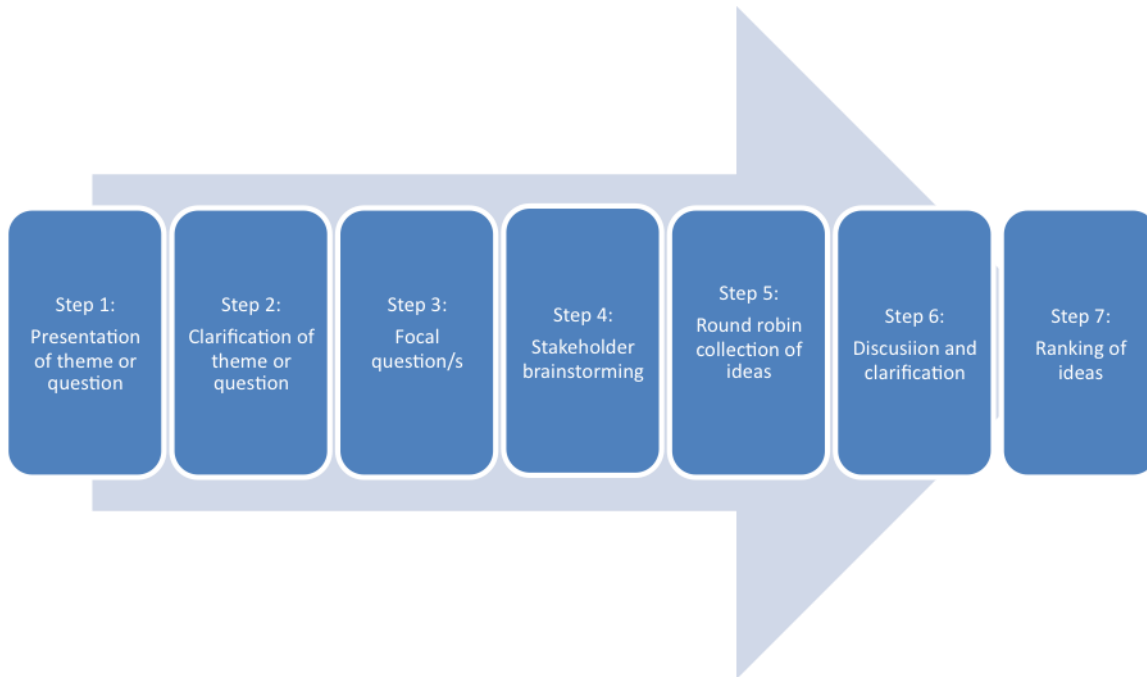
Step 4: Each participant ranks the statements in order of importance.

Step 5: Statements are then ranked in order of importance guided by the responses to the participants in step 4.

Extensive consultations were done with my peer from the PALAR set, who conducted the focus group and we emerged with a guiding document for the process (Appendix J). The NGT process was modified for this focus group as represented in the diagram below (Figure

3.2). The round robin reporting was done in the form of the stakeholder groups as determined by the seating.

**Figure 3.2: Steps for data generation from focus group 1**



The seating was predetermined to encourage maximum participation. Three groups were arranged according to the stakeholder representation. Group 1 formed the external stakeholders of the school, group 2 was the parent stakeholder and group 3 was the teacher stakeholders.

In the other three focus groups I used guiding questions to stimulate discussion on the themes identified in the research question (Appendix K). These questions were not rigid and were amended or adapted as the discussion took shape (Yin, 2003). These interviews were also used to corroborate some of the data that was generated in the broader stakeholder focus group (Yin, 2003). The data generated here was taped and transcribed.

### **3.6.6 Document analysis**

The use of documents and artifacts formed an important part of this study. These are non-obtrusive data collection tools that can give insights into human behaviour and overlap with other methods of data collection (Savenye & Robinson, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Some examples of these artifacts and documents used in this study included documents and correspondence from the Department of Basic Education (DBE); administrative documents generated during the course of the study (Appendices N,O,P); incoming and outgoing correspondence; petitions and memorandum; anecdotal notes from various sources; drawings from learners; various scribble pads that I used to keep my journals; formal journal pads for learning and reflective purposes; newspaper reports; observations of cultural clothing and even the hat I wore on the first day of school (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Savenye and Robinson 2011; Yin 2003). These various sources as well as the journal reflections allowed me to triangulate my findings with the responses from the focus group interviews.

The issue of ensuring confidentiality of documents and artifacts used are important so that it does not cause any harm to the organisation or individuals, even though it might not be specifically identified (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The issue of confidentiality is something I had to consider throughout the study as I decided on what the most appropriate documents were to answer the research questions in the study. Before using the sources, I had to ensure that the rights and privacy of all participants were protected as I proceeded with the research.

### **3.6.7 Data analysis and coding**

The study formed part of my daily life and my work, and large amounts of data were generated which I had to analyse. This is typical of qualitative research as was highlighted by Struwig & Stead (2010). A number of subthemes emerged from the main themes that were



identified in the research questions, and from these I was able to identify patterns and even a few new concepts and operational documents that emerged. According to Sutter (2012) and Struwig & Stead (2010) this should be the objective of data analysis.

The data was coded and analysed by drawing up a spreadsheet under the main themes identified in the research questions. The specific comment, event, document or artifact was placed in a column followed by a date, next to which a note was made of a possible sub theme. The last two columns focused on the coding of the item and any link the data had to any other recorded item in the analysis (Appendix L). The data was then coded and analysed, and conclusions were drawn based on the study. For this study, the focus of analysis was primarily on pattern matching and explanation building (Yin, 2003) in accordance with the main themes of the study. These main themes were management responsibilities, as it related to leadership and organisational management; stakeholder involvement; professional development and school culture. Where further subthemes emerged, new codes were assigned to them as suggested by Struwig & Stead. (2010).

The identified themes, used in the research questions will be used to report and discuss the findings. The PALAR methodology that I used ensured that learning and research formed the nucleus of this study. Data that emerged was analysed and sometimes put through various cycles of the action research process. An example were the various forms of sanctions that emerged against volunteers that the group felt were not honouring their roles at school. I initially was the only one that decided on the sanctions at the beginning of the study, as with the case of the leader of the community police forum whom I had to request to leave the school because of constant transgressions. Later on in the study, as trust was built and the leadership of the volunteers gained in confidence and capacity, they could decide on

sanctions with me. This occurred in the case of one of the volunteers who arrived intoxicated at the school. The volunteer appeared before the leadership committee of the volunteers and was reprimanded. We could learn from the first experience and this better informed our future decisions.

The analysis methods were also informed by the interpretive and critical paradigms for this study. As a researcher and active participant, I had to critically reflect on my own perspective as well as the perspective of the participants of the study. An example of this was how my knowledge of community was changed by interacting with a new and more diverse community. The data generated when interacting with the grieving isiXhosa parent and my perception of disrespect versus the parent's cultural norm was put through the process of critical analyses. I discovered that how people appear does not necessarily represent their intentions within certain contexts.

Another example was the interaction with a parent of a child who suspected that she was demon-possessed and I had to critically engage the parents of the child to seek 'professional' help, while at the same time honouring their belief of visiting a sangoma (a traditional healer). The knowledge constructed here was that honouring others' beliefs was important but ensuring that those beliefs were not to the detriment of the child was equally important. New knowledge was also constructed in the way we set up the systems of the school and we went through various cycles of designing forms and, making decisions.

### **3.7 Methods to Ensure Trustworthiness**

My objectivity and position of power were probably the biggest challenges of the study. As researcher I am also the acting principal of the school. I was aware that my role as principal and researcher could influence the responses from the stakeholders. I remained aware of this duality throughout the study and reviewed this with my peers in the PALAR study group. In addition, I did not participate in the broad stakeholder focus group interview (group 1), which formed an important data generating activity.

As a participant observer I had to constantly be aware of my own perceived bias and the influence I would have in relation to the dual role that I performed in this study. My objectivity would be critical to render the findings credible (Struwig & Stead, 2010; Savenye & Robinson, 2011; Suter, 2012). In order to address any issues of bias I looked at suggested criteria of Savenye & Robinson(2011) and Suter(2012). They note that the the role of a participant observer makes it less likely to report erroneous data. In this study, triangulation from the different sources helped to ensure that the data was properly corroborated. Documents, artifacts and journaling made up the different data collection methods that were used by me as the participant observer. The findings from these methods were checked against the views of stakeholders who participated in the focus groups.

The establishment of the relation of trust was important and in the findings the candid responses of the participants, even when levelling criticism at my leadership, is evidence of this. The fact that the participants also knew that my time at the school was limited to the duration of my acting period at the school may also have assisted in this. Secondly, the fact I was appointed as acting principal to the site meant that had I had access to all activities of the school. This put me in a position to have a comprehensive view of the organisation even

though the research might have been confined to a certain component of the study. The observations that I made were extensive and occurred over a period of time because I was present at the school from the beginning of the year. The observations continued until the final focus groups were conducted to corroborate and support the findings. The period therefore extended for more than nine months and I have included observations that occurred after the identified period, which I thought would add value to the study.

I also had to ensure that I that I did not deliberately omit any voice from the study. Although the voice of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) was not part of any focus group or interview, the number of interactions with them in the form of documents, circulars and even protest actions, ensured that they are heard throughout the study. It also became important to emphasise the fact the study did not focus on the quality of teaching and learning but sought more to give attention to the elements that need to be present when opening a new school. On reflection, the topic was quite broad and this allowed for rich data to emerge that would inform the findings of the study. There was a constant engagement with the research site and I made regular observations, including certain cues that would assist in the studies. These cues varied from body language, to notes and messages that were passed to me. I also observed the ways in which people expressed themselves and the emotions that came from it. The school-based complementary learning framework model, the theoretical underpinning of this study, allowed for a broad interpretation of factors that are needed to support teaching and learning. Therefore the findings of this study, although they cannot be generalised, may be applicable to other schools in similar circumstances.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

In pursuit of researching these elements that need to be present when opening a new school, I had to ensure that this research would not be at the expense of those that shared my space (Mouton, 2003). In a qualitative research study, ethical issues are not a once-off activity but should be addressed throughout the study, with keen attention given to the subjects who collaborate in the study (Savenye & Robinson, 2011). This was accomplished in this study by constantly reminding the participants that I was busy with research and also seeking permission from the participants when I found any data that would be useful in the study. Making them aware of their rights during the course of the study was important because the participants were highly cooperative and willing to participate in the study. I held a workshop with the School Governing Body (SGB) and explained to them the nature of my study, the data collection methods that will be used and that the study will be available to the school for reflection and use for further school improvement. I also (throughout the period of the study) reminded the various stakeholders of the study and its main research focus.

To allay any fears and questions that the participants might have, I sought their informed consent (Struwig & Stead, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I informed the School Governing Body of the objectives of the research and received their written consent to conduct the study. The consent (Appendix C) was accompanied with the commitment that:

- Participation is voluntary
- Disclosing information is not obligatory
- The option to walk away (opt out) at any stage of the research
- Information would be treated confidentially
- Strict anonymity applies

- All possible risks will be minimised or avoided
- Findings of the research will be made available on request
- All queries will be addressed by the researchers
- Appreciation of willingness to participate

At the focus group interviews the participating stakeholder participants completed a consent form giving permission for them to be recorded and for the data to be used (Appendix D).

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

The study conducted was a post-modernist, qualitative study; that followed a participatory action learning and action research approach that was informed by an interpretive and critical paradigm. Diverse data generating strategies were used that included journaling, artifacts and focus groups. The chapter also highlighted the need to pursue strong ethical considerations to ensure for rich data findings that will be discussed in chapter 4.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I will present the data generated during the course of this study. The data was gathered from documented sources, descriptive journal entries, reflective journals and four focus groups that were conducted with various stakeholders of the school. The presentation was guided by the themes that were identified in the main research and subsequent sub questions of the study, which focused on identifying the key and evolving elements that need to be present when opening a new community school. The main themes used in this study were management responsibilities; professional development; school culture; and stakeholder involvement.

#### **4.2 Management Responsibilities**

The two main themes explored under management responsibilities centred on leadership and organisational management.

##### **4.2.1 Leadership**

###### *4.2.1.1 My leadership journey*

The ability to lead without title and leading from within is the philosophical outlook that I strive for as a leader (Sharma, 2010). This leadership concept puts forward the notion that the leader's title is not the end but the means to achieving the end, and as leaders we should be using our titles to achieve these ends. The end in this case study was to establish an effective community school in the context of the challenges of a school situated in an impoverished area.

The challenge I was confronted with was how to start a new school from basically nothing (besides the school building), and get it to the point of operational effectiveness. This section of the chapter will chronicle my leadership journey from being called ‘that coloured with a hat’, on the first day of school by an angry community to being called ‘tata’ (father) by the same community members.

In the context of having such a short time to open the school, I was faced with many challenges and opportunities to learn that have shaped me as a leader. My role as leader of the school was further complicated when I assumed the roles of researcher and acting principal. In addition, there was no supporting management structure until the official opening of the school. I had to start the school on my own, which went against my belief in a collective management style where I could depend on and trust the people with whom I shared the working space.

#### *4.2.1.2 Building trust*

Although the community was new to me (and I was new to them), I had to place a large degree of trust in the people with whom I shared my working space. This ranged from the community volunteers to the teachers. For instance, when the security contract ended, I had to hand over the keys of the entire school building to the Community Police Forum (CPF), all of whom were community volunteers who were totally unknown to me. As will be demonstrated throughout this chapter, this trust was repaid with positive support, even though there were challenges.



#### 4.2.1.3 *Becoming a reflective leader*

Part of my continued learning was to become more reflective as a leader, especially when criticism and challenges were levelled at me. I came in as an outsider and my sincerity and credibility was questioned during the first few days of opening the school. This was quite evident when I had to tell the community that the school was full. The community felt that as an outsider, I had no right to tell them that the school was full, especially after they had fought so hard to acquire a school for their community. It took time and hard work to establish a degree of trust. I had to humble myself on a regular basis, because as someone that struggles to listen at the best of times, I never allowed people to complete their words, which usually led me to the wrong conclusions. Then there were times, especially when workshops were delegated to other colleagues, that I could feel that certain remarks were directed at my leadership. A teacher in a conflict resolution workshop noted that, “we have made many decisions to implement, but not all of them get implemented.” Another teacher remarked in a meeting after the register workshop that “we are making mistakes because things do not get explained properly to us”. I considered these remarks as an indirect reference to the way I was leading and managing the school.

There was also the time when the teachers who had not been paid for quite a few months became frustrated and unilaterally decided to confront the DBE at the District Office. I recall journaling at this stage that I felt that they had lost faith in my ability to resolve their challenges. These types of comments all made me become more reflective as a leader and resulted in an adjustment to my leadership approach where I reverted back to becoming a learner.

#### 4.2.1.4 *Leading and learning*

As a leader with the responsibility of opening a new school, I had to become a teacher and more importantly a learner as well. I had to learn to be able to guide and mentor as well as put myself in a position to learn. The PALAR approach that I adopted presented many learning opportunities, especially when challenges emerged. I also developed a deeper understanding of the cultural context of the community in which the school was located. One of the lessons was in understanding why black women do not look a leader in the face when speaking to such an authority. I had to speak to a mother and I thought she was not interested in the meeting because she kept her gaze on the ground. I had a volunteer who acted as a translator for me during this conference. After what I felt was a frustrating session with the parent, I shared this frustration with the translator. When the mother had left, the translator's response was, "Meneer (sir), did you not see her clothes? She was in mourning because she had lost her husband, she was not disrespecting you, but this is how we do it."

Hence my lessons in cultural sensitivity continued throughout my stay at the school. Admittedly, I had the most patient teachers in the form of community members to guide me. I recall there was a stage when the office admin clerks decided to only speak in isiXhosa to me and I had to figure out what they wanted. On another occasion, the chairperson sent me a letter written in isiXhosa when she wanted me to complete some instruction. I also recall when two teachers got married and came with blankets around their shoulders to school. They managed, through jest, to explain the tradition of becoming a makoti (married woman). Then there was our heritage day programme when the organizing committee of the programme decided to use the deputy principal of the school as a symbol to prepare for the school programme because she is a princess of a particular Xhosa clan. I recall journaling the frustration caused by the mistakes made by the administrative volunteers and of reminding

myself that these were people who were volunteering with a passion and that their best teacher were the mistakes they were making as they became more familiar with the work that they were doing.

#### 4.2.1.5 *Leading by example*

The newness of the school meant that as leader I had to lead many of the processes of the school. I had to have comprehensive knowledge in the various areas of managing the school. This included leading and being chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) meetings until the elected chairperson developed the skill to conduct the meetings. This happened for the first five meetings of the SGB. I had to conduct student leader workshops until the new teachers were ready to lead these workshops. The leading also extended to the administrative planning of the school. Initially, I had to design and prepare templates for the academic planning and financial documents, while also preparing agendas for various committee meetings. All this meant that I had to be knowledgeable about my core responsibilities. In the areas where I was uncertain about my role, I had to do some research. An example of this was not knowing the conditions of employment for new teachers. It took many phone calls and visits to the DBE offices to get the required information.

The view of having a leader with some knowledge was supported by one of the teachers in the focus group when she commented that “the principal did a good job in management, very knowledgeable about education department – from administration to what was happening in the classroom — I believe our school is what it is because we had a good principal, and because we had a principal who was knowledgeable and grounded. We moved from the chaos at the start to where we are today.” This kind of leading by example requires personal commitment and sacrifice.

#### 4.2.1.6 *Personal sacrifice*

I did not anticipate the amount of personal sacrifice I would have to make on a material and emotional level. My family car became the ‘delivery vehicle’ of the school. Many times I had to ride to different parts of the city to collect various sponsorships. I recall on my first visit to the school, 13 December 2011, how my car got stuck in the mud on the road to the school. Since the opening of the school, I was twice trapped in the muddy access road to the school and had to repair four punctures to my tyres. As the school had no telephone landline, my personal cellphone became the official communication instrument of the school because there was no other infrastructure for communication at the school. This continued up until the time of writing up these findings. Many of the other teachers (and even unemployed volunteers) made use of their own phones to communicate on behalf of the school. During the first few weeks I had to buy electricity for the school from my own personal funds. The money was, however, refunded.

The fact that some of the teachers were coming to school every day and working in the most challenging conditions without receiving compensation took its toll on me emotionally. I recall having an emotional melt-down after a session of trying to motivate the educators to remain optimistic, even though they had not been paid for five months. They tried comforting me by saying that they understood that it was not my fault that they were not getting paid. I felt guilty knowing that I drew my salary every month, while they, the teachers, had to face the dishonouring of their parents “because they cannot understand how we come to school every month but we still have to contact them to lend money for boarding and transport to school.”

What added to this emotional turmoil was to see how resourceful these teachers were in gathering materials to create educationally conducive environments in the class. This occurred with little support from me. The apathy of the DBE and the sometimes emotionally draining and abusive meetings with the officials of the DBE, made me doubt my capacity as a leader at times. This emotional strain and stress was increased when from time to time I had to pay visits to School A, the school I had come from and was still leading. I had to go back and solve problems on matters related to the operations of School A. Managing one school and partially managing another school stretched my leadership capacity. As a result I had to become more resourceful.

#### *4.2.1.7 Resourcefulness*

As a leader, in this particular context, I had to become resourceful and take a lot of initiative, especially because the organization was so new. I had to mobilise the network created in School A to assist with the opening of the new school (School B). I drafted general letters and received mostly positive responses, from businesses, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and individuals to the many requests that we made. During this time I was also a columnist for a local newspaper and wrote a regular column on the school. This not only made the public aware that we existed, but also managed to highlight our successes and challenges. I recall when we needed carpets for the foundation phase classroom. I posted a request on a social media page and received responses that allowed us to put carpets in at least five classrooms. The first workshop for the new teachers was also run by responses that were posted on a social media page. I posted the following question to friends on the page, “what do you expect from a new teacher starting in the profession?” I had 26 responses and these responses became the foundation for the orientation workshop that we held at the beginning of the year.

#### 4.2.1.8 *Community expectations of the leader*

As the schooling processes started falling into place, it became clear that the school and community had expectations of what they wanted to see in a leader. In a workshop held in preparation of the selection process of the new principal of the school, the SGB identified the following characteristics they wanted in a leader:

- a principal with a vision
- an open minded person
- good credentials
- a good proven track record
- patient and firm
- a willing parent of the community
- a leader not a boss
- a humble and a good hearted person
- must have a backbone
- a good listener
- a hard worker
- person that will have the interest of the school at heart.

These characteristics were confirmed in the stakeholder focus group where they ranked the following most important characteristics of a good leader; “a visionary, firm and fair, mother/father figure and a hard worker.”

#### 4.2.1.9 *Compassion and courage*

In starting a school without having a clear understanding of what I would encounter meant that I had to trust both the known and unknown. This would occur on a professional and community level. In the focus groups some of the advices given by teachers to a new principal when opening a new school were: “you have to be flexible, you are going into the unknown, and the community provides you with the opportunity for employment”. Another teacher added, “Shine your light wherever you are because where there is light people will follow.” Yet another teacher encouraged me by saying “principal, if you can love everyone, love them all treat them all the same and listen to the people’s problems.”

During the course of the study I was confronted by challenges that required me to provide bold leadership. These challenges usually emanated from the lack of delivery of the DBE and ranged from the non-payment of teachers and grade R practitioners, to the lack of delivery of the basic resources to enable the school to be run effectively. During various stages of the study, I was compelled to take a stance on various matters that arose as a result of wanting to do my work effectively. I participated, out of conviction and support for my colleagues, in several pickets and demonstration marches. We eventually took my car and drove a delegation to the Provincial Office of the Department of Basic Education (DBE). These actions were accompanied by numerous memoranda and press releases. It eventually led to the decision not to write the Annual National Assessment (ANA) because of the non-support and lack of delivery from the department. By the time of writing ANA we had received virtually no workbooks from the DBE. The decision not to write ANA lead to threats of disciplinary action by the DBE against me. Ironically, after every action we engaged in, there was some reaction to our issues from the DBE. Sometimes I had to openly confront the officials about their inability to deliver on the basic needs of the school. I recall that when we

protested at the school and the parents took the decision to close the school, I had to be very frank in telling the officials that they were failing us as a community.

#### *4.2.1.10 Paternal role of the leader*

I had to assume a paternal role, and had to be prepared to feel the pain and suffering of the schooling community. I recall how I saw teachers change from being excited first year teachers in January to looks of desperation on their faces by May, when they had still not been paid their salaries by the DBE. Constant positive reinforcement of what they were doing, in spite of not being paid, helped considerably. One of the teachers reflected in the focus group that, “We did not have much experience in school, we did not have resources but worked with what we had. The motivation from our leader was to encourage us to use what you had and everything would be fine. When we got good results, we received compliments for doing well with the nothing we had.” My paternal role also led to counselling a volunteer about the marriage crises that she was going through. I encouraged her to work hard to ‘stick it out’ and take care of herself. She later remarked in the focus group “(the principal) persoon wat GOD hierna gestuur het (person that GOD sent here), he gave us a chance to learn. I do not know if we would have got the experience if it was someone else.” I also had to identify when to start the process of preparing for a handover of leadership as I was only at the school in an acting capacity.



#### *4.2.1.11 Transitional leadership*

In June I took the decision to start delegating responsibility to the deputy principal and the School Management Team (SMT). This decision was informed by the fact that the school would eventually have a new leader and I wanted to ensure that the culture of cooperative distributive leadership was in place. I also needed to start spending more time at School A, as I was involved in their programmes too. The fear of abandonment was highlighted in the focus group of the volunteer leaders when one leader commented on the advice she would give to a new principal, “he must be at school regularly – if he is not here the school becomes corrupt. I think the people want to see his eyes.” When I asked her to explain what she meant by “corrupt”, she said that when I was not there people tended to slack off and do their own thing. This meant that a lot of learning had to take place and I had to take the time in explaining how we should all take responsibility for the roles assigned to us and the focus should not be on the leader, but more on the tasks that had been assigned to us. This was done in various meetings with teachers and volunteers.

The first part of the findings focused on me as the leader. The following section will reflect on the systems that had to be set in place and others that were developed during the course of the opening of the new school.

### **4.2.2 Organisational Management**

This section focuses on the findings which relate to setting up the systems of the school.

#### *4.2.2.1 Creating enabling conditions*

The planning of a school usually hinges around infrastructural readiness, resources (textbooks, stationery etc.), the number of learners enrolled at the school, the amount of staff

provided and administrative readiness. I developed the knowledge to plan the systems of the school during the eleven years I served as a principal in School A.

The need to start off the school with a clear vision, with sound policies in place and with budgets to govern the operation was highlighted in the focus group. It was not possible to do this because of the short notice given before the opening of the school and absence of stakeholders at the beginning of the school. Five days prior to the opening of the school, I was the only member of staff identified to work at the school. The initial question I was confronted with was how to develop a system that would have a school fully operational in the shortest period of time, with practically no resources to support this.

*a) Access road and electricity*

A report tabled by a District Task Team that comprised various sections of the DBE, indicated that permission to erect the school was given on the 9 October 2010, with approval being granted to erect a prefabricated building granted on the 11 November 2010. The Department of Public Works, who is responsible for the erection of state buildings, indicated that the building should be ready for handover to the DBE by the 28 September 2011, although the team noted that there was still much work that needed to be done on the building. The building was eventually handed over to the education department on the 13 December 2011. The challenge of the poor condition of the access road leading to the school was identified in reports to the DBE and they recommended that the road be prepared, by the local municipality, to allow learners and teachers access to the school. This recommendation was further emphasized and supported in my report to the District dated the 6 January (Appendix S) where I reported after a visit to the school with the newly selected staff members that, “We visited the school today and they were busy grading the road to give us

access to the school. The conditions and access to the school need urgent attention and I think we need to engage with the politicians and Metro to give priority to this as I am of the view that this can impact on our ability to deliver quality education.” By the time of writing up these findings no further attention had been given to the road and the access road is still a major challenge. Many of the teachers use public transport and many of the taxis refuse to use the road, dropping them off a long way from the school.

According to the DBE report, a ‘further request’ for electrification was made on the 20 January 2011. When we took occupancy of the building there was no electricity because the electrical cables outside of the school were stolen. In my journal I reflect, “today (23 January 2012), I am extremely happy because we have electricity for the first time.”

*b) Registration of the school*

A District Task team report dated the 23 September 2011, notes that application for registration of the school was declined by the Provincial Office because of a moratorium that was in place and that no action could take place until registration happened. They indicated that “... a staff establishment could not be generated without registration and an EMIS number.” A further submission was made on the 29 September 2011, and they gave themselves until the 20 October 2011 to finalise the registration process. In a memo issued on the 30 November 2011, there is an indication that the school had received an EMIS number, which is the official number allocated to a school to indicate that it has been registered.

c) *The building*

In a letter dated 30 November 2011, requesting resourcing for the school, the Provincial Office of the DBE indicated that the school was ready for opening. Twenty one classrooms were built for grades 1-7 and two additional classrooms were built for grade R. In identifying the challenges that might confront the school, the District Task team made the following observation about the infrastructure of the school: “This school will serve a very large community (underlined in report) and it is envisaged that the existing erected structure might not cater for the needs of that specific community (definitely more classrooms will be needed).” This was further endorsed in a newspaper article by the District Office when they confirmed, “We are looking at getting more prefab structures to add to existing ones to make sure everybody can be accommodated (Mbabela, 2011).” This was further endorsed and supported in my report to the District Office on the 14 December 2011 where I recommended that “The DOE (DBE) should ensure that either 3 new classes or mobile units are erected by 2012 for the anticipated migration through the grades.” There was, however, no movement in the creation of the new classes and large amounts of learners had to be turned away or were placed on a waiting list due to the insufficient places. The two grade R classes, identified in the DBE infrastructure report, were actually one big class.

d) *Maintenance and security*

The maintenance of the school building became a challenge as no support staff was provided to the school. The staff establishment issued by the DBE indicates that the school is entitled to nine support staff. The school was and is maintained through the support of community volunteers. We identified the toilets, grounds and classrooms as key areas that would require maintenance and control.

Various reports by DBE further identified the serious challenge of numerous alleged burglaries that were plaguing the contractor during the construction phase, and recommended that a permanent security guard be placed at the school. I supported this in a report that I submitted to the DBE where I highlighted the threat of an unsecure building. The challenge of securing the building was taken care of when we recruited our community police forum (CPF) volunteers from the community. These are volunteers that deal with issues of crime in the community.

#### *4.2.2.2 Resource provisioning*

##### *a) Furniture and resources*

In the District Task Team report of September 2011, it was suggested that the procurement of furniture should commence and that the various sections of the District should liaise around the procurement of learner support material (LTSM) (Director, 2011). In a report dated the 29 September, the task team recommended that furniture located at one of its offices and furniture from a closed school be used as a temporary measure (District Chatty Task Team P.E., 2011). They noted the following in their report: “Furniture, LTSM and stationery will be a District challenge if the normal provincial protocols in respect of a new school cannot be met.” In a memo issued by the Chief Director of Cluster C, a request for the ‘urgent resourcing of the newly created school in PE Chatty area’ was issued on the 30 November 2011 (Tyali, 2011). The letter indicates that the local District was ‘instructed’ to identify a local serving principal to act in the post, that the school had been allocated an EMIS number, and that it was afforded Section 20 status. In my report dated the 14 December I made the following recommendations, as indications at that time was that there was no movement on the resource allocation:

- a. Sufficient furniture – at least enough seating to accommodate 40 learners per class
- b. Enough LTSM for at least the English Lolt (Language of learning and teaching)
- c. Non educational consumables (items to clean and maintain the school)
- d. Some cash allocation so that we can purchase electricity and telephone air time. I will make use of my personal resources e.g. phone and internet and will claim from the school when its finances are in order.’ (Damons, 2011)

On a visit to the school on the 6 January 2012, I reported to the District Office that there was no furniture, no electricity, and no learner support material at the school (Damons, Report preparation for school opening, 2012). I pleaded in this report for the District to give urgent attention to these matters as I knew it would negatively impact on the ability of the school to function effectively (Damons, Report preparation for school opening, 2012). When schools opened on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, no furniture or learning support material had yet arrived and the school had to borrow support material from School A. The items varied from chairs for teachers to sit on, tables to do the registration, toilet paper, staplers and staples, dusters, and pens and pencils, to name a few. From the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012, furniture started to arrive from various sources. The District brought furniture from one of its offices and by the 24<sup>th</sup> of January; enough furniture had arrived to ensure that every child at least had a desk or a chair to sit on. We received support from various stakeholders and even received surplus supplies from the Mayor’s Office which were left over from the 2010 world cup.

A company donated a photocopy machine and office furniture for the principal’s office. The irony and frustration was seeing this machine standing in the office with a beautiful red bow

which we were unable to use because of the lack of electricity. We had to lend a computer system from School A so that we could make the running of the school more efficient. With the assistance of various stakeholders, the school managed to acquire its own computer, lap top, data projector and working photocopier.

*b) Learner teacher support material*

The learner teacher support material (LTSM), in this study, refers to the text books and stationery. The DBE provided some stationery items on the 16 January but we found this to be inadequate to meet the needs of the school. We however managed to survive through the generosity from various stakeholders who made contributions in various forms to compensate for the lack of LTSM. An organization came forward and provided a R20 000 donation of stationary. Individuals who read of our plight made small but invaluable donations that have kept the school going. I remember having to ride to various homes to collect a variety of goods. These donations ranged from old encyclopaedias to old gardening equipment. A retired couple donated pens and erasers. People from all walks of life opened their hearts and pockets to support the school.

*c) Finances*

We also were faced with the challenge of not receiving any financial support in the form of cash from the DBE to operationalise the school. The first sort of financial support we received was in July of 2012, when the DBE deposited money into the school's account for the feeding scheme. A company, who was a supporter of School A, came forward and made a cash donation of R15 000 towards the school for the operational costs of School B. After our appearance on a local radio station someone came forward to assist with the feeding scheme with an amount of R500, 00 per month that is still continuing today. The SGB was also

compelled to ask each child to bring R1,00 per week towards the purchasing of the electricity for the school.

An organization came forward and supported our feeding scheme by supplying us with food, a gas stove, a gas canister and cooking utensils. We partnered with a company that was building houses in the area and they donated a variety of goods that were used by volunteers to perform essential tasks around the school. The vegetable gardeners received gardening implements and seeds; the care givers received first aid boxes; the admin staff received a computer and printer; and the toilet and classroom cleaners received brooms, mops, buckets and cleaning material. Then there was also the group in a retirement village that encouraged their occupants to donate cleaning material towards the school. We collected a few boxes of various cleaning materials that kept us going for about two months. We received our first cash allocation, for operational cost, from the DBE, in September 2012. I am sure that we would not have survived if it were not for the support of the broader community.

#### *4.2.2.3 Learner enrolment*

##### *a) Learner Numbers*

In a report tabled in the form of an activity plan, the District Task team, established to look into the opening of the school, indicated that they involved community structures and the media to do the pre-registration process of learners (District Chatty Task Team P.E., 2011). In the press release the District Office also recognized that there might be an influx of learners at the beginning of 2012 as many parents left registration for the last minute. In suggesting provisioning for the school, the DBE projected that 880 learners would be enrolled in the school and made recommendations on the resources, staffing and funding



based on these projections (Mannya, 2011). What we actually encountered, when the school opened, was quite different (Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1: Comparison of learner numbers**

<b>Information</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
DBE Survey (Oct 2011)	114	200	76	59	44	40	27	26	<b>586</b>
Staff Establishment (02 December 2011)	40	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	<b>880</b>
5 May returns	144	265	94	74	57	71	48	51	<b>804</b>

The above table captures the information provided by the DBE in terms of the pre-registration process that took place in October 2011. The information captured for the issuing of the official staff establishment (02 December 2011) and the 5 May 2012 returns, reflect the actual number of learners that enrolled at the school. Schools were scheduled to open on the 11 January 2012 for the learners and I did the initial planning based on the figures (DBE survey) that were provided by the DBE in their 2011 staff establishment document. The DBE did pre-registration in 2011 and when schools opened in 2012, the official registration forms from this pre-registration process had not yet arrived at the school. We then had to begin the process of re-registering of all the learners. This caused a lot of tension as many parents assumed that if they registered their children the previous year they would automatically have a place. But with no forms on the opening day, we had no proof that registration was done, although the DBE did present a spread sheet of learners who they said had registered.

The official policy that governs enrolment indicates that all children enrolling at a school had to complete an admission form. The challenge was further exacerbated by the limited physical space of the school building. The projection of the DBE was in stark contrast with

the numbers that actually emerged during the re-registration process. The largest enrolment was in the foundation phase (grade R-3) and lower numbers were enrolled in the higher grades. On the first and second day of school, I was confronted by an angry crowd of parents demanding place for their learners. A parent, in one of our PALAR set meetings, laughingly recalled their first encounter with me during this time of enrolment. They remember angrily commenting to themselves, “Who is this coloured telling us there is no place? Why does he not go back to his own school?” I recall this statement being made when I had to inform them that we only had place for 80 grade R learners at the school. I remember going to the crowd of disgruntled parents and inviting them to elect a committee to meet with me so that we could resolve the challenge that emerged, especially around the grade R and grade 1 enrolment.

Eventually we had to restructure the class allocation from the one recommended by the DBE for the 2012 staff establishment, to the one that would cater for the actual need that emerged because of the re-registration process (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2: Comparison of class allocation per grade**

<b>Grades</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>
DBE	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	19
Actual	4	7	2	2	2	2	1	2	22

The registration process then influenced the decision of the language of learning and teaching.

b) *Language of learning and teaching*

The District Task Team report of the 29 September 2011, indicated that the community was made up of predominantly isiXhosa and Afrikaans speakers and that the medium of instruction will be determined by this and the “educator core provision” (District Chatty Task Team P.E., 2011). The District Office in a media release further stated that the medium of instruction would be isiXhosa and Afrikaans (Mbabela, 2011). In my report submitted to the District Office I proposed that the medium of instruction be English with either isiXhosa and or Afrikaans taught as a first additional language (Damons, Recommendations in preparation for school opening, 2011). The recommendation was informed by the fact that the initial data gathered by the District Office indicated that the preferred language of instruction was predominantly English. Most of the families relocating to the area were isiXhosa speakers. I further suggested that learners who indicated that they preferred Afrikaans as a medium instruction should approach the three other primary schools that were located not too far from the area. I had consulted the principals of these schools and they were willing to assist with the enrolment of these Afrikaans speaking learners.

The medium of instruction later became a thorny issue, which we had to navigate through. It almost led to some racial tension as most of the Afrikaans speaking parents were coloured. At a meeting convened on the 29 February 2012, with the parents who wanted their children to be taught in Afrikaans, we agreed on the following around the medium of instruction to accommodate all parents:

- English would be the medium of instruction of the school
- isiXhosa would be the first additional language of the school
- Afrikaans speaking learners from grade 5 -7 who are Afrikaans speaking would be able to do Afrikaans as a first additional language

- Teachers would be sensitive to the fact that these children from Afrikaans speaking homes will be faced with a challenge as it related to medium of instruction
- The school would have a learning area (subject) orientation workshop for all learning areas and for all parents, to orientate them around the work that would be covered by their children.

After this meeting the SGB then ratified the decision that the language of learning and teaching would be English, with isiXhosa as the first additional language (FAL). We delayed the implementation of a FAL in grades 1, 2 and 3 because of the lack of resources to implement it at this level. FAL was eventually introduced in the fourth quarter in these grades.

#### 4.2.2.4 *Staffing*

##### a) *Recruitment*

In the District Task Team report of the 23 September 2011 they recommended that the staff of schools who were ‘double parked’ or/and displaced teachers, be used to fill the staff establishment of the new school. These were teachers who were either chased away from their previous schools or who were in excess to the staff establishment of the school. In a subsequent report on the 29 September they identified the following points as ways of staffing the school:

- Educator initiated transfers
- Educators from closed schools
- Excess and ‘doubled parked educators’
- Displaced managers to initially manage until possible advertisement
- Excess non-teaching staff (reference)

The report further suggested that positions for the school management team should be filled through a bulletin and through internal adverts.

I had the first meeting, around staffing of the new school on the 14 December 2011, with the Education Development Officer (EDO) of the school. By this time there had been no movement by the District Office around the appointment of staff and it was left to the EDO and myself to come up with a new set of criteria for the selection of staff. We developed a set of criteria that was approved by the District Director. We first focused on the curriculum needs that were suggested by the Task Team. We started with a list of Funza Lushaka (FL) bursary holders that had to be placed at schools, giving priority to those living in Port Elizabeth. FL bursary holders were students who received a bursary from government and had contracts to be placed in schools. Then we would consider a list of teachers who were in excess because of the redeployment process at their schools. We wanted to stay as objective as possible and moved through the lists alphabetically. If the name matched the curriculum needs, at the identified time, the name was pencilled in to be contacted. I left the contacting of these educators to the EDO and we agreed that we would arrange for interviews on the Thursday, 5 January 2012, at School A. When I met the EDO, she reported that most of the identified teachers were FL bursary holders and that she could not get hold of excess teachers or very few matched the criteria. From this process of interviewing we ended up with an initial staff of 21. Of the 21 identified staff members 18 were FL bursary holders, all of whom would start teaching for the first time. Two other educators, who were in excess from other Districts in the Province and had some teaching experience, were sent by the District Office to form part of the staff.

Of the 18 FL bursary holders one was white, four were coloured and 13 were black. At the time three were from Uitenhage, eight were from Port Elizabeth and seven were from areas outside of Port Elizabeth and who had to relocate to Port Elizabeth.

The staffing challenge was further compounded when the white and coloured teachers decided to take up offers at other schools, after they had been contacted by principals of these schools two weeks after the academic year began. The challenge that we faced was that we could not compel these teachers to stay because there was no written contract, only verbal undertakings from the employer. We then supplemented the staff compliment by asking the remaining teachers, who were FL bursary holders, to contact friends or class mates from the universities, which they graduated from, to find out if they were looking for teaching posts.

The staffing was eventually finalised on the 23 January 2012 and we ended up with the following staff compliment: 1 acting principal; 1 deputy principal (redeployed); 1 head of department (HOD - redeployed); 23 post level teachers (18 FL bursary holders and 5 redeployed); and 3 volunteer grade R practitioners. We were also fortunate to have two unemployed teachers willing to volunteer at the school while waiting for the possibility of getting employment at the school or in another institution.

*b) Employment Challenges*

One of the major challenges we faced was the payment of salaries to the temporary teachers, most of whom were new teachers. The school was engaged in a protracted battle, with the DBE, to get these teachers paid. These actions varied from memos, pickets, joint protest actions with other schools, closure of the school by parents, to a delegation of School Governing Body members, including myself, visiting the provincial education offices about 300km away in Zwelitsha, to try and resolve the matter. Twelve of these teachers received

their first payment in June, five were paid in September and the last teacher received her back-dated salary in October.

Staffing in the grade R classes posed a serious challenge as well. The Department did not make any allocation for grade R practitioners in the staff allocation. A grade R practitioner does not have a formal teaching qualification but has a qualification in order for them to teach in a grade R classroom. We had to request two of the FL bursary holders to teach the grade R learners and four grade R practitioners approached the school asking to volunteer, in the hope that they would be eventually employed. One of these Grade R practitioners left due to personal reasons but the three other practitioners are still working at the school on a volunteer basis. Their payment is one of the demands that is still outstanding from the list of demands that we submitted to the DBE.

c) *Administrative staff*

The school started the year without any administrative support staff. I recommended in my report to the DBE that the District Office considers seconding the secretary of School A, to assist with the anticipated administration workload that would accompany the opening of the new school (Damons, Recommendations in preparation for school opening, 2011). We received no response from the DBE and I ended up approaching the administrator of the school network that we were a part of to assist me in trying to deal with the anticipated administrative challenges when the school opened at the beginning of the year. This administrator became more than an assistant but also my confidante and sounding board on a number of issues. He later assisted in identifying and recruiting volunteers into the school. When he eventually left, the role of the administrator was taken over by four unemployed volunteers from the community, of which two had children at the school. These volunteers

entered the school with none of them having any work experience, let alone secretarial or school management experience. Through the process of action learning and research, these volunteer administrators have become highly competent and efficient at running the administration of the school. The school still has three of the administrative volunteers' active in the school.

#### 4.2.2.5 *Administrative Planning*

The administrative planning was guided by my experience in School A and I used the template, similar to the one in Appendix M, from this school as the basis of my administrative planning in School B. All the initial planning of the school centred around me. This was mainly due to the fact that there was no management structure in place, the Deputy Principal and HOD arrived during the second week after the opening and the majority of staff were new. Although I believe in the concept of distributive leadership (Ncobo & Tikly, 2010), I was forced to assume a hierarchal position when it came to planning, with little consultation and more presentation on the plans that I developed.

The fluidity and newness of the organisation meant that there was a need for meetings on almost a daily basis as we navigated through the various facets of planning to set up our school. The newness of the organisation meant that I had to be very thorough in my explanation of how a school works in its various dimensions and structures, as this was a new experience to the majority of the staff. Those teachers, who came from other schools, came with different ideas of doing things and these had to be fused together with my approach. This was highlighted in a focus group interview that I had, when one of the more experienced teachers commented that, "I learnt so much, it is so different from the way we use to do things at my previous school."



The administrative planning document (APD) (Appendix M) which became our guide and which went through various cycles, informed by our new learning and contextual conditions, was formally implemented at the beginning of the year. The APD started off as an ‘operational plan’ with a theme of ‘Our destiny is in our hands. Great seeds produce great harvest’, to the final working document that was adopted by the staff, with the theme ‘Faith like a mustard seed.’ This APD is still in operation in the school today.

Besides consolidating the planning into one workable document, there were also the secondary documents that were required by the DBE, in order to regard the school as effective. These documents were usually created when we realised that we needed one. We realised that many people were visiting our school and we were not recording their visits. So the visitor’s register was created (Appendix N). Other administrative forms were developed, and went through different cycles of change until we settled on the one that best suited the need of our context, these included:

1. Assembly planning book (Appendix O)
2. Weekly planning book, where committees filled in times for their respective meetings and these were then placed on the whiteboard at the entrance of the school(Appendix P)

The implementation of these systems and the support that leadership required to do this would not be possible if it was not for a variety of stakeholders.

### **4.3 Stakeholder Involvement**

In this section, I will focus on the roles of the stakeholders by posing various questions: What defines a stakeholder? Who are the stakeholders involved in a community school? What are

their roles? How do they manage their roles? These are the questions that this section seems to answer with the data that was generated during the course of this study.

#### **4.3.1 Identifying the stakeholders**

In the focus group that was held on the 11 October 2012, we identified a broad range of stakeholders who could play a meaningful role in the running of the school. These stakeholders ranged from the parents, DBE, health organizations, social support agencies, municipal support structures, institutions of higher learning, and security and safety agencies. The focus group ranked these stakeholders in order of priority and emerged with the parents, the DBE, social workers, business, and the safety and security agencies as the most important.

The business stakeholders played an important role at different levels of the school. We had a local businessman at the beginning of the year who heard about our plight of no electricity and borrowed us his generator. He also regularly dropped off bread for the feeding scheme of the school. A major national company sponsored a rugby field and play park for our grade R learners. The same company provided employment by utilising volunteers to complete these two projects. Other businesses got involved in the school because of their association with one of the other companies involved in the school. An example of this was when an organization made a substantial donation of stationery to the school. The company from which they bought the stationery, made their own donation to the school. This was over and above the goods that were bought from them.

The media became a very important stakeholder for the school. We appeared in a few articles that featured the work we were doing in spite of our challenges. We made use of these

articles to appeal for assistance. It was mainly after these newspaper reports that we received assistance from companies and individuals. One media partner adopted us in a campaign with the police and had every child photographed and finger printed. Another media sponsor heard of our lack of text books and donated a reading book to each child in the school.

Social partners like the clinic and social development agency became important stakeholders, especially in communities faced with so many social challenges. We were able to establish a relationship with the local clinic and they brought their mobile clinic onto the premises of the school once a week. Furthermore, the community at large was encouraged to access health services at the school.

We also developed a strategic relationship with the local university. This relationship allowed us to access the different departments of the university to assist in diverse areas of the school. Our grade R practitioners are part of a grade R development programme, through the school network located in the university. We were also able to source funding for our information technology and were able to purchase a laptop, data projector and screen.

The involvements of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) are important because they provided capacity development for our community volunteers. We were able to send our caregivers for training and one NGO, who was doing work in our community with orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC), established a relationship with the school, so that they could have easier access to the children.

School A became a very supportive stakeholder in the establishment of School B. They provided us with resource support, allowed us to use their copying facilities, gave us

permission to use their bank account to receive money and made their facilities available when we needed it. Using a service provider from School A, we were able to acquire a computer software programme to run the academic administration of the school. School A's volunteers also provided training to the volunteers at School B. In addition, we sent our administrators to School A to get 'in service training' under the supervision of an experienced secretary.

A group which I possibly would term the 'unwilling stakeholders' also emerged during the opening of the school. These were mainly insurance and finance companies that came to school to attempt to generate business from the school. What made the school attractive to these businesses was the fact that we had 18 new teachers and these companies wanted to sell their products to them. Many came under the guise of wanting to assist these teachers in their financial planning. We developed a policy that if you wanted to speak to these prospective clients, you had to pay your way into the school by donating something that would assist the school. In this way we managed to acquire a microwave oven, an urn, a kettle and a dinner set for the use of the school.

Finally, there was a group of stakeholders who did not contribute materially but who made a significant contribution to the culture of the school. These were organisations ranging from local churches to political and community structures. They used the buildings for church services and community meetings. The SGB drew up a social contract with these stakeholders which indicated that they could use the school building on condition that they share the responsibility of looking after the building and pay a contribution towards the use of the electricity. However, the most important stakeholders were the parent and community volunteers.

### **4.3.2 Recruiting and managing community volunteers**

The feeder community became a major stakeholder in the operation of the school. 300 people signed up to volunteer at the school when it opened at the beginning of the year. At a meeting we convened to find out why they were interested in volunteering. The responses ranged from “we thought there would be jobs with the new school opening” to “we have nothing to do and wanted to contribute towards our children’s education.”

The identification of “parent” stakeholders became even more complex because a “parent” is not necessarily identified as only the biological parent or legal guardian of the school. Furthermore, the community felt that even though some of them had no children at the school, they had a right to the school because the school was situated in their area. We then moved away from using the term parental involvement and focused more on community involvement in the school. The term “parental stakeholder” was used to define the legal guardian of a child enrolled at the school. “Community stakeholder” was defined as a person or interest group from the geographic location that has a direct or indirect interest in the school.

We structured community involvement around the key areas of support that the school would need to make it functional. My previous experience with volunteers at School A, especially community volunteers, was that there had to be a functional relationship between the school and the volunteer (Damons & Abrahams, 2009). The school had to benefit and the volunteer had to benefit. My previous experience also taught me that you had to identify a champion from the community who understood the community and could almost become a personal advisor on community matters. This was particularly important in the context of this study because I came in as an outsider (‘that coloured with the cap’) into the community. The

challenge was further exacerbated by the fact that my isiXhosa vocabulary was confined to single words like ‘molo’ (greeting) and ‘gcwele’ (meaning ‘full’), a word I often had to use to have to inform parents that the school was full.

I initially thought that approaching the elected structures located in the community would assist in the identification of this ‘personal advisor’. I however learnt that because of the tension around housing in the area, the community was fragmented and there were many structures, all who claimed to be legitimate representatives of the community. Leadership however emerged during the crises of dealing with inadequate space for the learners at the opening of the school year. I recall being approached by two parents who were concerned that they had registered their children the previous year and now they were told the school was full. Through translation and engagement, we managed to find a solution not only for their challenge but to the challenge of the community as well. These two parents were then recruited to become my advisors, and they would claim later that they were my personal assistants. Both of these parents now serve on the School Governing Body (SGB), after being elected by the parent community. The one parent serves as the coordinator of the community volunteers and the other parent is the chief administration officer and Chairperson of the SGB. It was to these ‘advisors’ that I would constantly turn when I needed to get the pulse of the community. The community also used these parents if they needed to engage with me. The coordinator of the volunteers also became my personal translator for those community members and parents who wanted to communicate in isiXhosa with me.

Identification of volunteers for these projects became a matter of great tension because of perceived biases of those who were doing the recruiting. The recruiting of these volunteers to the different projects was left in the hands of the parent volunteers, with whom I had developed a relationship of trust. From time to time I had to intervene because definite biases

in recruiting emerged, as only a certain group of parents from one section of the community was being recruited. I had to remind the volunteers that the school belonged to all in the community. The school now has a good distribution of volunteers from the five different areas that feed the school. We eventually ended up with 90 volunteers after this process in February, and by October we still had 82 volunteers who were still active in the various projects at the school. The qualifications of these volunteers ranged from those who have some post matric qualification, to those who did not complete primary education. The question of managing these volunteers became an issue that we had to deal with in a creative manner.

#### **4.3.3 Indigenous knowledge**

In order to place the volunteers into functional areas of the school, the network volunteer, two parent volunteers and I, identified the areas where the volunteers would be needed. We assigned volunteers to the following categories: vegetable gardeners; feeding scheme; caregivers; classroom cleaners; toilet cleaners; teacher assistants; administration assistants; security personnel; and a maintenance officer. All these were identified as areas that would constructively contribute towards the growth of the school. We also had to identify job descriptions for the various volunteers. This was done by the volunteers who described what the volunteering roles would entail.

Each volunteer group elected a leader. They in turn formed a leadership team that dealt with matters pertaining to volunteers. I had regular meetings with the leadership team to discuss issues that emerged while the volunteers were performing their duties. However, the issue of credibility of leaders often emerged as a challenge. One of the volunteers, reflecting in the focus group in response to the question about the advice they would give to a principal

wanting to implement a volunteer programme at school, noted, “(The principal) need to be hands on and should not delegate important meeting decisions for others to report.” This was true, particularly when tough decisions had to be made with a team of seven leaders who sometimes sent out seven different messages.

The ingenuity and creativity of the community also contributed to the success of this involvement. I used to reflect in different seminars and conferences that the community brought the indigenous knowledge of survival into the school. I recall when we had no resources, one would see these community members bringing their buckets and brooms from home to clean the classrooms and toilets. The gardeners convinced the driver of a grader that belonged to the construction company building houses in the area to clear a plot for them to start the vegetable garden. The plumber fixed leaking toilets with a homemade gadget that he designed himself. The feeding scheme was started with twenty rand contributions from the volunteers in the feeding scheme. The intellectual capacity of the community in maintaining and sustaining itself came strongly to the fore, in the time of need, and they brought their knowledge of self-preservation into the school. It was, however, important to keep the volunteers motivated and committed to working in the school.



#### **4.3.4 Motivation**

The school decided to look for incentives for the volunteers, as long as they remained committed to doing the work. We secured various sponsorships to purchase the necessary tools and equipment that were needed to run the various projects. I initially held regular motivational talks to encourage them in what they were doing. These sessions were continued by the various leaders of the projects. During these meetings, the volunteers were encouraged to raise concerns and were constantly thanked for their contribution towards the school. We also had to remind the volunteers that the school was in no position to pay stipends or salaries, although this never stopped the volunteers from constantly asking for some sort of payment.

The school became a beacon of hope to these community volunteers. The volunteers would have access to the resources of the school. The school would make photocopies, draw up curriculum vitae, and provide advice and support to volunteers who would need it from time to time. The volunteers were also gaining on-site job experience because many of these volunteers had never been in formal employment before. I would also provide testimonials or act as a reference for those who were applying for jobs outside of the school. When a local port and harbour company was busy with an outreach programme to train the unemployed, the school made a special effort to get the application forms, assisted the volunteers in completing the forms, and returned the forms to the company.

Any gifts that had no functional value for the school were offered to these volunteers. Surplus food parcels from School A were divided among the volunteers. We encouraged other business partners who did projects at the school to employ from among the ranks of the volunteers. When a company prepared our rugby field we managed to secure jobs for 62

people for a period of two weeks, One of our faith-based partners managed to secure stipends through the Department of Trade and Industry, and now the 82 volunteers are receiving a monthly stipend for eight months that will end in March of 2013, with the possibility of it being renewed after that period. This project also further committed to assist in the skills development of the community members receiving the stipend. To date, no training has happened and the inconsistent payment date of the stipends caused a lot of tension, as most volunteers have this stipend as the only source of income.

My experience at School A taught me that people get involved in schools for various reasons. Big companies have corporate social responsibility projects that they must undertake and smaller businesses look to expand by reporting on their involvement in projects like the school. NGO's and other training organisations receive external funding for themselves by reflecting on their involvement in various projects. The school then had to respond to meet the needs of these stakeholders. For example, companies that required BEE endorsement for their CSI projects would receive a letter from the school that would contain the following line in it, "Our feeder community that benefited from your gift is 100% black; about 80% black African and 20% coloured." Our thank you letters to private individuals were on a more personal level. We were also requested from time to time to make presentations at donor functions. With so many stakeholders, tensions sometimes emerged as the protection of personal and professional space became important.

#### **4.3.5 Protecting the personal/professional space**

Having so many people on the site created tensions from time to time. By February we were almost a fulltime adult corps of 108 persons, 31 academic staff members (including the three

grade R practitioners and the two unemployed teachers), and 77 volunteer community members across the various projects.

A challenge of protecting the professional space and developing a culture of respect between the teachers and volunteers emerged during the course of the study. A volunteer reflected in one of the focus groups that “there are two different types of communities inside of school, teachers and parents and there is a big difference – teachers use their education thing as the key and think that parents cannot think the right thing but when we are debating you can see that the parent can learn from the teacher and the teacher can learn from the parent.” A teacher reported her frustration with the volunteers, “I am in conflict with volunteers, I thought that there was something wrong with me – people (volunteers) misinterpret my intention.” She was making this reflection after an incident when she asked a volunteer to clean her class and paid her. Other volunteers became envious because someone had earned something. This could have been prevented, the teacher argued, if there was better ‘transparency’. A second teacher in the focus group qualified this transparency by saying; “The principal meets everyone, but separately in the school – I feel that he (the principal) was causing division amongst us – everyone wanted to claim the school”. The point that she was emphasizing was that I never convened a meeting of the two communities of the school to introduce the stakeholders to one another and to clearly define the roles of all involved in the school.

The teachers also felt they were being overloaded by all the projects that were taking place at the school. One of the teachers complained about being over-burdened by being involved in too many projects, “Lot of things that had to be done – too much use of us as guinea pigs at school, overloaded us with things from outside. We had to concentrate on the school’s challenges and then we had to deal with expectations of others. Sometimes in their mind the

expectations were different from what was needed in this environment.” She was given the example of researchers that came with their research agendas and wanted them to try programmes. The researchers forget sometimes that their core business was teaching, and that they could not drop all responsibilities to meet the agenda of the researcher.

The key lesson I have learned is that it truly does take a village to raise a child, but it would be advisable to carefully consider who you invite into that village to raise the child.

#### **4.4 Professional Development**

Professional development as it relates to the context of a school usually has to do with developing the academic, professional and organisational competencies of the professional staff (Steyn, 2012). In the context of a community school, this definition has to be expanded. The need for a much broader definition of professional development is based on the fact that many of the key stakeholders of the school required training in how to support and work in the school.

In the focus group, the stakeholders identified the need for professional development and training for the following groups in the school: parents, caretaker, volunteers, all workers in the school, and outside community members.

Comments made by two of the new teachers highlighted the need for professional development, especially in the context that they encountered at the school. The one teacher said, “Coming here, all I wanted was to be a teacher... going to my classroom and teach, and make a difference in someone’s life.” However, they were confronted with the harsh reality of the context of the school. She noted, “The schools where we did our practicals, they were

public schools that had great physical resources. I never thought I would be dealing with hectic stuff ... for example a child was raped several times... those were my fears and I did not want to go to such things that I had to deal with. I see this child every day, looking in the child's eyes was traumatizing.”

#### **4.4.1 Types of professional development**

Professional development programmes were structured according to the different needs of the school. The informal, on-site, type of professional development was the main type of development that took place at the school. We identified and intervened with programmes where we identified gaps in our knowledge and expertise. These programmes were run by me and other staff members who either volunteered to do this or who were identified because of their specific skill set.

##### *4.4.1.1 Professional development for teachers*

The first formal professional development session was held on the 6 January 2012 with the new teachers of the school. The objective of the workshop was to orientate them about the context that they were coming into as well as to allow for relationship building among them. These workshops later focused on the administration of the school and included how to complete a register and fill in comments on report cards.

The academic development programme was mainly led by the Deputy Principal and Head of Department of the school. At the beginning of the year, I invited a retired colleague of School A to assist me in developing systems for the school and to help the colleagues organize the academic programme. We were paid two visits by the curriculum section of the Department of Basic Education who provided some guidance to the teachers on how to prepare

academically. Some of the teachers attended the new curriculum training, but it was very difficult to motivate and encourage them to attend the training during the June vacation as all of them had not yet received payment and no resources had arrived at the school.

The lack of provision of lesson plans and portfolios were also a big challenge and we had to rely heavily on School A to provide us with copies of these documents. Colleagues at School A also peer-coached and mentored colleagues of School B in relation to the curriculum. Individual teachers approached me to assist in some of the challenges they were experiencing in class. One teacher was struggling to deal with the issue of a multi-cultural class and approached me for assistance. I observed his lesson and gave him feedback on possible changes he could make.

I would also lead most of the initial committee meetings, to give colleagues a sense of what was expected of them. These various committees included the finance committee that looked at the finances and fundraising projects of the school. The ground development committees looked at the development of the grounds of the school. In total eight committees were established. At times, when I realized that committees were struggling or when I was approached by the committees themselves, I would then intervene to give guidance. There were also individual development sessions. I sat with the treasurer of the school and guided her in completing the financial statements of the school. By March 2012, these committees were becoming self-sufficient and competent. This was evident in the planning and successful execution of programmes like Human Rights and Heritage Day that were superbly managed by the committees themselves.

Through the methodology of PALAR, we designed templates for the various committees on which they could reflect their activities. A teacher who attended the short learning programme with me, and who assisted in the designing of these templates, conducted a workshop with staff and parent volunteers on how to plan, monitor and implement programmes of the school (Appendix Q).

We had daily morning and afternoon contact sessions with staff and this provided a platform where issues relating to the operation of the school were raised, discussed and reported on. We used these platforms to remind one another about our professional responsibilities like reporting to class on time, being prepared to teach, the language of engagement with the learners, and how we communicated with parents and one another as colleagues. These sessions also became a platform where teachers could raise some of the successes they were experiencing in the class or report on projects that we were busy with.

As the school became more operational, the need for other workshops to deal with some of the professional challenges also emerged. One teacher raised the following concern during a workshop conducted by one of his peers: “I need help to deal with children that are infected with HIV/AIDS, especially when I suspect they might be infected.” This bothered him because he had an encounter with a child who was constantly sick in his class. The grandmother did not declare the status of the child, but when another family member came and the teacher enquired about the constant illness, this family member then declared that the child was on ARVs. The teacher became concerned because he was afraid that he forced the parent to declare the status of the child.

As these teachers engaged with the contextual reality of teaching and learning, they were extremely positive and creative in the way they did their work. One teacher noted, “Do what you can with what you have, you can open doors which you thought were never possible.” Another teacher supported this and added, “You must have the courage to believe that whatever situation you (are) in, you can go through that ... when you (are) in a foreign environment without your family, not getting paid, asking for money from home. Through that I survived, and was getting this motivation in this environment. I survived beyond these conditions and I am still standing.”

Some of the other professional challenges that the new teachers raised, included dealing with learners who had multiple learning challenges, sexual abuse cases, and engaging with parents who were ‘difficult’. We resolved that we would seek outside support to deal with these and other issues as they arose, but we also decided that we needed to do research and allow staff members to present on the topics that were raised. After a workshop on conflict resolution by one of the new teachers that most staff members described as excellent, the teacher who raised the concern about how to deal with learners who were infected with HIV/AIDS was tasked with the responsibility of doing research and presenting a workshop on the topic.

Social programmes like end-of-term parties also took the form of development and even this had to be organized. With the first social event, the organizing committee bought meat for *potjie kos*, even though we were supposed to *braai*. This taught me that even the smallest detail should not be taken for granted when dealing with any activity of the school. This learning was reflected in the staff meetings where we regularly did analysis of programmes and the subsequent two end-of-terms functions which went very well.



Although the focus was predominantly on the new teachers in the school, professional development was needed by the more experienced staff members as well. This was reflected by one of the more experienced teachers in the focus group when she said, “As an old teacher, I was all the years blank as teacher. I come from a stereotype way of doing things at my previous school. I got new ideas here. I learnt a lot through committees. We could speak freely here. At other schools the principals do not share most of the things. We did not know what was happening in management of the school.”

Professional development and learning also occurred by the action learning that took place through the work of the teachers. Through this learning, the perspective of teachers changed as they started to engage with the realities of teaching. This was reflected by a new teacher in the focus group: “Coming here, all I wanted was to be a teacher, going to my classroom and teaching, and making a difference in someone’s life. But now that I am here I see myself wanting to study further. I see myself sitting in management. I see myself sitting in the principal’s chair managing a school. I have big dreams now, looking beyond what I came here for through engaging with management – you need to constantly upgrade yourself, keep moving.”

As a principal, I was also reminded that I had to play a more active part in the professional development of the school. This was noted by a teacher in the focus group in response to the question on the advice that they would give to a principal who would open a new school. The teacher reflected that the, “(The principal’s) concentration should be mostly on the classes, (he must) see the progress there so that he can give direction to us as teachers, especially foundation phase teachers, because they are the best phase in the school, because if the foundation phase would collapse, then the whole school would collapse” .

#### *4.4.1.2 Professional development for the School Governing Body members and the community volunteers*

The next level of organization that required developmental support was the School Governing Body (SGB). All elected members of the SGB were new to the portfolio, except me and one other teacher. For the first five meetings I had to lead and give direction on the specific roles of the various components of the SGB. I worked with the SGB members in helping them to understand the difference between governance and management, developing meeting procedures, drawing up agendas and developing report back protocols. I also trained them on the more complex tasks of making staff appointments, managing the school finances, and drawing up contracts.

Servicing our broader community also was important as reflected in the academic open day that we had for parents. There was a request in a parent meeting in which parents stated that they wanted to understand what their children were being taught. The school responded by convening a workshop in which teachers explained what learning areas were, and what content was being taught in the various learning areas.

The need to develop competencies in the administrative staff also required attention. Tasks like how to receive parents and guests, and developing filing and recording systems required patience and understanding when training these eager volunteers. The mistakes that were made by the volunteers had to be treated as lessons. None of the administrative volunteers had any computer skills and they basically taught themselves. I recall us losing two hours of computer work because the electricity ran out and I forgot to inform the administrators to constantly save the documents while typing. After this lesson, they jokingly asked me whenever they saw me working on the computer, “are you saving sir?” Today, two of them

are competent and one manages two educational management software programmes, including SASAMS, the complex school software, and the management programme of the DBE. The issues of office protocols and how they related to one another in a very confined space was eventually developed by the volunteers themselves.

In the focus group held on the 11 October, the stakeholders identified the following areas as the most important for their professional development:

- agricultural development
- conflict management and communication skills
- curriculum workshops
- adult basic education classes
- strategic management workshops
- coaching and mentoring workshops
- business and computer skills
- first aid training and sewing
- safety and security.

The data generated clearly indicates that in a community school there is a strong need for ongoing professional development among all the stakeholders in the school. In the next section, I consider the importance of school culture in shaping the attitudes and actions of all the stakeholders.

## **4.5 School Culture**

### **4.5.1 Symbols in forming a school culture**

I can recall that as early as February, children, parents and teachers were approaching my office wanting to know when the school would be adopting its symbols. In retrospect, I admit that I was so caught up with the matters of running the school that I probably failed to give adequate attention to this. I remember being ‘slipped’ a number of drawings that the children would suggest could serve as the logo of the school. We eventually adopted a badge that was designed by a grade 6 learner, that depicted the sun rising over a mountain. This was preceded by the composition of a school song that was composed by two of the teachers. The song’s first stanza starts with the sun rising (Appendix R) and includes lines written in isiXhosa and Afrikaans as a way of ensuring that the school demographics were captured in all the work we did.

When the teacher suggested a motto that would be used on the badge I was interested to know why it deviated from the first chorus line of the school song. The chorus line reads: ‘We teach, we learn, we care, we strive for excellence.’ The motto we eventually agreed upon was, ‘We care, we teach, we learn, we strive for excellence’. She felt that if we did not enter the organization with a caring and compassionate mindset, no constructive teaching and learning would take place, and excellence would not be obtainable.

The decision of the school colours and uniform was also quite a significant debate among teachers and parents. Both groups felt that because of the socio-economic challenges confronting most of our learners, it was important to have neutral colours like black, grey and white to allow those who could not afford a uniform to be able to afford an outfit that could match the colours of the school. The key to the decision was that we wanted children in

school and we did not want them to feel excluded because of a uniform. The parents adopted the colours of the school as red, black, grey and white. We erected a name board and adopted a logo. A school stamp was also donated to the school. The school song is sung at each assembly. These symbols led to a sense that ‘we have arrived’ as a school.

#### **4.5.2 Diversity as a tool for building culture**

The theme of honouring and respecting the diversity in the school was carried in all the programmes. In meetings, parents were encouraged to speak in the language of their choice. We were fortunate to have people that could translate into three languages, isiXhosa, English and Afrikaans. I used volunteers to do translation into isiXhosa for me, especially in conferences with parents. I did this only after requesting permission from the parents whom I was meeting with. Some of my personal biases around language and race were also challenged. I remember an interview with an isiXhosa speaking parent when I asked, in what probably sounded like a condescending voice, whether I could get a translator in to help with the meeting. The parent responded in a confident voice: “Meneer (sir) I can speak in enige taal (any language) that you comfortable with.” This encounter further helped shape my own ideas about how I thought about and engaged with the community. The ability to honour and respect the diversity of the various demographic groups also played an important role in developing our school culture. I remember how I was called to a grade 6 class to deal with perceived racial tensions among the learners. After a session, we agreed that we are all the same and that when children were misbehaving, race had nothing to do it.

There was also an instance when I had to deal with a situation in which one of the children was ‘possessed’. I sensed the fears of community members and teachers because of their cultural beliefs around the topic of being demon-possessed. I found this particularly

challenging as I tried to balance dealing with a child whom I perceived as being emotionally distressed and a parent who firmly believed that her child was demon possessed. I had to seek counsel from my cultural ‘advisors’ and was able to navigate through this situation by trusting the wisdom of my parents and sticking to my belief that the child needed professional support. We eventually convinced the mother to seek professional help, while not discarding or ridiculing her regular visits to *sangomas* (a traditional healer) to seek help.

The organization adopted a learning culture and we all were put through various processes of capacity building. So whether it was the principal being taught isiXhosa by parents, volunteers being skilled in the various techniques of their areas of expertise, or teachers learning how to manage a community for the first time, the school was truly a total learning organization. The school culture was being shaped by virtue of people being involved in the school, all bringing different skill sets and competencies. This was reflected by one of the administrative volunteers who said that, “Ek het geleer om ander te respek. (I learnt to respect others).” Some of the other lessons were shared by another volunteer, “I am a person with respect. I am a hard worker I now have inner confidence and I am not afraid to look at rich people.’ The SGB chairperson reflected that, “I must not be a clever (person) who think I know everything. I must consider everyone’s ideas and be able to take this into the future”. The impact on how the school helped shape her is captured by the volunteer in the kitchen who stated that:

“working with different people and different cultures we had to learn to respect each other – listen to each other, even if we had different views, on top of that was how to keep school going. We have to build the school, bring information to school from wherever you get it so that you can use it to make the school grow. Show the community that we can do it here – the experiences we got here we are trying to know each other – the development towards the stars or sky.”

The key was also trying to ensure that all stakeholders felt valued and appreciated. This was expressed by the leader of the gardeners in a focus group. She noted that the principal, “Was straight forward. (He) has the talent to encourage people. Other volunteers considered the role of gardeners almost as lower than the other categories (of volunteers), but the principal managed to motivate us to realize that all roles are important and no role is more superior to the other –that’s why I am still here.”

#### **4.5.3 Creating a culture of honoring one another’s space**

The ability to understand the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in a confined space like a school, and ensuring that we respected one another’s spaces remains a challenge when you run such a community school. Besides the over seven hundred children at the school, 108 adults (26 teachers and 82 volunteers) had to be managed. This led to many tensions caused by various issues that varied from sugar disappearing out of the kitchen, money disappearing overnight in one of the grade R classes, to teachers feeling volunteers wanting to take over their roles as the intellectual guardians of knowledge and parents feeling that teachers were underestimating their intellectual ability. I saw this as a natural part of engagement and my experience at School A prepared me for these natural tensions. The lesson that I learnt from my previous experiences was that these tensions will arise when you have so many people gathered in one space under such challenging conditions. So the tensions in itself are not important, rather, it was how one deals with them that becomes more important.

The disputes or challenges that arose among volunteers were dealt with by the now established leadership committee of volunteers that comprised the leader of each area in

which we had volunteers. Only matters that they felt they could not resolve, or those of a more serious nature were referred to the principal of the school.

I do now however recognize that I could have done a better job in bringing the teachers and volunteers together to properly define their roles. This I will do before I leave the school and before the new principal assumes duty.

#### **4.5.4 Developing a caring culture**

In spite of the innumerable challenges, a wonderful caring culture has emerged at the school. I remember in March, after three months of opening, one of the volunteers passed away. Teachers and volunteers pitched in and managed to collect over R300, 00 to give to the family. We held a memorial service at the school and hosted the family with coffee and tea. Even the 18 teachers who had not received salaries, contributed to the family.

On another occasion, two grade 6 learners were invited to a camp with 17 other schools and could not meet the demands on the needs list. In fewer than 10 minutes during a staff meeting, almost every teacher volunteered to buy something on the list and all the needs were met. Care was also shown when a coloured parent's house was under attack in the community and the isiXhosa parents provided protection and a safe haven for her and her family at the school until the police arrived. As one of the parents said at the time, "I realized that it was ..... (*Name of parent*) house that was being attacked and we had to do something."

When two of our learners were allegedly sexually assaulted in the community, one of our caregivers spent the whole day at the hospital and then felt embarrassed to phone me at home. When I asked her about this, she responded, 'Because I am disturbing your family time.' I



remember how ashamed and embarrassed I felt because she was so considerate of my personal needs, even though she was a volunteer and needed to get home because the taxi's did not ride into her area at that time in the evening.

#### **4.5.5 Accountability and a caring culture**

Accountability was demonstrated when we embarked on various forms of protest action to highlight the challenges in our school. We always consulted with the parent body and obtained their blessing before any action was taken. This ensured that we conducted ourselves as professionals; accountable to the community we were serving.

Another example of accountability occurred when teachers started to question why financial statements were not being produced on a more regular basis. We therefore resolved that executive SGB members would have access to what was going on in the bank account of the school. When I fetched bank statements I would have to explain to the chairperson of the SGB and the treasurer what deposits and withdrawals were made in the account. This culture of transparency made sure that we kept ourselves accountable to one another.

The school culture was also characterized by a degree of firmness, and leaders at different levels were not afraid to exert their authority, which led to tension at times. In the focus group held with the teachers and the volunteers, in response to the question on how they experienced the principal of the school, some of the administrative volunteer responses were, "he was preaching in most cases, but he open gates and doors, he trust people and gave people chances". This was supported by another volunteer when she said, "hy is pa vir almal – hoof het nie gewys dat hy hoof was nie – hy luister na anders se problem – verkeerd is

verkeerd' (a father to all, he did not show that he was a principal – listened to others' problems – wrong was wrong).

The responses of the teachers to the same question were, "though the principal was firm, you must not be loose. – He is flexible, a good leader must not be too harsh or not too mediocre".

The need for firmness with love was echoed by one of the new teachers when she said, "He was not only just a principal but he was a human being as well and you could feel that he felt your pain and challenges. He was approachable but at the same time he could put the fear of GOD into you – you need to know why you are here, which was a good thing". One of the responses of the volunteer leaders in their focus group was: "It is hard work and we experienced tough love. I thought the principal was loving but jo he don't play". This was in response to how they experienced the principal at the school. Another volunteer saw the principal as, "Strict. I thought he was strict only towards blacks – as time goes on and I got to know him I saw that he was straight forward and he was a good principal and it was not about colour. Encourages you to move in a direction."

I remember two instances that required firm leadership as well. Reportedly, the leader of the community police forum (CPF) was constantly coming to school over weekends under the influence of alcohol and harassing community members on duty at the school. After three prior warnings, I took the decision to bar him from the school, until he could show rehabilitation. This seemed to have earned me a lot of respect, especially among the security volunteers' as the leader was seemingly untouchable in the CPF circles. This move eventually led to his dismissal from the community structures. Another occasion that required firm leadership was when the perceived favourite of the principal came to the school intoxicated and she was disciplined, this time in consultation with the leader of the volunteers and the chairperson of the SGB.

Although the school understood the plight of community members it had to remain firm when it came to doing the right thing. The stipends for volunteering had not yet arrived and the volunteers were becoming impatient, because of their own personal struggles. At a meeting of all volunteers there was a proposal put forward that the school advances money to the volunteers, “because they knew the school had started to receive money from the DBE.” I had to explain to the volunteers what the money was to be used for and how it would be illegal to use the money for any other purpose. Although I sensed many were not happy, I think most of them accepted the decision because it was explained to them.

#### **4.5.6 Personal investment in building a caring culture**

Investing in one another also became an important characteristic of the organisation. If you walk into the principal’s office you will find a number of inspirational messages that volunteers presented to me from time to time, to remind me that they were aware of my personal inputs in establishing the school. For instance, there was the occasion when one of the kitchen volunteers gave a letter expressing appreciation for what I managed to achieve thus far in the school and what the school meant to the community. There were numerous times when I would suspend my normal duties’ to spend time just listening to the fears and aspirations of the volunteers and the teachers. I recall how I shed a tear when one of the new teachers had to humble herself to lend money so that she could afford a graduation outfit in March because she had not been paid yet. I also recall numerous occasions where I would advise volunteers on matters from spousal abuse, to delinquent children and social grant applications. The value of making time and personally investing in the welfare of the volunteers was confirmed by the leader of the volunteers in the kitchen when she said, “I was surprised he (the principal) never chased us away or never told us there was nothing for us to do here. He gave us opportunity to do whatever we thought was right”.

So even as countless battles were waged in the community relating to housing and service delivery, and while many buildings, including that of the local councillor, were attacked and the site of a construction company petrol bombed , the school remained unscathed. I also discovered through informal conversations that some of the community members belonged to different factions, but as one volunteer put it, “when we come into..... (name of school) we leave community outside of the gate”. So I think the community has come to value the school as being much more than just an educational institution. It has become a symbol of true community transformation.

#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

The data generated in this study was structured around the main themes in the research questions. This data attempted to highlight the key characteristics of a leader in setting up management systems in a school faced with various challenges. It also showed the invaluable role that various internal and external stakeholders played in the establishment of the school and how through professional development and creating a positive school culture, they were able to achieve success in spite of these challenges. The final chapter (chapter 5) will highlight the conclusions to these findings and make some recommendations.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

During the course of this study, insights were gained into what various stakeholders viewed as important when it came to opening a new school. I also reflected on my personal experiences and learning, as well as the voices of other stakeholders that formed part of the school. For the purpose of the discussion and recommendations, I discuss the findings around the main themes of the research question. The discussion will focus on the elements of effectiveness as identified by the DBE and other authors. I will look at whether the key elements were in place for the school to be regarded as an effective community school. This view will further be explored by looking at the key characteristics of the two models presented in this study as underscored by the school-based complementary learning framework. I will conclude the chapter with recommendations to various stakeholders and suggest areas for further study.

#### **5.2. Management Responsibilities**

The findings show that there is not one specific role that a leader should adopt when opening a new school. The challenge was finding the perfect balance of leadership and management styles that were appropriate for the situations that arose when starting the new school (Christie, 2010). I moved from an initial undemocratic style of leadership, where I had to do everything myself, to the eventual role of mentor, learner, teacher and researcher. I reflect on this evolving style of leadership in the following section.

## **5.2.1. Leadership**

### *5.2.1.1 Complex nature of leadership*

Sharma (2007) argues that leadership emerges not when things are going well but rather when we are faced with challenges. This point of view resonates with my own leadership journey and development over the period of this study.

Moving from School A with some knowledge of how to run a community school (Damon & Abrahams, 2009), I could not have anticipated the complexity of the conditions that would face me when I agreed to open School B. These conditions ranged from being exposed to a new culture, establishing a new school and creating new systems that would suit the context of the school. The complexity was intensified by the various tasks that I had to perform as a leader. These varied from training volunteers and nurturing and mentoring teachers, to engaging with business leaders and other stakeholders. These areas of complexity are cited by Le Grange (2007) as a natural part of leadership in complex social dynamics, like the one encountered in this study. Bush (2007) further states that change leadership must not only deal with change but they must be able to manage this change. This complex nature of the social dynamics of the school meant that I had to adopt a very flexible approach to leadership. I had to implement the operational plans of the school and also be responsive to new situations and challenges that arose for which we had as yet not developed any solutions.

### *5.2.1.2 The dance of leadership*

I agree with Harris (2003) when he argues that principals are seen as the key to school improvement programmes and work in collaboration with school management teams (SMT) to ensure its effective implementation. The operational reality that however confronted me at the beginning of the year made it impossible for me to implement this. Starting the year with

no management team or an SGB meant that I had to be making all the decisions from management to governance on my own. I had to rely on my previous leadership and management experiences and skills, the knowledge I had gained in the field, as well as on my own intuitive sense to set up the initial operational structures of the school and respond to the problems as they arose. As the organization grew and these structures were put in place, I then had to move from the more hierarchical, decision-making role to a more distributive leadership style (Grant, 2006), where I could delegate some of the responsibilities for the work to some of the other stakeholders.

Assuming different roles that varied from instructor to mentor supports the argument that a leader has to manage many roles and these roles are complex at the best of times (Christie, 2010; Evers & Katyal, 2007; Harris, 2003). To further add to these complexities, I then assumed the role of the researcher as well. It was however through this role that I learnt that I should be a lifelong learner because there were so many developments in the field of my work. My role of researcher actually enhanced my praxis as a leader and assisted in different developmental structures of the school. Through the PALAR set formed after the short learning programme, we were able to develop forms for project management and evaluation at the school. The process capacitated one of my colleagues, who could assist me in one of the focus groups for this study. The school in return also made contributions to various forums like the PALAR set itself and meetings of the network of community schools. Representatives of the school also participated in various conferences.

The process of constant reflection, through the journals I kept, allowed me to look at the manner in which I was leading and allowed me to make adjustments in my leadership style. One of the lessons that came out of the reflections was that I constantly had to critically

evaluate my assumptions about the community I was working in. I underestimated the intellectual ability of the community by thinking that all parents needed help with the languages of the school and assumed that one of the parents would need a translator, only to discover later that she was fully bilingual.

#### *5.2.1.3 The hard and soft aspects of leadership*

The hard aspect of leadership was my ability to develop resilience in order to deal with a variety of issues across the school and beyond it. When engaging with the department of education, I had to develop a strong backbone and a thick skin. This included the intense engagements in meetings, writing countless circulars and memoranda, seeking assistance, and dealing with the challenging conditions in the school. Although I was faced with these challenges, I constantly reminded myself that it was my decision to take up the position of acting principal in School B and that I owed it to the children and the community to make a success of it.

As a leader, I could not distance myself emotionally from the work and showed empathy in some of the situations that emerged. This included shedding a tear with the unpaid teachers as they became desperate at not being paid. Then there was also the material sacrifice to myself and my family, in the form of the personal resources that I had to contribute in opening the school. Fear and uncertainty also became my constant companions, and I had to learn to embrace these feelings as part of the process of my personal growth. The soft side of leadership allowed me to discover my own resourcefulness and further assisted me in creating a climate conducive for effective learning and teaching to take place.



#### 5.2.1.4 *Creating a learning environment*

My experience in opening a new school has taught me that the most important role of leadership is to create enabling conditions for learning. In the community school, these conditions are supported when all the stakeholders are connected to the teaching and learning processes (Harris, 2003). This learning approach, where all internal stakeholders are engaged, to running the school has always formed part of my personal belief system. My work in the school affirmed this belief. The challenges that we faced, in my opinion, contributed tremendously towards this culture of learning. The lack of resources made us resourceful and resilient and we were able to draw on the different funds of knowledge that resided in and outside the community to survive (Prew, 2007). Knowledge was shared for the common purpose of developing an effective school. Community volunteers developed competencies through the projects that they were involved in. I also deepened my understanding of the cultures in the school and became more sensitive to it. I even expanded my isiXhosa vocabulary. Thus, in pursuit of creating an environment that our learners could flourish in, we adopted an approach to schooling that was much broader than the narrow focus on the academic achievement of learners, we adopted a holistic focus on their well-being and their learning that was located within the broader development of the community (Tilman, 2005).

So the journey of moving from the derogatory status of being ‘that coloured with the hat’ at the beginning of the year to being called ‘tata’ (father), as I prepared to leave the school, was filled with much learning, sacrifice and leadership lessons. The knowledge generated together with others made up for the many personal sacrifices that I had to make as an individual (Prew, 2007).

### **5.2.2 Organisational management**

Ribbins (2007) argues that the way principals lead schools is informed by the type of persons the leaders are, and how they were shaped by their circumstances. The circumstances during the course of the study shaped the way I had to manage the school, by virtue of the operational reality that confronted me.

The planning and opening of a new school cannot be confined to the offices of various government departments without ongoing consultations with the identified community. This non participation by the community creates a disconnect between the intended plans and its implementation on the ground. The information I received from the DBE contradicted the operational reality that confronted me. The data that was generated during the study varied from the information that was provided by the DBE. This data from the DBE included the inaccurate learner numbers and the recommended language of learning and teaching. This had a tremendous impact on getting the school ready as initial planning, based on DBE data, had to change when we were confronted with the operational reality.

Our work during the first few months also highlighted the DBE's complete under-preparedness for opening a new school. The department knew since 2010 that they would open a new school in that area but no resources were available when the school opened in 2012. The DBE failed in its responsibility to provide the basic learning materials, as well as the intellectual, physical and social support that was required to ensure that the school would function effectively. These supports are essential to create the enabling conditions for learning and teaching to take place. Much of our time and energy were spent on numerous engagements with officials at various levels of the DBE through meetings, protest actions or memoranda. These energies could have been better used in the running of the school and

implementation of its programmes. No one, in the DBE, wanted to take responsibility for this failure. It is very difficult to place blame on one official as the findings show that we interacted with so many different officials. Although this failure of the DBE to deliver was frustrating at most times, it did galvanize us into action.

The fact that we regarded ourselves as a community school that was proactive in addressing the challenges to education, played a huge role in ensuring that the school achieved some measure of functionality and did not transcend into chaos during those first few months. As a school, we became resilient and relied on human capital to ensure that we were able to survive. These collective actions ranged from the teachers, who were unpaid for quite a few months, using their own money to buy basic resources, to parents bringing food from home to start the feeding scheme and the classroom cleaners bringing their own brooms and buckets from home to clean the classrooms. This commitment underscores the importance of building a network of support around children and schools, especially in situations where the key partner responsible for providing the resources and support to schools fails to effectively deliver on its mandate. It is also important to note that these partnerships should not be seen as a substitute for the responsibilities of the DBE, rather, they are meant to complement and strengthen the work in schools (Bouffard & Weiss, 2008). Confronted with the challenges we faced as we started the school, we became a resilient schooling community (Prew, 2009).

The importance of me moving away from the initial authoritarian approach to a more collaborative system of working became crucial in creating a school where everyone feels responsible for solving the problems that impact on our ability to deliver quality public education in an effective running school (Witten, 2006; Noguera, 2003).

The way the school was managed informed the way the systems of operation had to be set up in order for us to run an effective school. The primary measurement for effectiveness, according to the DBE, would be the Whole School Development model (Province of the Eastern Cape, Department of Education, 2005). Christie, et al (2007) further identified some extra key characteristics of schools that work. Most of the energies went into setting up the systems to make the school an effectively running school, under challenging conditions, but I would argue that we managed to meet the key characteristics as identified by Christie et al in their report:

- *they had a management team that focused on the key tasks of learning and teaching*  
We were able to keep to the key task of teaching and learning although we did not manage to implement the First Additional Language in the Foundation Phase. I would argue that this resulted mainly from the lack of academic and material support from the DBE and my inability to create an effective balance between system and instructional core (as highlighted by one of the teachers in the focus group, when she said I had to spend more time in the classroom).
- *they carried their tasks out with competence* - We carried out the majority of our tasks with competence and confidence and as one of the officials of the DBE commented, when they visited the school, it seemed as if the school was in operation for years.
- *they had developed school cultures that supported work ethic, expected achievement and acknowledged success* - The development of a value driven culture among all stakeholders of the school, supported the creation of these systems. Although the focus of the study was not on learner achievement and did not measure this, the feedback from external stakeholders and parent stakeholders, on the teaching and learning culture is testament to the work done during this time.

- *there were strong accountability systems in place* - The creation of a learning organisation allowed us to move from an initial one-man show, when the school opened, to having an organisation truly owned in all facets by the stakeholders involved in it. This lays the foundation for developing an accountability system in the school.

This success and sustainability of this perceived effectiveness will however be tested as a new leader will assume the position of principal at the school. I have requested a meeting with the new principal and SGB of the school to facilitate this transition of leadership, as I think it would be important for the new leader to understand the key values that underpinned the establishment of the school and its systems.

We were effective and resilient because we were able to adapt our programmes and systems to meet the needs of our environment, a key aspect identified by Prew (2009) in his study of effective township schools in South Africa. This would not however have been possible without the support of numerous stakeholders.

### **5.3 Stakeholders**

The findings show that a diverse group of stakeholders formed an essential part of this effective community school. We discovered that a broad range of stakeholders got involved in the school for a variety of reasons. These findings support the view of Foskett (in Lumby, 2003) that stakeholder relationships are exchange based. All stakeholders benefited in some way by their involvement in the school, and the school was the major beneficiary of the support and assistance by these stakeholders at various levels. The findings of the study allow me to highlight two categories of stakeholders and their relationships to the school.

### **5.3.1 Internal stakeholder**

The internal school stakeholders are not only the teachers and parents. As the study shows, the community felt that because the school was located in their geographic area, it did not only belong to parents of the school but they all shared in the ownership. The exchange based relationships, with the community based partners, were built around the values of trust, honour and respect. The leader of the garden project reflected on this in the focus group, when she said that because their role was regarded as equally important to that of the rest of volunteers, it made them feel valued. Everyone's role and contribution was acknowledged as being equally important for serving the core business of the school (Witten, 2006).

The exchange based relationships with community volunteers was that in return for their services, the school would explore programmes that would offer them material support and skills development. The community volunteers were exposed to a variety of opportunities that included training programmes from the institution of higher learning, on site job experience, job creation opportunities and eventually all of them receiving a monthly financial allowance through a government sponsored programme. In return, these community volunteers offered a broad range of support to the school that varied from nutritional support to teacher support in the classroom. The opportunities for these volunteers would not have materialized if it was not for the assistance of outside stakeholders.

### **5.3.2 External stakeholders**

The second category of stakeholders fall outside of the geographic location of the school but are key partners for accessing resources for the school and the community. The relationship that we built here was mutually beneficial to all. The relationship also varied in commitment and expectations with regard to each of these external stakeholders. When companies

donated, we supplied them with letters of endorsement confirming their involvement in the school, especially for the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) score card. These stakeholders were attracted to the school because of the variety of programmes that the school offered that included health, education, skills development and the creation of job opportunities. In other cases we made presentations at functions of these companies, as was the case of the agency that donated goods towards our volunteer projects. In another instance, a company that made a donation required our assistance at another school that was struggling to get the community involved in its projects.

The faith-based organisations got involved because they wanted to establish a relationship with the school as part of their faith based agenda and we sent them thank you letters.

We were able to support the research and community outreach agenda of the local university and through our involvement in the school network, which is based at this institution, we were able to acquire much needed ICT equipment. The research around Grade R assisted the practitioners and teachers in gaining valuable training on the use of resources as well as teaching methodologies. The school also received a donation of books that was facilitated by a member of staff from the institution.

School A actually became a major external stakeholder during the initial establishment of School B. School A did not only lend material support, but teachers from School A assisted teachers of School B with academic projects. We were able to use of the resources of School A in the administrative, academic and community involvement aspects of the new school. This notion of clustering or partnering with other schools is thus an essential stakeholder aspect of an effective school.

The involvement of both the internal and external stakeholders also brought about its own set of challenges for the school.

### **5.3.3 Challenges**

There was a constant challenge to keep the community volunteers motivated and engaged but the incentives helped a great deal in this, although they only materialized after seven months. This was important because many of the volunteers came with hope to the school, but hope alone does not fill a stomach. So in the absence of initial material benefits, it also took a lot of explanation and patience to show these volunteers how they were benefiting in the form of job experience. We also acknowledged the contribution they were making by bringing invaluable knowledge to the school.

The challenge of protecting the professional space also emerged in the findings. This was in particular reference to clearly defining the different roles of all participating stakeholders in the school. The school was seen as a space for the unemployed in the community to create opportunity for themselves, and the community was seen as a stakeholder to support the work of the school. I had to ensure that the balance was created between these two communities in the school. The lessons from School A have taught me that tensions are a natural part of engagement when schools open up their doors to the community. A teacher suggested that these tensions could have been avoided if I called the teachers and volunteers together in one meeting where the roles could have been clearly defined, thus eliminating some of these tensions. As part of my reflective praxis I realise that I should have been doing this even at School A but these are some of the lessons that I will be taking away from the school. I will also be facilitating such a meeting before I leave School B.



We also had to be mindful of those stakeholders who wanted to make use of the school to advance their own agendas. These included certain NGOs' who wanted to boost their numbers to get government funding, by indicating that they were working at our school but who were in fact doing little or no work at all. Then we had the financial institutions and insurance companies who all came under the guise of wanting to assist to 'empower' the new teaching work force around future financial planning. These became our 'unwilling' stakeholders because we charged them a fee to do presentations to staff. This allowed the school to acquire much needed resources. The lessons learnt here is that the relationship should never be one sided and to the detriment of the other party.

In conclusion, the identification and engagement with these various stakeholders were important in providing the assistance that Witten (2006) and others argue is needed to be able to support the core responsibility of learning and teaching in a school faced with complex realities.

#### **5.4 Professional Development**

The literature shows that relevant and effective professional development is an essential element of a good school (Steyn, 2012; Tilman, 2005). Although most literature points to the professional development of the teaching staff, it was clear that in a community school, this professional development needs to extend to the community volunteers involved in the school as well. This will be crucial if schools would want to improve the level of involvement of these stakeholders in the school.

Steyn (2012) and Tilman (2005) argue that professional development, especially for staff members, needs to be on-going in order for teachers to deal with the myriad of challenges

they face on a daily basis. The findings of this study show that this would also be true for the community volunteers involved in the school. We involved a number of community volunteers in helping with the more complex tasks of running the school and dealing with the educational challenges. Most of the professional development that was done in the study was initially identified, initiated and conducted by myself. The knowledge I gained at School A allowed me to facilitate much of the initial development, which supports Tilman (2005) view that principals should play a leading role in the professional development of their staff. I am of the opinion that continual professional development of volunteers and professional staff would be needed. The development can eventually be taken over by competent internal trainers whose capacity can be enhanced by external stakeholders as well as by virtue of the work being done in the school.

As staff became more competent they managed to assist one another in tasks and peer development started to take place. Given the space and opportunity created by the learning culture of the organization, many staff members were able to engage with some of the challenges that confronted them. The school eventually evolved from me identifying the development needs of the teachers, to them identifying their own needs. According to Steyn 2012, this self-awareness is an important component of professional development.

The same process of progressing to eventually take ownership was also applicable to the various volunteer groups. In community school models advocated by the WHO (Vince Whitman & Aldinger, 2009) and UNICEF (UNICEF, 2009), and the example of this study, it becomes clear that professional development for all the stakeholders involved in the school is important. This should be ongoing and relevant to their work.

In hindsight, I do not think that we would have been able to establish the school if it was not for the support of all these stakeholders. I recognize that the community volunteers were the most important stakeholder that contributed to the establishment of the school. However, I contend that the involvement of the stakeholders would not have been successful in the absence of a caring school culture.

### **5.5 Creating a Caring School Culture**

In this study, all the stakeholders agreed that they could best work in an environment that was caring and valued what they did. The nature of the challenges that confronted us necessitated the development of a culture that was supportive and values driven. It placed an emphasis on the importance of relationships and the building of trust, as many people were involved in the school and were entrusted to carry out the tasks assigned to them.

Although there were challenges in managing such a large community in one space and tensions emerged, this is a natural part of engagement in a community school (Christie 2012, Ncoko on Education, East London on the 6-7 November 2012). Instead of focusing too much on the tensions, we focused on developing processes to resolve them. In this study these tensions were resolved through meetings, counselling, and confronting and disciplining, which represented all the key elements when dealing with social capital (Smylie & Evans, 2006).

The study also made me aware of the role played by the school principal in shaping this culture. This shaping was done by backing up my talk with purposeful action. So from carrying desks to classrooms at the beginning of the year to being a learner of the new cultural dynamics that I was exposed to, my involvement became an important part of

shaping the culture. Although I made quite a few mistakes, the process of PALAR allowed me use them as opportunities for learning that not only developed me but also grew the organization (Tilman, 2005). Reflecting on my work and research during the study, I believe that the culture that emerged was one of caring, compassion, and openness to learning. This was important in creating the conditions for the effective functioning of the school.

### **5.6 Meeting the Requirements of a Community School Model**

The findings that emerge would put a strong case forward that the school, in this case study, met most of the requirements for it to be called a Health Promoting School and a Safe and Caring Child School, (Vince Whitman & Aldinger, 2009; UNICEF, 2009). This was made possible by using the social capital to create the village, called school, that not only took care of the child but also looked at the empowerment of the community from which these children came. This finding then will strongly support the School Based Complementary Learning Framework, which argues that we need to address the issues that emerge from the context of the school in order for effective learning and teaching to take place (Witten, 2006).

### **5.7. Limitations of the Study**

This study has a few limitations. I was very mindful that my role of principal and researcher might have influenced the outcome of the study, as authority carries quite a lot of respect in this community. This was also a single case study and I have to be wary of making generalisations to other schools. However, some of the findings can support the work of schools that are faced with similar challenges to the school in this study. Finally, the study did not attempt to measure the quality of learning and teaching. Instead, it sought to identify and explore the key elements that need to be in place in order to create an enabling environment for effective teaching and learning to occur.

## **5.8 Recommendations**

The following recommendations arose from the findings as a result of the study:

### **5.8.1 Department of Education**

The findings of this study underscore the essential role of the DBE in creating the enabling conditions for schools to function effectively. The state plays the most important role in providing quality public education, and has to ensure that all the support and resources required to achieve this goal are given to schools. In the following section, I make some recommendations about the role of the DBE when establishing and opening new schools.

There should be an integrated infrastructure plan when any new housing development is erected in a particular area. Clear provision should be made in this plan for supporting infrastructure, like schools, roads, clinics and other social structures. The DBE should form an integral part of such a plan as it would be able then to source the demographics as it relates to language and size of the housing settlement, and so forth. This information should then inform the DBE on issues like the size of the school building, the language of instruction for the school, and the staffing. They should also ensure that development of the infra-structure is completed according to a timeline to ensure that all systems are in place when the school is opened. This integrated plan should include the voice of the community in which the school will be located, as well as the voices of the professional staff that will be assigned to the school.

Once a school has been identified to be built in a new housing settlement, I would recommend the following to the DBE based on my findings in this study:

- Ensure that the new school is registered on the data base immediately after approval has been granted to build the school and even before the first brick is laid. This will ensure that the subsequent red tape of procurement and staffing could be more efficiently dealt with.
- Ensure that the capacity of the school will meet the amount of learners that will be relocated to the new housing development.
- Ensure that all the bureaucratic procedures necessary for opening a new school are in place at least a year before the school is opened, including:
  - Registering the school officially and assigning an EMIS number
  - Ensuring that every section in the DBE is aware of the school opening and assigning the opening to an interdisciplinary task team that will be able to address all the material needs of the school
  - Ensuring that all resources have arrived before the first day of school
  - Having a budget available six months before the school opens, in order to deal with the operational costs
  - Appointing a principal while the school is still in construction and if possible, six months before the opening of the school. I would not recommend using a principal from an existing school to do this job. I would suggest that the appointed person be twinned with a principal of a school from a similar context, who can mentor and support the new principal.
  - Supporting the appointment process and ensuring that all staff have letters of appointment at least two months before opening, so that they can be given enough time to prepare for the opening
  - Working with the entire staff or at least the school management team a month before schools open so that they can take charge of the registration process as

well as prepare for the organisational management that accompanies such an opening

- Having the curriculum unit open up an office at the school to assist with the orientation if the staff is made up of predominantly new teachers

### **5.8.2 School leadership**

The findings of this study have implications for the training of current and future school leaders. Current training models like the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) places strong emphasis on school management and gives very little attention to the community-based aspects of schooling. Higher Education Training programmes should include more aspects related to the impact of poverty on schooling and how these are managed; the role of the school as an integral part of communities; and how community assets can be used to support the work of schools.

Another important component of such an enhanced principals' development programme would be a course on how to nurture, manage and sustain relationships with diverse stakeholders, which is a common feature of a community school.

Leadership training should also focus on the leader as learner and researcher. The PALAR methodology is the ideal approach to assist with the challenges that will emerge by virtue of the work that has to be done. This methodology is useful because it is grounded in social change and gives voice to all involved in the process. The findings of this study also suggest a deepening of our understanding of the theoretical framework of the community school and its viability as a model for school improvement in South Africa. In this model, leaders develop the capacity to use the social capital of the community because they provide the

cement that will eventually keep the school together. This approach also calls for an investment in these community volunteers, in which they are used to support the school improvement goals. The community volunteers also provide indigenous knowledge that is crucial in developing a deeper understanding of the social processes of schooling and can inform the decision-making processes of the school. The manner in which these volunteers are recruited requires careful thought and should be done in consultation with the staff and broader community structures.

### **5.8.3 Teachers**

Teacher training should also place a greater emphasis on how teachers deal with issues of health, hunger and abuse that often come up in the classroom and affect the teaching and learning processes. In this regard I would also argue for a rethink in the way teachers are trained. We have to train teachers for the contextual realities that they will face when they start teaching, especially if an assumption can be made, at this stage of the history of our country, that many new teachers will be teaching in a very similar context to that of the study. An argument could even be put forward for a retraining of practicing teachers because many of them were not trained to deal with the complexities that confront many of our schools today. These complexities range from academic change, policies reviews to the more complex challenges of engaging with some of the social problems in education. Institutions of higher learning should be aware of the diverse nature of schools in the different communities, so that they could feed into this training and schools could inform the training.



## **5.9 Further research**

This study has attempted to identify some of the key elements that need to be present to make schools effective, especially in the context of challenging conditions. I do believe that further research is required and would suggest a continued focus on the following areas:

### **5.9.1 Model of the community school**

In the context of the multiple challenges facing many diverse communities in South Africa, more research is required into alternative approaches to schooling that will respond to the contextual realities of these communities.

### **5.9.2 Stakeholders and schooling**

I would also recommend further research about the role of families and other stakeholders in supporting and developing schools in promoting the quality of learning and teaching, especially in the context of schools similar to the one in this study. This study has attempted to make a contribution in broadening our understanding of the important roles the different stakeholders play in the school and their contributions to making it function effectively.

## **5.10 Study Summary**

The main research question focused on some of the key elements that need to be present when opening an effective community school. The study used the School Based Complementary Learning Framework as a theoretical framework to approach this study. The limitation of this study was that no data was generated to determine if the key elements that were identified actually improved the quality of teaching and learning.

The study also wanted to ensure that the voices that contributed towards the opening and effective running of the school were heard. The process of data collection allowed me to give voice to this key objective, as the focus groups allowed stakeholders to share their views. The journaling process allowed for both descriptive and reflective opportunities for me as a researcher and participant. The use of other documents and artifacts lent itself to the richness of these findings.

The themes identified in the research questions guided me through the study and subsequent sub themes that emerged added value to the findings of this study. The study allowed, as one parent reflected, the two schooling communities to give voice to what they thought these key elements should be. Teachers, parents and community volunteers became the strongest voices, alongside my own, that emerged in this study. Each stakeholder's view brought a unique perspective to the richness of the findings and it is the harmonizing of these perspectives that will propel the school towards the direction of being able to qualify itself as being an effective community school, not only measured against the scale of academic achievement, but also in the pursuit of social justice for the community it serves (Berkhout, 2007).

My own preconceived ideas as a leader were challenged throughout the course of the study and I experienced tremendous growth and learning that I know will contribute towards improving my praxis at School A. This learning was enhanced by the action research methodology that was followed. The participatory action learning and action research was evident throughout the study as we navigated through known and unknown areas. This methodology was also important as it allowed the pursuit of addressing the everyday issues that confronted the school (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). The learning started from the moment I

was approached to open the school and I now realize that it will continue on a daily basis. As we engage in the process of trying to establish new schools , we do not only pursue academic excellence, we also pursue a broader agenda of addressing those social issues that impact on the quality of education, especially in poor and marginalised communities (Ncobo & Tikly, 2010; Noguera, 2003; Witten, 2006).

The importance of creating good schools in especially new housing developments cannot be emphasized enough. With these expanded housing developments comes the need for social infrastructure to effectively serve these communities. A good community school, that serves the holistic needs of the children and empowers and develops communities, remains one of the most valuable models for schooling in township and rural communities in South Africa. It deserves more recognition and support from the DBE and other stakeholders in the education field. This study has attempted to highlight these possibilities.

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## APPENDIX A



Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**  
EDUCATION

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**Port Elizabeth District**

Ethel Valentine Building • Sutton Road • Sidwell • Port Elizabeth • Eastern Cape  
Private Bag X3931 • North End • Port Elizabeth • 6056 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
Tel: +27 (0)41-4034400 • Fax: +27 (0)41-4510193 • Website: [www.ecdoe.gov.za](http://www.ecdoe.gov.za)

Enquiries: Dr Nyathi Ntsiko

Email: [nyathi.ntsiko@edu.ecprov.gov.za](mailto:nyathi.ntsiko@edu.ecprov.gov.za)

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**Mr B. Damons**

**Researcher  
c/o Dr A.L Witten**

**Director:** Centre for the Community School  
Missionvale Campus  
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Unit  
E-mail: [allistair.witten@nmmu.ac.za](mailto:allistair.witten@nmmu.ac.za)

Dear Mr B. Damons

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN DEPARTMENTAL SCHOOLS:  
PORT ELIZABETH**

Title of dissertation: Navigating the pathways to the opening of a new community school in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality.

I refer to your letter dated 20 June 2012.

Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct your research on the following conditions:

1. Your research must be conducted on a voluntary basis.
2. All ethical issues relating to research must be honoured.
3. Your research is subject to the internal rules of the school, including its curricular programme and its code of conduct and must not interfere in the day-to-day routine of the school.

Kindly present a copy of the letter to the principal as proof of permission

I wish you good luck in your research.

Yours faithfully

**DR NYATHI NTSIKO  
DISTRICT DIRECTOR: PORT ELIZABETH**

/ag

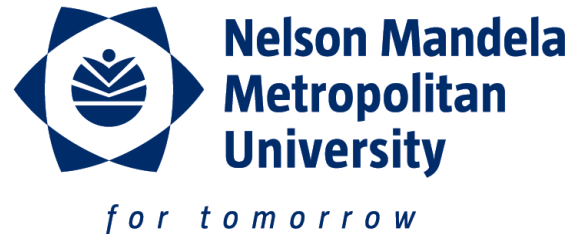
26 June 2012

building blocks for growth



*Ikamva eliqaqambileyo!*

**APPENDIX B**



**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

Tel . +27 (0)41 504 2125

Fax. +27 (0)41 504 9383

12 September 2012  
Mr BP Damons / Dr A Witten  
Education Faculty  
NMMU

Dear Mr Damons / Dr Witten

**WHAT DO STAKEHOLDERS VIEW AS THE KEY ELEMENTS THAT SHOULD BE PRESENT WHEN OPENING A NEW COMMUNITY SCHOOL IN THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY? A CASE STUDY.**

Your above-entitled application for ethics approval was approved by the Faculty Research, Technology and Innovation Committee of Education (ERTIC) meeting on 16 August 2012.

We take pleasure in informing you that the application was approved by the Committee.

The ethics clearance reference number is **H12-EDU-CPD-026**.

We wish you well with the project. Please inform your co-investigators of the outcome, and convey our best wishes.

Yours sincerely

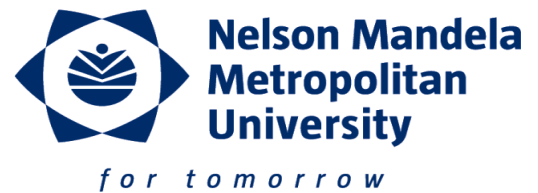
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Elliott-Gentry", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Ms J Elliott-Gentry**  
**Secretary: ERTIC**

## APPENDIX C

*SGB Consent Form Page 1*

• PO Box 77000 • Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University  
• Port Elizabeth • 6031 • South Africa • [www.nmmu.ac.za](http://www.nmmu.ac.za)



**Research Project: What do stakeholders view as the key elements that should be present when opening a new community school in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality? A case study.**

### **SGB Consent Form**

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the School Governing Body of Alfonso Arries, give consent for you to conduct research using our school as a case study, keep a journal, conduct the focus group and use documents that you might need to enhance your research. We further grant you permission to use the name of the school in the study.

I have read the Project Information Statement explaining the purpose of the research project and understand that:

- The role of the school is voluntary
- I may decide to withdraw the school's participation at any time without penalty
- School stakeholders will be invited to participate in the study.
- All information obtained will be treated in strictest confidence.
- The stakeholders' names will not be used.
- The school will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.
- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- A report of the findings will be made available to the school.
- I may seek further information on the project from Bruce Damons 0824556422

\_\_\_\_\_  
SGB Chairperson Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
SGB Secretary Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX D

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• Port Elizabeth • 6031 • South Africa • www.nmmu.ac.za



### APPENDIX 2B

## STAKEHOLDER CONSENT FORM

**Research Project: What do stakeholders view as the key elements that should be present when opening a new community school in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality? A case study.**

**Researcher:** Bruce Damons

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above study.


Please tick box  
Yes No

4. I agree to the interview being audio/video recorded.
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.


Stakeholder Consent Form

1



Bigail Grouma      19/10/12        
Name of Participant      Date      Signature

Stakeholder Group: Administrator

Bruce Damons      19/10/12        
Name of Researcher      Date      Signature

## **APPENDIX E**

# **Curriculum Vitae of Bruce Peter Damons**

**2012**

### **Personal Details**

Full name Bruce Peter Damons

Occupation Principal, Sapphire Road Primary/Alfonso Arries Primary

Nationality South African

Identity Number 6707315146088

Marital Status Married

Health Excellent

Language English and Afrikaans

Home Address 211 Mountview Drive, Malabar, Port Elizabeth, 6020

Home Telephone Number (041) 4574664

Cellular Telephone Number 0824556422

Work Telephone Number (041) 4831878

Work Fax Number (041) 4831483

Drivers License Code EB

Email bpdamons@vodamail.co.za

### **Management and Technical Competencies**

Human Resource Management

Innovative Curriculum Adaptation and Implementation

Compiling and Management of Budgets

Management of the processes to secure consumables, LSM and infrastructural maintenance

Experience in programme planning, development, implementation and assessment.

Management of Academic as well as Social Development programmes.

Skills training and experience in conflict resolution.

Competency as a facilitator of strategic thinking and planning sessions.

Creative problem solving skills.

Excellent interpersonal skills and consultative decision-making style.

Excellent networking skills.

Skills training facilitator.

Computerised administrative skills.

Proposal writing

## **Education**

### **Institution NMMU**

Course MEd – 2012- Center For Community Schools (currently enrolled)

Topic: What do stakeholders view as the key elements that should be present when opening a new community school in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality, a case study?

### **Institution NMMU**

Course Bed Honours (Cum Laude) – WSD - 2010 – 2011

Focus Areas Curriculum Development

School Management

Helping Skills & Techniques

Teaching/Learning in Multilingual Contexts

School Improvement Programmes

Teaching – Learning Strategies

Educational problems within Social context

Research in Education

Child Development

Effective Schools

**Institution NMMU**

Course ACE - 2004 to 2006 (Complete)

Focus Areas Issues in management of Schools

Organisational Theory & Practise

Evaluation & Assessment

Human Resource Development

Principles and Practises of Educational Management

Schools and the Law

**Institution University of the Western Cape**

Diploma obtained Secondary Teacher's Diploma STD (1989)

Psychology 3, History 2

Institution Vista University – Port Elizabeth

Qualification LLB (u) First Year - 1998

Courses Completed Communication Skills 100

Constitutional Law 100

Family Law 100

Introduction of Legal Systems 100

Introduction of Law 100

Legal Skills 100

Law Persons 100

## **Matriculation Paterson High School,**

Port Elizabeth

1985

Other programmes OBE courses, various Leadership and Labour training courses dealing with Principalship and Negotiations, Life Skills Workshops, Financial Management etc.

PEP – Principal Enrichment Programme on Leadership – General Motors Foundation

### **Employment History**

**Current:** Principal of Sapphire Road Primary since February 2000 to date & Caretaker

Principal Alfonso Arries Primary School - 2012

### **Organisational Achievements since 2000**

#### **a. School , Organisation, Administration and Curriculum**

- Convening of two successful policy conferences in 2000 and 2007 to chart a 5-year vision.  
Participants in conferences - parents, teachers and members of civil society, Sapphire Road Primary
- Development of strong sense of school ownership among parents, teachers ,learners and broader community
- Growth of school from 516 learners in 2000 to 1050 in 2010
- Turn financial deficit, at assumption of duty, to a present positive bank balance
- First school to declare itself a no school fee school in 2006
- One of the fist schools to institute a joint School Management Team with representatives from Post Level 1 on it
- Computerising school administration

- Introduction of an innovative reading programme that is aligned to NCS. Seen a marked improvement in reading skills of learners, especially slower learners.
- The building of two security houses on premises of school. Both houses built by community volunteers.
- Pilot school in international teaching training programme – PEER
- Participated in Faculty of Education (NMMU) Curriculum Renewal Workshop 2011
- Presented leadership input for principals, SGBs and teachers (NMMU)
- Invited to lecture NMMU students on community schooling 2011 - 2012

**b. International , National, Provincial, Recognition and Links**

- Cofounded international reading research programme , Partners for Education, Excellence and Research(PEER).
- Strong International, National, Provincial and Local network in business, social and politics
- The twining of our school with schools in Seattle, USA and Netherlands
- International Fundraising for school based projects.
- Visited Seattle, USA in 2003 and 2004 as part of Principal Exchange programme
- Instrumental in encouraging University of Washington to relocate some of its programme from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth. Programmes were run in Walmer Township, Red Location Museum and schools in Active Schools. Hosted many other departments as well.
- Recipients of Batho Pele award 2005, from Premier’s Office
- International, National, Provincial and Local acknowledgement and recognition for school’s programs

- Declared the best health promoting school in the country. Assessment done by a consultant from the National Department of Health
- Visit by the Deputy President, Phumzile Mlambo Ncuka and The Premier of the Eastern Cape Province in December 2006 to acknowledge programmes of school
- Through Active Schools programme manage to get furniture and computers from Netherlands and Germany
- Attended an international health promoting schools conference, of the World Health Organisation, in 2007.
- Received the National Teaching Award for Excellence in Primary School Leadership, 2008
- Attended a WHO conference in Nairobi Kenya 2009

### **c. Health**

- Establishment of a vibrant HIV/AIDS awareness and counselling programme in partnership with our community. Counselling room operates from our school managed by an NGO called Emmanuel.
- School First Aid training from Germany on how to deal with injuries in work place
- Have a fully functional clinic on the premises of the school that is manned by eleven volunteers and a Doctor that comes in twice a week and provides his services free of charge
- The school is featured in a Swedish DVD production on HIV/AIDS

#### **d. Papers and Conferences**

- Addressed a World Health Organisation (WHO) conference in Vancouver, Canada in 2006. The only South African representative at the conference. – ‘Strengthening the links between the school and the community for a healthy community!’
- Submitted a paper titled – ‘How to get communities involved in schools especially in disadvantaged communities’, to the World Health Organisation (WHO) for an international conference on health promoting schools. Paper published in 2009 in an international research book.
- Invited by Western Cape Education department to address schools in the province 2010
- Invited to address conferences of the departments of Health and Education both at district and provincial level
- Delivered addresses at churches, NGOs and businesses around the success model of the school
- Joint presentation at Manyano launch conference 2010
- Joint presentation, Basic Education Conference in Durban 2012
- Joint presentation Strategies to overcome Poverty and Inequality: Towards Carnegie III Conference, UCT 2012

#### **e. School and the Community**

- Establishment of Skills School which facilitated the training of unemployed members of our community in a basic skill. More than 1000 people trained since 2000.
- School is used by community for church, ABET classes
- Introduced a teacher assistant programme in 2010 from unemployed community members, 31 members recruited



- 2010 in collaboration with a local church and government recruited additional volunteers that perform tasks ranging from security to vegetable gardens.
- 145 volunteers working at both Sapphire and Alfonso Arries, 2012
- Successfully opened a new school in Nelson Mandela Bay 2012

**1 January 1992 – February 2000 – Post Level 1 Educator, Hillside Secondary, Port**

**Elizabeth**

I taught English as an additional language to grades 8 to 12.

**Achievements**

- 100% pass rate in two years of teaching grade 12
- Acting Head of English Department
- Headed sport committee
- Leader of the first SADTU site committee
- Educator representative on SGB
- Leader of Matric Tour committee
- Initiating a school based peer-mentoring programme for matrics.
- Co- Ordinated anti violence programmes with Departmental and Non-Governmental Organisations.
- Served as SADTU's Regional Sport Convenor and Deputy Secretary
- Seconded for a year to the Education Department, to work on redeployment

**1 January 1990 – 31 December 1991 - English Teacher George Schmidt Junior**

**Secondary**

**Achievements**

- Leader of Sport and Discipline Committees

- Served on coordinating committee that worked on unification in school sport (EPSSCO)
- Community based mentoring programme.

### **Community Involvement and Other Leadership Roles**

- Co Founder of Active Schools, organisation open to previously disadvantaged schools trying to adopt the same vision as Sapphire Primary. Assisted in securing funding for Active Schools.
- Instrumental in the launch of EPSSCO
- Co Founder of PEER, based in Seattle, USA, focusing on teacher methodology training
- Administering and running a Basic Skill School for unemployed community members since 2000
- Teaching of basic computer skills at Sapphire Road Primary's Skill School
- Mediator in disputes at schools and assisted in mediation at Jose Pearson TB Hospital
- Ran a major anti xenophobia programme in our area in 2008 that included, an advocacy and appreciation programme at Sapphire , a prayer service on top of a mountain at 3 am, and appreciating Africa concert attended by more than 10 000 people
- Assisted in the formation of the Northern Areas Arts festival, that attracted more than 60000 people over a weekend in 2008
- Volunteer radio presenter on KQFM 2005 – local community radio station
- Appeared on national media both radio and television because of achievements of school
- Leading many community projects and liaise with NGOs and government agencies
- Serve on advisory board of NMMU save our schools project
- Motivational talks at schools, Reserve Bank, Churches and NGOs
- Column writer in The Herald Newspaper and answers question in The Sunday Times
- Co - Founder of Manyano School Network Computer Literacy

**Proficient in:**

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Exampal – School administrative programme
- Software installation
- Microsoft Power Point
- DVD designing
- Internet and e-mail Hobbies

Computers, reading, writing, travelling, debating and golf.

**Referees**

Christian Martin Member of Parliament

Eastern Cape Province

041 4815882 (h)/ 0823092849

GM Naidoo ex District Director – Grahamstown

0842986108 / 0845616304

Julia Sauer EDO School

041 4034400 / 082749564

Dr. Al Witten Director Community Schools, NMMU

0713026200

Dr. Joanne Robbins Principal Morningside Academy, Seattle (PEER Programme)

[joanne@morningsideacademy.org](mailto:joanne@morningsideacademy.org)

**APPENDIX F**



‘Liberating the mind from mental inferiority’

Address:

c/o Coral & Sapphire Road,

Booyesen Park,

Port Elizabeth,

South Africa

6059

Telephone: (041) 4831878

Cell: 0824556422

Fax: (041) 4831483

Email: [sapphireroad@telkomsa.net](mailto:sapphireroad@telkomsa.net)

[bpdamons@vodamail.co.za](mailto:bpdamons@vodamail.co.za)

Website: [www.sapphireprimary.co.za](http://www.sapphireprimary.co.za)



## **1. SAPPHIRE ROAD PRIMARY – AN OVERVIEW**

Sapphire Road Primary is situated in Booyesen Park, Port Elizabeth, South Africa but it mainly services the disadvantaged areas of Kleinskool, Kwanoxolo, Frans Valley, Greenfields, Pola Park and the Nceba Faku Village.

Our learner population has grown from *559 in 2001 to 1230 in 2011*. We have grade R to grade 7.

Our challenges have increased because 90% of our parents are unemployed.

We adopted a policy that ensures that no child is excluded from a school because of school fees. The School Governing Body therefore took a courageous decision, in 2005, to abolish school fees and to fundraise instead. In 2010 we were officially declared a no school fee by the Department of Education.

The school not only focuses on educating learners but the capacitating of our parents and the community at large, with skills that would be beneficial to the individual, community and school in general.

Sapphire Road Primary shares the vision of Government, Business and the Education Department which is to ensure that our schools not only become centres of academic excellence but serves as catalyst for social and economic change in previously disadvantaged communities.

The Objectives and Vision of our School can only be achieved with the assistance of Government, Business, Community, Social Partners and the School.

### **HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE**

Some of the notable achievements of the five-year vision plotted in 2000 are the following:

## **ACADEMIC**

- ❖ Our teachers are part of an international pilot programme that focuses on improvement of best teaching practices.
- ❖ Introduction of new reading and health approach in 2008.
- ❖ Integrating the personal wellness of learners into the learning process.
- ❖ Use of volunteer unemployed parents in the classroom with teachers.
- ❖ No school fees since 2006.
- ❖ Strong extra mural programmes that include, rugby, soccer, netball, mini cricket, hockey, choir and arts and culture
- ❖ Exposing learners to field trips
- ❖ Constant training and retraining in programmes related to the curriculum

## **SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

- ❖ Training of unemployed youth and parents in basic skills like welding, computer literacy, sewing and carpentry. The school has trained more than 1000 unemployed members of the community, through the skills programme.
- ❖ The building of two security houses on the premises of the school using bricks that were made by unemployed parents. The homeless families that live in these houses stay for free and in return they look after the security of the school. No vandalism since 2003
- ❖ The fitting of security gates, to protect the school, by unemployed parents, trained at our skill school.
- ❖ Repairs to school furniture and securing of neighboring schools buildings, using our skill school.
- ❖ Making of our entire sport kit by the sewing section of the skills school.
- ❖ Moral regeneration programme included as part of skills development
- ❖ Opening of an accredited training center for the unemployed, on the premises of the school that will train the unemployed from 10 other communities.
- ❖ ABET classes for parents to teach reading skills. Launched in 2007.

## **HEALTH**

- ❖ The unveiling of an AIDS ribbon at the entrance of the school and our piloting of the 'We Care', HIV/AIDS awareness programme with FAMSA.
- ❖ The opening of a counselling centre on the premises of the school to help the community deal with social issues confronting them, including HIV/AIDS. The centre is manned by peer counsellors that do advocacy as well as home base care.
- ❖ The establishment of two vegetable gardens on the school. The produce from this garden is shared between the people that work the garden, those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS and the school.
- ❖ Ran a pilot sweet potato project that provides an income for unemployed parents.
- ❖ Regular health talks by local clinics and NGOs' that focus on prevention and cure. e.g. TB, nutrition, substance abuse etc.
- ❖ In 2006 we started building a clinic and a counseling room on the premises of the school. This is done by parent volunteers and the clinic will service the community and school. The clinic was official opened on the 19 February 2007. 10 Parent volunteers and a supervising doctor volunteer in the clinic. The supervisor of the clinic is a retired nurse that volunteers her services free of charge. The school has run a number of campaigns and launched the measles immunization campaign for the city, TB tests for the community and all the learners and teachers, general health check up for learners and teachers.
- ❖ Personal wellness programmes for teachers. etc. fabric painting, meditation, stress coping mechanisms.
- ❖ Mass TB testing programme on premises of school

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- ❖ The opening of a gym by the weightlifting association of South Africa to promote weightlifting development in the area. Two of the learners from these classes won gold medals at the national Weightlifting championships in 2005.



- ❖ School is used by five different churches, from the surrounding, to hold services over weekends.
- ❖ Addressed the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2006, in Vancouver Canada, on health promotion in school.
- ❖ Was assessed to be the best health promoting school in the country.
- ❖ Recognition for work done by The President of the country as well as receiving the Batho Pele award from the Premier of the Province. School visited by the Deputy President of our country in 2006
- ❖ Founding member of Active Schools, working with 11 other disadvantage schools to ensure that they adopt the same vision expounded by our school.
- ❖ Have developed outreach programmes with other feeder communities that include advocacy as well as development programmes.
- ❖ The school adopted parent and teacher charters that recommit us to providing quality education to the most vulnerable sector of society.
- ❖ Received a Provincial education award in 2008.
- ❖ Received the National Education Award for Excellence in Primary School leadership in 2008.
- ❖ Opening of The House of Hope, 2010, on the premises of the school that will focuses on remedial intervention during the day and during the evening will act as a place of safety for those children that feel threatened in the community.
- ❖ Recruitment of 92 volunteers, supported by a local church, DTI in 2010 that work in various areas of the school including:
  - Teacher Assistants
  - Day and night security
  - Administration volunteers
  - Computer trainers
  - Orphaned and vulnerable children volunteers
  - Vegetable garden
  - Clinic
  - Plumber
  - Painter
  - Grass cutter

- Sewing

## **VISION**

**To ensure that the school is used as a base that educate ours learners and also provides the opportunity for development of parents and the community. This can be done if the school serves as the centre of educational and social transformation.**

## **2. RATIONALE BEHIND PROGRAMMES**

We have adopted the vision that our school should be the center of all community, social and academic upliftment. In order to achieve this we have made sure that our programmes reflect this vision. This vision is needed if we want to be able to tackle the various challenges that confront us daily.

### **Academic**

- ❖ Ultimate objective of the school; however because of our challenges we want to use this tool as a mechanism to 'liberate the mind from mental inferiority'.
- ❖ Encourage educator learning at a local, national and international level.
- ❖ Recognise the fact that no constructive learning and teaching can take place if no stable social and educational environment exists.
- ❖ Ensure that we develop all our learners holistically.

### **Skills Development**

- ❖ Critical for school growth is the growth of the community surrounding the school.
- ❖ High levels of unemployment contribute to many of the evils of society.
- ❖ School has the infrastructure to make a meaningful difference not only in the lives of our learners but in the lives of the community they come from.
- ❖ Communities tend to respect institutions more that make meaningful contribution to their development.

- ❖ Unemployed acquire a basic skill that they then can use for themselves or the benefit of the school.
- ❖ Skill school is presented on the premises of the school.

## **HEALTH**

- ❖ Have learners and parents living with the virus.
- ❖ Government needs assistance with challenging the pandemic.
- ❖ Only way to defeat the ignorance around the pandemic is by constantly running capacity building programmes.
- ❖ Link between ignorance of health issues and health challenges experienced by communities
- ❖ The clinic on the school will allow us to monitor the health of our infected families as well as to deal with some of the other health issues that we are confronted with on a daily basis.

## **Community Outreach**

- ❖ Important that the school plays a central role in the development of the community in general.

## APPENDIX G

memo

Faculty of Education

### Centre for the Community School (CSS)

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• Port Elizabeth • 6031 • South Africa • www.nmmu.ac.za



**Nelson Mandela  
Metropolitan  
University**

*f o r t o m o r r o w*

September, 2011

Report

### **The Manyano Network of Community Schools: Proposed Programme of Action for School Improvement**

#### **1. Introduction**

Over the past few months, CCS has convened a series of meetings and workshops with principals of the 12 schools in the Manyano Network. These sessions focused on achieving the following goals:

- To establish a structured and self-directed community of practice among schools in the Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage areas that regard themselves as community schools.
- To define the relationship between CCS and the Manyano Network. This includes clarifying the functions of CCS as part of the Education Faculty at NMMU, and the nature of the relationship between CCS and the Manyano Network.
- To identify the activities of the Manyano Network that would constitute a programme of action for school improvement.

This report describes some of the work that CCS has been involved in over the past months and highlights the activities that schools in the network will participate in over the next few years. CCS would like to present this programme of action to members of the Faculty of Education as well as the other faculties and departments at NMMU, and explore ways of engagement that are aligned with the Education Faculty's vision and mission. It is important to note here that this is a proposed programme and the schools will welcome new ideas, insights, and recommendations that may enhance the programme.

CCS would like to draw on Faculty expertise that is relevant to the areas identified in the following section to design and implement a programme for schools in the Manyano Network. This programme will incorporate the key CCS activities of teaching, internships, school improvement programmes, and research.

## **2. The Manyano Programme of Action for School Improvement**

Recognizing that their schools operate in complex and challenging social environments, principals in the network have adopted a multi-pronged strategic approach to school improvement that focuses on the holistic development of the child. This programme of action has the following core elements:

### **2.1 *Curriculum Development***

The Manyano Network subscribes to the notion that teaching and learning remain the core processes that define the work of the school. As such, it centralises the focus on instruction and builds the other aspects of school improvement around this. These aspects, which are both directly and indirectly related to the instructional core, are aligned in a coherent system of activities that are aimed at supporting and strengthening the teaching and learning processes.

Schools in the network also subscribe to some of national priorities around school improvement that have been identified by the National Department of Basic Education. In particular, they are interested in the Annual National Assessments around literacy and numeracy and the call made by the Minister of Basic Education to develop action plans for improvement in these two areas.

The key focus of the network's activities over the next few years will therefore be on strengthening literacy and numeracy in their schools. Schools in the Uitenhage area of the network will be working in clusters to build a feeder school "literacy continuum" that will connect early childhood initiatives to grade R, primary, and high schools for children moving through the feeder schools. The following questions will guide the design of an intervention like this:

- What are the proficiencies that children should have in literacy at the various stages of their socio-cognitive development that will adequately equip them to move to the next phase of schooling?

- What kinds of professional development and support will teachers need to enable them to effectively prepare learners to be proficient in literacy during the different phases of schooling?
- What role can other education stakeholders (parents, community-based organizations, libraries, etc.) play in helping to achieve this goal?
- How do we measure progress in terms of achieving this goal?

## **2.2 Capacity-building**

An initiative to focus on strengthening literacy and numeracy in schools can best be supported by creating the “enabling conditions” within the school environment, where the elements of school organization and structures, the efficient allocation of resources, and school culture are all aligned to create the conditions that are conducive to effective teaching and learning. Research is clear that good school leadership, at all levels of the system, is an essential element in any effort to improve schooling outcomes.

The Manyano Network has identified the following areas in which capacity-building is required:

- Leadership and Management training for principals and deputies. This intervention will focus on developing a systems-wide leadership approach to supporting the core curriculum focus on literacy and numeracy. It will also include the design of a quality assurance instrument for community schools.
- Leadership and Management training for School Management Teams (SMTs), especially as it relates to school functionality that incorporates both school-based operations and external programmes that are integrated into the school’s activities.
- Governance Training (including the financial management of community schools) for School Governing Body (SGB) members.
- Training for parents and establishing community-led initiatives to support literacy and numeracy in schools.

While training for teachers in literacy and numeracy remains central to this initiative, the school principals also emphasised the importance of providing broader support to them in terms of wellness programmes etc. An envisaged activity is a one day Teachers Summit titled: *“Teachers – Our Assets: The role of teachers in community schools”*

### **2.3 Psychosocial support for learners**

As leaders of community schools, the principals recognise the need to address some of the social challenges that often affect learner performance in the school and classroom. They identified the importance of building a network of support around learners, especially those more vulnerable to the effects of poverty and inequality. Some essential elements in establishing a learner support system include:

- Helping teachers to identify some of the learning needs and building their capacity to address these needs.
- Assistance in testing learners with special needs.
- Establishing multi-disciplinary student intern teams from NMMU who will work with learners around issues relating to physical and mental well-being, social services, career counselling, etc. These teams would comprise students from the faculties and departments of Education, Health, Psychology, Social Work, and the Community Development unit. They will work closely with teachers in identifying the learners. They will also work with their faculty advisors in designing appropriate interventions and supervised internship projects that are carefully coordinated and bring benefits to the NMMU student, the learner, and the school.
- Assistance to teachers in dealing with learner discipline at school.

### **2.4 School Infrastructure**

The Manyano Network identified school infrastructure and facilities as a major challenge to creating an enabling environment in which effective teaching and learning can occur. The principals suggested an “Infrastructure audit” of the buildings of all the Manyano schools. This audit can be part of a project undertaken by students from the schools of Architecture, Engineering, and the Built Environment. The audit will have the following key components:

- An assessment and analytical report of the physical condition of the current buildings.
- Interviews with all the relevant stakeholders (principals, teachers, learners, parents, community members) to identify the common elements of what they would want to see in their school as a community school.
- Redesigning a school building (around the current one) that best captures the hopes and aspirations of the school and serves as a community asset.

The Manyano school principals will use this final report and building design to lobby for funding from the Department of Education and elsewhere to upgrade the infrastructure of their schools.

### ***2.5 Community-focused project***

Besides efforts to involve parents and community members in some of the above activities, schools in the Manyano Network will also identify a project that benefits members of the community. This can be in the areas of skills-training, job-creation, and other community-building or entrepreneurial activities. The projects will be identified and implemented by the schools.

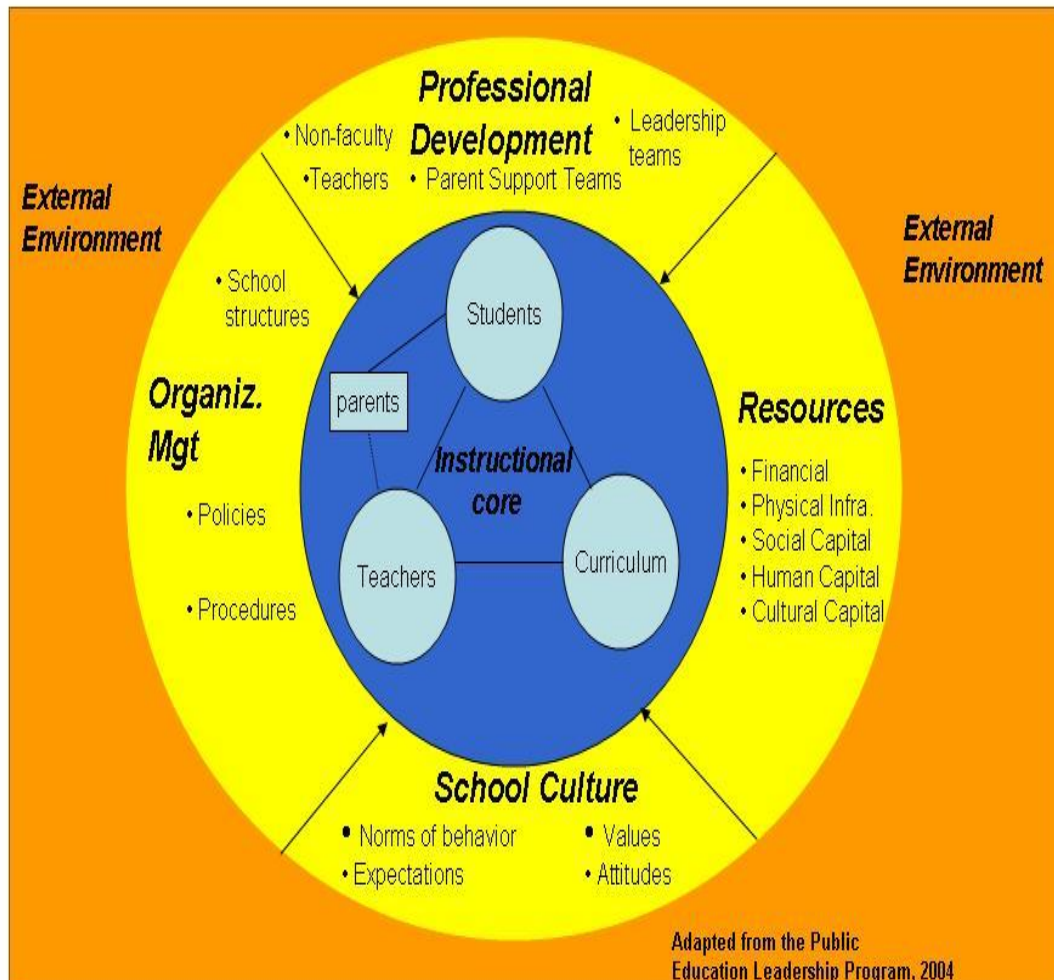
## **3 Guiding principles in the design and implementation of the Manyano Programme of Action for School Improvement**

This collaborative approach to improving educational outcomes for learners, schools and communities involves cooperation and coordination that leverages knowledge and expertise within NMMU as well as the Manyano Network of Community Schools to address complex problems and develop creative solutions. In order to realize the above goal, the following guiding principles are recommended:

- Build collaborative capacity by developing common purpose and acknowledging multiple stakeholders and diverse perspectives.
- Ground the work in contextual relevance by conducting baseline studies/needs assessments before the design and implementation of projects.
- Create benchmarks that measure progress towards the goals of the initiative
- Develop a research agenda that deepens and expands knowledge of the community school.
- Create joint opportunities for learning that by consulting with principals and other school leaders in terms of the design and implementation of projects.

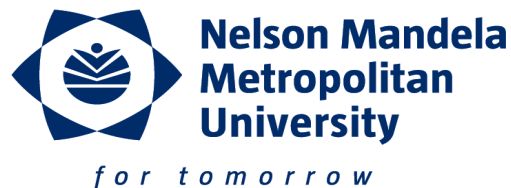


## APPENDIX H



## APPENDIX I

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### Stakeholder Invitation

**14 September 2012**

Dear Sir/Madam

You are invited to participate in a focus group discussion on the following topic “the role of stakeholders in building a community school” with other identified stakeholders. The session will have two groups with one question to answer for each group. You are also asked to choose one question that you would like to tackle from the following questions.

- What personal values or benefits have you experienced since the opening of our school?
- What can be done to make our school more effective?

This discussion will be 90 minutes long. It is going to have three phases; welcoming and introduction, discussion, and closure.

**Venue: NMMU Education Faculty.**

**Date: 11 October 2012**

**Time: 13.30 – 16.00**

Can you also please indicate whether you will be needing transport to and from the venue by no later than 04 October 2012.

(A finger meal will be provided)

RSVP: Mr. B Damons 082 455 6422

Mr. LK Mveli 073 932 9486

**APPENDIX J**

# Focus Group

Date: 11 October 2012

Venue: NMMU: Vista Campus

Time: 13.00 – 15.30

Stakeholder group (please mark with an X)

<b>Educator</b>		<b>Parent</b>		<b>External Stakeholder</b>	
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Programme Facilitator: Lazola Mveli

1. Welcome and Objective of Focus Group Lazola Mveli
  2. Complimentary Learning Framework: Model for Community School AI Witten
  3. Explanation of NGT Lazola Mveli
  4. Theme 1 School Culture
    - a. What defines school culture AI Witten
    - b. Give Definition of School Culture now
    - c. Presents most important elements of school culture for school in your context
  5. Theme 2 Stakeholder Involvement
    - a. What defines a stakeholder in a community School AI Witten
    - b. What stakeholders do you think should be involved school
    - c. How should they be involved
- Break: 10 minutes comfort break
6. Theme 3 Professional Development
    - a. What is professional development AI Witten
    - b. What type of professional development should take place in your context
  7. Theme 4 Organisational Management
    - a. What is Organisational management AI Witten
    - b. What type of management style should be present in your context
    - c. What type of systems should be place in your context
  8. Final Feedback Round

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**Theme 3: Professional Development**

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**Theme 4: Organisational Management**

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## APPENDIX K

### Focus groups administrators

#### 1. What experience have you gained by working in the school

- a. Fik – by seeing new people every day and working with different people
  - i. How to deal with different cases
- b. Abi – communication , ‘ek het geleeromanderterespek.’

#### 2. How did you experience the principal of the school?

- a. Fik – “could distinguish his different moods by the way he speaks”
  - i. ‘jo the eyes of the principal made us scared sometimes’
  - ii. ‘he sticks to his point’
  - iii. ‘was preaching in most cases, open gates and doors, trust people and gave people chances’
- b. Faith – “ able to treat all characters the same in all situations”
  - i. ‘pushes people to grow themselves.’
  - ii. ‘man from GOD accepts from the poor to the highest level
- c. Abi – ‘pa viralmaal – hoof het niegewys da thy hoof was nie – hyluisternaanders se problem – verkeerd is verkeerd.’
  - i. ‘persoonwat GOD hiernagestuur het, gave us a chance to learn, do not know if we would have got the experience if it was someone else.
  - ii. ‘meneer het nie mask nie, show what type of person you are, a great man of GOD.’

#### 3. What has the experience of volunteering here taught you

- a. Fik – ‘I am a person with respect, hard worker, have inner confidence, not afraid now to look at rich people.’
- b. Faith – ‘ I must not be a clever that think I know everything, consider everyone’s ideas and I will be able to take this into the future

## **Focus group with teachers**

### **1. Management – how did you experience the principal of the school – reflection of the principal**

- a. Han – did not have much experience in school – everything was managed well – did not have resources but worked with what we had – motivation from leader use what you had everything would be fine – good results, compliments doing well with nothing
  - i. No one is perfect – new teacher found a challenge – lot of things that had to be done – too much use of guinea pigs at school overloaded with things from outside – concentrating with schools challenges and then you have to deal with other expectations of others in their mind that were different from this environment
- b. Belwana – as old teacher – all the years blank as teacher – come from a stereotype way of doing things at previous school – got new ideas here – learnt a lot through committees – we could speak freely here – other schools its principals do not share most of things they keep for themselves – we did not know what was happening in management of the school – though principal firm, you must not be loose – he is flexible a good leader must not be too harsh or not mediocre, must have last one word – principal always comes with proposal does not want to be decision maker alone – wants others ideas
  - i. If we can get transparency in everything that happened
  - ii. Noqoba – principal meet everyone in school but separately in the school – feeling that he was making division amongst us – everyone wanted to claim the school – hearsay the principal caused tensions between the volunteers and principal



- c. Nqoba – did a good job in management very knowledgeable about education department – from admin to what was happening in the classroom – he was only just a principal but he was human being as well and you could feel that he felt your pain and challenges – approachable but at the same time he could put the fear of GOD into you – you need to know why you are here – you had to know why you were here – which was a good thing – belief school what is because we had a good principal but because we had a principal that was knowledgeable and grounded moved from the chaos from the start to where we are today.

**2. What do you think can still be done better to make the school even better than it is?**

- a. Belwana – concentration should be mostly in classes see the progress there so that he could give direction to us as teachers, especially foundation because they best phase in the school, because if the foundation phase would collapse then the whole school would collapse –
- b. Noqba – system when need something in classroom there are resources in school – we are afraid to ask feel annoying people by continually asking but if there was open door where we could meet and discuss and have to use my own resources not knowing what we have

**3. What are the lessons that you will say you have learnt in the ten months as human being**

- a. Hanjana – courage whatever situation you are in you can go through that – foreign in environment without your family not getting paid asking money from home – through that I survived and was getting this motivation in this environment – growth (paid in June) survive beyond condition and still standing – I was very fragile to situations of where children coming from had to be handled because it was sensitive was always distant from me but now in this situation I had to deal with it, I only used to see these situations on TV but now I was confronted with the reality it is in front of you and you have to deal with it and you grow because of it

- b. Nqoba- do what you can with what you have you can open doors which you thought were never possible, have so little (starts to become emotional) – learner in class who had never being to school before 10 years old, mother could not take her to school because there was no school close by – when a relative came and asked about her progress and I told her she was in my top group – laughs ‘I remember when I spoke Xhosa and this very child responded that I do not understand you because I only speak English (and she is Xhosa and she was pushing me to speak English – the ways she has excelled, confirmation that I am not moving alone – I am not afraid to let this child represent my class – wow event in life – confirmation that you do not need much, you just need to use what you have – shine your light in your corner – (shared my emotions – confirm that they are going to be great teachers)
- c. Belwana – GOD can still do it – my past experience made me not trust my colleagues – I got little ones – I got love here – I love my class – I was the best and teachers became jelous because I was working hard –conflict with volunteers I thought that there was something wrong with me – people spread misinterpret my intention – (space not created to get whole community created)

**4. What are the things that are keeping you back from achieving your great self on your path to greatness/**

- a. Noqba – coming here all I wanted was to be a teacher going to my classroom and teach and make a difference in someones life but now that I am here I see myself wanting to study further, I see myself siting in management, I see myself siting in the principals chair managing a school, I have big dreams now, looking beyond what I came here for through engaging with management – you need to constanly upgrade yourself, keep moving
- b. Hanjana – I thought because of schools we were doing our practicals, public schools had great physical sitautions – you were not dealing with hectic stuff lie\ke such

situations – as young as you are you have to deal with a situation for example of a child that was raped several times – those where my fears and I did not want to go to such things that I had to deal with – see this child everyday look at child in eyes it was traumatizing – now that I dealt with this situation I want to standard it want to develop skills – read about it in book from NMMU but I want to learn more about it, ended up crying because the situation followed me, so that I could do deal with it professionally

c. Belwana – told myself to do better, thought I would do remedial course but it is too late for me I cant go to the university – I am lazy to read – I was a remedial teacher at school and managed to have turn around at my previous school

5. Advice/ one thing that you would tell a principal of a new school

a. Hanjana – they had to be flexible – you going into the unknown – community provides your opportunity for employment

b. Nqoba- shine you light wherever you are because where there is light people will follow.

c. Belwana – principal ,if you can love everyone, ‘love them all’ treat them all the same and to listen to the people’s problems

### **Focus group Volunteers**

1. How have you experienced the school since start of the year/

a. Rachel – working with a lot of people – school gave me a chance to work with community and love people – school is great

b. Lucky – working with different people and different cultures we had to learn to respect each other – listen to each other even if we had different views on top of that was how to keep school going – build school bring information to school from wherever you get it so that you can use it to make the school grow – show the

community that we can do it here – the experiences we got here we are trying to know each other – the development towards the stars or sky

2. Some of the challenges you have experienced at the school?

- a. Racheal – hard work and tough love, I thought the principal was loving but he doesn't play, because of that I started with song still busy with the song
- b. Lucky – everywhere there is a challenge – people find negatives in good things because we all do not see things the same – you disturb by things at school but you need to keep the focus on the right thing – we are all human beings but we have different views – I am here I came to do what I suppose to do and will not give energy to those that advocate negativity
- c. Amanda – two different types of communities inside of school, teachers and parents –big difference – teachers use their education thing as the key and think that parents cannot think the right thing but when we are debating you can see that parent can learn from the teacher and the teacher can learn from the parent.

3. The Principal of the school: how did you experience the principal of the school?

- a. Asanda – saw principal he was strict thought he was strict only towards blacks – as time goes on and got to know him saw that he was straight forward and he was a good principal not about colour. He is stubborn sometimes and if he does not understand you- he will say hiemakanienie(xhosawhat a little) – encourages you to move in a direction – listening skill.
- b. Gardner - straight forward talent to encourage people – other volunteers considered the role of gardeners almost as lower to other categories but principal manage to motivate us to realize that all roles are important and no role is more superior to the other –that's why I am still here
- c. Lucky – I was surprised he never chased us away never told us there was nothing for us to do here, gave us opportunity whatever we thought was right – said to me my

colleagues – he is willing to help for someone to do something – gives out hand to help – likes to help people

- d. Amanda – he is not a racist – a good listener – encouraging but also you can be very strict – do not mess with him because he can change
- e. Rachel – change like a colouring man (verkleurmannetjie) – is always there to listen – had many problems gave words of encouragement out of his heart and bible – he does not play – he does not take you in the heart – what I love about Mr damons

4. What advice would you give this Principal?

- a. Rachel – he must be a good listener and be able to work with community and if there is a problem he must assist where he can. He must be a lovable person, tough love and very strict the school wont go forward and be honest
- b. Amanda – he must be at school regularly – if he is not here the school becomes corrupt, I think the people want to see his eyes – schools is school want to see – make sure that your heart should be at the school you heart and soul should be here
- c. Gardner – need to be hands on and do not delegate important meetings decisions ( I thought I was delegating authority)
- d. Asanda – check go around, not sit in his office visit the various sites regularly. Be objective and listen to all sides of the story

APPENDIX L

DATA GENERATION DOCUMENT									
No	Themes	No	Event	Date	No	Sub Themes	Where/ Who Literature (author and chapter + page)	Where Data Recorded	Link
	<i>main themes of study</i>		<i>specific event/ document/ comment made</i>	<i>when observation made</i>	<i>sub section main theme</i>	<i>themes that emerge from main theme</i>	<i>linking to literature from across chapters</i>	<i>titles given to diff data generation tools</i>	<i>links to other data recorded</i>
3	Stakeholders	1	SGB empowerment appointments feeding scheme	SGB meet	a	investing in stake holder capacity		j5 pg5	4.3c
		2	Thank you letters, specific to contribution of school	writing thank you's	b	expressing gratitude for help		j5pg6	om1.1a
		3	Developing incentive for volunteering	Ebernezer	c	recognising peoples needs		j5pg7	2.4d
		4	identification of diverse stakeholders for different needs	legal resource	d	use of stakeholders as need arises		j5pg8	
		5	leadership workshop TA	12-Mar	e	capacity building stakeholders		j4pg1	
		6	Proposal writing of garden	April	f	capacity building stakeholders		doc2pg9	
		7	feeding scheme list	Jan	g	empowering to take ownership		doc2.13	
		8	office management plan		h	self capacitating		doc2.14	

9	Feeding scheme plan for the week	06-Feb	i	stakeholders taking responsibility		doc2.17	
10	cpf plan		j	capacity building stakeholders		doc2.18	
11	Manyano meeting	27-Jan	k	being part of collective		doc2.19	
12	Pops foundation delivery not	12-Mar	l	stakeholder commitment		doc2.23	
13	Skills development plan	March	m	identifying of needs		d0c2.24	
14	Names for Siyazebenza training	March	n	follow up with stakeholders		doc2.28	
15	SGB workshop principal's post	19-Sep	o	buy in and investment		doc2.33	
16	Identifying areas volunteering		p	ownership of self invest		doc2.36	
17	linda letter netball	26-Jan	q	identifying talents in staff		doc2.38	
18	story of tik Rachael	July	r	listening talents		doc2.39	1a
19	Palar plan Racheal Damons	June	S	capacity building stakeholders		doc2.43	
20	Bethelsdorp SGB unit		t	stakeholder collaboration		doc2.44	
21	Van Der Berg donation of Example	April	u	stakeholder collaboration		Jorn1.1	
22	sapphire support on carpets, copies books etc	throughout	v	various stakeholders		jorn1.2	
23	distinguishing of roles for various stakeholders tension between SMT and SGB	September	w	role identification		jorn1. 16	principal step in and give direction when needed

		24	assigning meaningful titles to roles: LSA for caregivers	September	x	role identification		jorn1.17	assign titles that promotes culture growth and caring
		25	Meeting social development youth integration	September	y	stakeholder motive		jorn1.20	discernment as leader without offending and loosing out on opportunity
		26	Conflict of CPF accessing kitchen loss items	February	z	role identification		jorn3.5.1	culture respecting one another space and others
		27	Visit of Jerado Burger Denver Swanepoel	February	a1	stakeholder incentive		jorn3.5.2	
		28	list of various stakeholders	February	a2	knowing stakeholders		jorn3.6	
		29	die Burger taking photos as part of Police campaign to id children	February	a3	using stakeholders creatively		jorn3.8.1	helped with having photo id for children



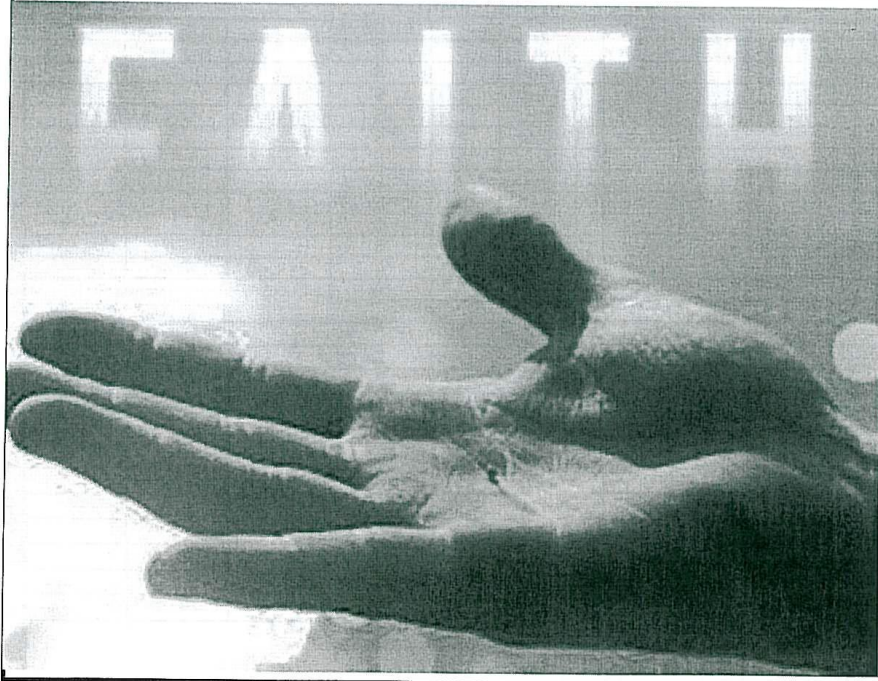
APPENDIX M

# ALFONSO ARRIES PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATIVE PLANNING DOCUMENT 2012

Educator: *MR. R. D. MARTIN*

OUR DESTINY IS IN OUR HANDS. GREAT SEEDS  
PRODUCE GREAT HARVESTS.



**MONDAY PRAYS**

TERM 1		TERM 2		TERM 3		TERM 4	
WEEK	WHO	WEEK	WHO	WEEK	WHO	WEEK	WHO
1		1	Diko	1	Tezani	1	Mhlakuva
2		2	Mjila	2	Makhathini	2	Libi
3		3	Mayekiso	3	Bovu	3	Sana
4		4	Belwana	4	Ntozini	4	Belwana
5		5	Kobo	5	Kaleni	5	Mjila
6	Joseph	6	Mweli	6	Vimbani	6	Diko
7	Hanjana	7	Nondikane	7	Deerling	7	Nondikane
8	Mantewu	8	Gugwini	8	Nxanga	8	Zimemo
9	Bolasha	9	Rebe	9	Zimema	9	Damions
10	Ngqoba	10	Martin	10	Damons	10	
11	Diko	11	Nomnganga	11	Kayser		

# ACADEMIC HEADS

## GRADE HEADS

GRADE	HEAD
R	HANJANA
1	DIKO
2	MWELI
3	GUGWINI
4	NOMGANGA
5	MAKHATHINI ✓
6	BOVU
7	KALENI ✓

## PHASE HEADS

PHASE	HEAD
FOUNDATION	ZIMEMO
INTERMEDIATE	MARTIN
SENIOR PRIMARY	MARTIN

## LEARNING AREA HEADS

### FOUNDATION PHASE

LEARNING PROGRAMMES	HEAD
LITERACY	MANTEWU
NUMERACY	MWELI
LIFE SKILLS	NGQOBA

### INTERMEDIATE / SENIOR PHASE

LEARNING PROGRAMMES	HEAD
LLC - X	NTOZINI
LLC - E	THEZANI
MLMMS	MHLAKUVA
NS	MAKHATHINI
SS	MARTIN
LO	NOMGANGA
TECH	SANA
EMS	KALENI
AC	BOVU

FOUNDATION PHASE										
GRADE	EDUCATORS					CLASSROOM				
R1	MK/LD					22				
R2	RJ/VN					1				
R3	SH					2				
R4	AM					3				
1A	NP					5				
1B	NN					6				
1C	AD					7				
1D	BMJ					8				
1E	BM					9				
1F	BB					10				
1G	HK					4				
2A	LM					11				
2B	PN					12				
3A	VG					13				
3B	NR					14				

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR PHASE										
CLASS	EDUCAT	LEARNING AREAS								
TOTAL PERIODS - 30	ENG	XHOSA	MATHS	NS	TECH	SS	EMS	LO	AC	
LA - ALLOCATION	5	3	5	4	2	4	2	3	2	30
4A	NM	NH	NM	NB	HN	UV	PS	AN	AN	
4B	ST	PN	ST	UV	NM	NH	PN	PN	NB	
5A	NM	NH	UV	HM	UV	MK	UV	ST	NM	
5B	ST	HM	HM	HM	UV	ST	PN	NB	NB	
6A	MK	PN	AN	AN	NH	RM	MK	PN	NB	
LA - ALLOCATION	5	3	5	4	2	4	2	3	2	30
7A	NB	PN	NH	HM	NH	MK	PN	NB	PS	
7B	NZ	PS	AN	PS	PS	MK	PS	NZ	PS	

SUMMARY OF WORK ALLOCATION										
LEARNING AREAS										Tot.
	ENG	XH	WISK	NS	TECH	SS	EMS	LO	AC	
1	5	3	5	4	2	4	2	3	2	30
2	4B,5B	4B,6A,7A	4B			5B				
3	4A,5A		4A		4B		4B, 5B,7A	4B, 6A		
4			5A	4B	5A,5B	4A	5A	5A		
5			6A,7B	6A	4A			4A	4A	
6		4A,5A	7A		6A,7A	4B				
7	7A			4A				5B, 7A	4B, 5B, 6A	
8		5B	5B	5A,5B,7A						
9	6A					5A, 7A, 7B	6A			
10		7B					4A, 7B		7A, 7B	
11	7B			7B	7B					
12						6A		7B		
13										
14										
15										
16										
17										
18										
										0

INTERSEN 4-7										
GRADE	CLASS TEACHER					CLASSROOM				
4A	AN					15				
4B	ST					16				
5A	NM					17				
5B	HM					18				
6A	NB					19				
7A	PT					20				
7B	MK					21				

A L L O C A T I O N 2012

## GROUND DUTY ROSTER 2012

Team 1	UV	NR	NB2	VG	BB	MB		
Team 2	RM	AN	MK	BMJ	NP	LD		
Team 3	PN	NM2	NM	NN	SH	MK2		
Team 4	PNT	HM	AD	LM	PS	NL		
Team 5	AM	ST	BM	NZ	HK	VN		

### ROSTER

#### TERM 1

DAY	TEAM
MONDAY	1
TUESDAY	2
WEDNESDAY	3
THURSDAY	4
FRIDAY	5

#### TERM 2

DAY	TEAM
MONDAY	5
TUESDAY	4
WEDNESDAY	3
THURSDAY	2
FRIDAY	1

#### TERM 3

DAY	TEAM
MONDAY	4
TUESDAY	5
WEDNESDAY	1
THURSDAY	2
FRIDAY	3

#### TERM 4

DAY	TEAM
MONDAY	2
TUESDAY	3
WEDNESDAY	4
THURSDAY	5
FRIDAY	1

# SCHOOL TIMES

ASSEMBLY DAY		
PERIOD	TIME	
ADMIN	8.00	8.15
ASSEMBLY	8.15	8.45
1	8.45	9.30
2	9.30	10.15
BREAK	10.15	10.40
3	10.40	11.25
4	11.25	12.10
BREAK	12.10	12.30
5	12.30	13.15
6	13.15	14.00

13.00 TIME		
PERIOD	TIME	
ADMIN	8.00	8.15
1	8.15	8.55
2	8.55	9.35
BREAK	9.35	10.00
3	10.00	10.40
4	10.40	11.20
BREAK	11.20	11.40
5	11.40	12.20
6	12.20	13.00

13.30 TIME		
PERIOD	TIME	
ADMIN	8.00	8.15
1	8.15	9.00
2	9.00	9.45
BREAK	9.45	10.10
3	10.10	10.55
4	10.55	11.40
BREAK	11.40	12.00
5	12.00	12.45
6	12.45	13.30

14.00 TIME		
PERIOD	TIME	
ADMIN	8.00	8.15
1	8.15	9.05
2	9.05	9.55
BREAK	9.55	10.20
3	10.20	11.10
4	11.10	12.00
BREAK	12.00	12.20
5	12.20	13.10
6	13.10	14.00

## ASSEMBLIES

TERM 1		TERM 2		TERM 3		TERM 4	
WEEK	RESPON	WEEK	RESPON	WEEK	RESPON	WEEK	RESPON
1	SMT	1	SMT	1	SMT	1	SMT
2	R	2	6&7	2	4&5	2	2&3
3	1	3	R	3	6&7	3	4&5
4	2&3	4	1	4	R	4	6&7
5	4&5	5	2&3	5	1	5	R
6	6&7	6	4&5	6	2&3	6	1
7	R	7	6&7	7	4&5	7	2&3
8	1	8	R	8	6&7	8	4&5
9	2&3	9	1	9	R	9	SMT
10	4&5	10	2&3	10	1		
11	SMT	11	SMT	11	SMT		

## DATES FOR 2012

### QUARTERS FOR THE YEAR 2012

START	END	WEEKS	DAYS	SCHOOL PUB.HOL		
(9) 11 Jan	23-Mar	11	53(55)	21-Mar		
10-Apr	22-Jun	11	54 (51)	27, 30 Apr	01-May	
16-Jul	28-Sep	11	55(52)	09& 10 August		
08-Oct	7 (11) Dec	9	47 (45)			

#### FIRST QUARTER

WEEK	START	END	NO. DAYS	PUB HOL	
1	09-Jan	13-Jan	5		
2	16-Jan	20-Jan	5		
3	23-Jan	27-Jan	5		
4	30-Jan	03-Feb	5		
5	06-Feb	10-Feb	5		
6	13-Feb	17-Feb	5		
7	20-Feb	24-Feb	5		
8	27-Feb	02-Mar	5		
9	05-Mar	09-Mar	5		
10	12-Mar	16-Mar	5		
11	19-Mar	23-Mar	4		21-Mar
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>54</b>		

#### SECOND QUARTER

WEEK	START	END	NO. DAYS	PUB HOL	
1	10-Apr	13-Apr	4		
2	16-Apr	20-Apr	5		
3	23-Apr	26-Apr	4	27-Apr	30 April
4	02-May	04-May	3	01-May	
5	07-May	11-May	5		
6	14-May	18-May	5		
7	21-May	25-May	5		
8	28-May	01-Jun	5		
9	04-Jun	08-Jun	5		
10	11-Jun	15-Jun	5		
11	18-Jun	22-Jun	5		
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>51</b>		

#### THIRD QUARTER

WEEK	START	END	NO. DAYS	PUB HOL	
1	16-Jul	20-Jul	5		
2	23-Jul	27-Jul	5		
3	30-Jul	03-Aug	5		
4	06-Aug	08-Aug	3	09 & 10 Aug	
5	13-Aug	17-Aug	5		
6	20-Aug	24-Aug	5		
7	27-Aug	31-Aug	5		
8	03-Sep	07-Sep	5		
9	10-Sep	14-Sep	5		
10	17-Sep	21-Sep	5		
11	25-Sep	28-Sep	4	24-Sep	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>52</b>		

#### FOURTH QUARTER

WEEK	START	END	NO. DAYS	PUB HOL	
1	08-Oct	12-Oct	5		
2	15-Oct	19-Oct	5		
3	22-Oct	26-Oct	5		
4	29-Oct	02-Nov	5		
5	05-Nov	09-Nov	5		
6	12-Nov	16-Nov	5		
7	19-Nov	23-Nov	5		
8	26-Nov	30-Nov	5		
9	03-Dec	07-Dec	5		
10	10-Dec	11-Dec	2		
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>47</b>		



APPENDIX N

ALFONSO ARRIES PRIMARY SCHOOL VISITORS BOOK							
NO	DATE	VISITOR	PERSON VISITED	FROM WHERE	TIME IN	TIME OUT	SIGNATURE
1	23/5/12	D. GIBSON	B. DAMONS	P.E	09h00	9h36	[Signature]
2	23/5/12	E. JANUARY	B. DAMONS	CHARTY II	09h2		[Signature]
3	23/5/12	M. GIBSON	M. GIBSON	CHARTY II	09h55		[Signature]
4	24/05/12	N. NIKA	"		09:18		[Signature]
5	24/05/12	C. ALISON	Principal	Charty II	10:38		[Signature]
6	24/05/12	P. DUMPAI	Principal	CHARTY II	9:18		[Signature]
7	24/05/12	N. MALI	Principal	Swes	10:57		[Signature]
8	24/05/12	L. PANGWA	manager	Rhok.	13:55		[Signature]
9	25/05/12	X. MARCEN	Principal	Parent	08:3		[Signature]
10	25/05	SUMI N	Principal	CHARLES DN	9h35		[Signature]
11	"	B. STRYDOM	"	TANUSA	11:15		[Signature]
12	"	A.A. FETE	"	Metropolitan	11:15		[Signature]
13	"	DN MTSHULANA	"	Metropolitan	11:15		[Signature]
14	28/05						
15	30/05	S. MIZI	Principal	Pi-Chidline	11:55		[Signature]
16	31/05	A. Cellman	Principal	B.P.K.	13:25		[Signature]
17	31/05	B. STRYDOM	"	Maths Park	13:45		[Signature]
18	31/06	L. de Doncker	F.P. HOD	Boysen Park	10:10		[Signature]
19	01/06	S. MIZI	Dept. Princip	Pi-Chidline	9:22		[Signature]
20	05/06	H. Smith	Staff	Edu-Log	9:00	11:15	[Signature]
21	05/06	F. Satter	"	"	9:00	11:35	[Signature]
22	05/06	Rita	Principal	New English	11:11		[Signature]
23	06/06	Quik-Van	man	BETHUN	12h3		[Signature]
24	06/06/12	C.B. Stamper	Principal	Charty			[Signature]
25	11/06/12	P. BLAKE	PRINCIPAL	MAMMUI	10:30		[Signature]
26	11/06/12	L. Williams	"	Head	10:20		[Signature]
27	18/06/12	L.P. Maawara	PRINCIPAL	CHARTY 5	09:44		[Signature]
28	18/06/12	Colin Doloff	Principal	RES NIASGB			[Signature]
29	18/06	J. Yumtha	TEACHER	SESA	10:03		[Signature]
30	19/06	P. BREWER	PRINCIPAL	Community	10:41		[Signature]
31	19/12	T. LUKWE	PRINCIPAL	YMA			[Signature]
32	20/12/07	R. McCORMY	PRINCIPAL	DOE			[Signature]
33	11/11/11	H. Smith	Principal				[Signature]
34	30/07/12	L.F. Panyan	Teacher	26/07/12	13:00		[Signature]
35	31/07/12	D. Ntombi	Teacher	30/07/12	11:25		[Signature]
36	31/07/12	N. IORO	Principal	P.E	13:00		[Signature]
37	31/07/12	V. Nclima	Principal	P.E	14:30		[Signature]
38	08/08/12	L. SISHI	PRINCIPAL	DOE SVP	11:40	12:00	[Signature]
39	13/08/12	R. BOEZACHT	Principal	NMAMU	09h25		[Signature]
40	13/08/12	ENDER MOTALA	Principal	NMAMU	09h25		[Signature]
41	15/08/12	ROBIN NJETHULWANA	"	NMAMU	9:18		[Signature]
42	15/08/12	Robt Hlamba	"	NMAMU	"		[Signature]
43	15/08/12	Dolene Swanson	"	NMAMU	"		[Signature]
44	15/08/12	SPRAGUE MADANA	"	NMAMU	"		[Signature]
45	16/8/12	V. Victor	Vice-pr	LK Seville	11:30		[Signature]
46	17/08/12	Roger Dlamini	Vice-pr				[Signature]
47	17/08/12	MFESANE	Principal	Poly Park	11:30		[Signature]

APPENDIX O

ALFONSO ARRIES ASSEMBLY PLANNING	
CO -ORDINATING GROUP: _____ 7 _____	
<b>DUTIES</b>	<b>WHO</b>
DATE: 13/02/12	
DAY: MONDAY	
CO-ORDINATOR: JOSEPH	
PRAY: Ms Bovu	
READING: Ms NTOZINI	
LESSON: Mr Kaleni	
<b>SONGS:</b>	
ANNOUNCEMENTS	
1	V Accurate Peaps - A ✓
2	Discipline - Jaleny
3	Card + Scamp
4	N, DO per WO ✓
5	Attendance at school ✓
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
OTHER NOTES	

APPENDIX P

ALFONSO ARRIES WEEKLY PLANNING				
WEEK: 06/02 - 10/02				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
06/02	07/02	08/02	09/02	10/02
FINCOM	STUDENT LEADER	FIRST BREAK		HEALTH & SOCIAL WELFARE
		Sports Art & Culture	CDC	
		SECOND BREAK		
		ROOM: 21 FINANCE COMMIT		
FINCOM	COST OF CONDUCT Report of Student Leader	AFTER SCHOOL		
			STANDARD BANK STAFF	
STEPHEN MAZUNGUA BD 14:00	BD - Maryina NMMU - 14:00	OTHER MEETINGS		
			VWSA BD 10:00 am	

## APPENDIX Q

<b>HOT NIGHT PROJECT EVALUATION</b>	
<b>PERSON: Mhlakuva</b>	<b>FOCUS AREA: Planning Committee</b>
<b>WHAT WE HAD TO DO</b>	<b>LEARNING</b>
Finance	<b>CHALLENGES</b>
Sponsorships	Time to prepare
Stalls	Not enough items in stalls
Sales Day	Sponsors said we applied to late for sponsorships
Purchasing of goods	Transport to purchase goods and go to sponsors
	Cheap pricing of items sold
	Absent educators and lack of class control of money paid
	<b><i>Last minute payment by learners</i></b>
	<b><i>Only the treasurer had signing powers thus creating a bottleneck with late payments</i></b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>WHAT WE LEARNT</b>
Orders per item must be made in advance	Need to plan quantities in stall properly
Apply for sponsorships at the beginning of the year or previous year	We must identify sponsors early for the different areas
Follow up regularly with sponsors and get a contact person	Be specific when we ask for items
Target companies that have an interest in our community	Companies want to sponsor communities that they serve
Must collect monies earlier	Learners paid in monies close or on the day of the event
Have shopping list prepared earlier so that enough time to buy	Learners will buy items if they are available
<b><i>Open a tuck shop for the school</i></b>	We need to be patient with the community
Stall holders must be consulted when purchasing stock	Need to strategise how we approach sponsors and work as a team
Petrol allowance need to be paid for people looking for sponsorships - have a special fundraising programme for petrol	If people are aware the programme runs smoothly
Need to prepare administratively in advance before the event	Too many people speaking causes confusion
Have a contact session with staff before the day of event to make sure everyone hears the same message on management of day	
Give Fincom members signing power on the coupons	

## **Alfonso Arries School Song**

1. Rise the sun on Alfonso Arries  
Where friendship will ever shine  
Laying solid foundation is our aim  
Moulding the future is our goal

### ***Chorus***

**We teach, we learn, we care  
We strive for excellence  
Be of use in all the world  
Praise the Lord on Alfonso Arries  
May he guide us evermore**

2. Thank you Lord for all our teachers  
Thank you for our parents too,  
Guide them all and give them wisdom  
We're proud to call you Alfonso Arries

### ***Chorus***

3. Reis die son oor Alfonso Arries  
Where friendship will ever shine  
Laying foundation is our aim  
Moulding the future is our goal

### ***Chorus***

4. EnkosiBawongootitshalabethu  
Thank you for our parents too,  
Guide them all and give them wisdom  
We're proud to call you Alfonso Arries

## APPENDIX S

# ALFONSO ARRIES PRIMARY SCHOOL

(School does not yet have a postal address. Interim use postal address and fax number of Sapphire Road Primary)

Administrator – Mr. B.P. Damons

c/o Sapphire & Coral Road

Booyesen Park

Port Elizabeth

6059

Fax: (041) – 4831483

Cell: 0824556422

Email – [bpdamons@vodamail.co.za](mailto:bpdamons@vodamail.co.za)

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6 January 2012

The District Director  
Department of Education  
Port Elizabeth District

Dear Sir

### REPORT PREPERATION FOR ALFONSO ARRIES OPENING

#### Staffing

Before schools closed we had a meeting with you and the EDO, Ms Sauer to look at the process of staffing at the school. Ms Sauer and I sat and recommended criteria for the staffing at the school (see attached document). On the 5 January 2012 we had a screening process of the identified candidates for the vacant positions. The bulk of the educators initially identified where Funza Lashaka bursary graduates.

The educators who in excess, who we identified for possible placement, where not contactable due to the fact that schools were close.

Presently we have identified 14 educators, all who are first year teachers and I hope that we can conclude the process of filling the other posts before 11 January 2012. We did recommend that you perhaps need to start looking beyond our set criteria.

An orientation workshop was held today, 6 January 2012, for the new educators and all 14 were in attendance. I am extremely excited by the energy and enthusiasm of these new colleagues and I am sure that with other experienced colleagues, we will take the school to amazing heights. (find attach a copy of the orientation programme.) **I request that you finalise their appointment as soon as possible, so as to give them certainty about their placement.**

**Please give urgent attention to finalise the staffing.**

Access to the school

We visited the school today and they were busy grading the road to give access to the school. The conditions and access to the school needs urgent attention and I think we need to engage with the politicians and Metro to give priority to this as I am of the view that this can impact on our ability to deliver quality education.

The School

We visited the school, together with the new colleagues and the following was observed:

1. There is no furniture at all
2. There is no electricity as the cable have been stolen
3. The security is doing an excellent job and the school is still in the condition handed over on the 12 December
4. No learner support material at the school

**URGENT**

1. Please ensure that some furniture is delivered to the school as soon as possible. We will probably have to have our first staff meeting sitting on the floor.

2. Work with Metro to have the electricity restored to the area and school as soon as possible.
3. Make funding available for the school to use as a transitional measure. I can negotiate with Sapphire Road Primary to use their bank account to receive funds

#### Readiness

I am of the opinion that we will be as ready as the conditions allow us to be. I have prepared for the registration process and will be engaging with staff to ensure that the process moves as smooth as possible.

#### **I would also appreciate if I could be updated on the following:**

- 1. The replacement of myself at Sapphire, in the form of sending of two educators to replace myself and in the place of the deputy who is acting as principal.**
- 2. The secondment of Sapphire secretary to Alfonso Arries and her replacement**
- 3. Progress on the other matters relating to the school:**
  - a. Furniture**
  - b. Appointment of Support Staff**
  - c. LTSM**
  - d. Furniture**
  - e. Educational Consumables**
  - f. Maintenance**
  - g. Non Educational Consumables.**

Counting on your speedy positive response.

Kind Regards

Bruce Damons - Administrator