My teacher can make the impossible possible
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROCLAMATION
5 July 1822

‘Whereas it has been deemed expedient, with view to the prosperity of this settlement, that the language of the parent land should be more universally diffused, and that a period should now be fixed at which the English language shall be exclusively used in all judicial and official acts, proceedings and businesses within the same.....

With teachers on my side.... I shall achieve the impossible
SOWETO UPRISINGS – 1976

Never again

Fiercest resistance to the promotion of Afrikaans as an additional medium of instruction for science and history instead of English for Bantu education throughout South Africa.
1993 - INTERIM CONSTITUTION

Wherever practicable, a person shall have the right to use and to be addressed in his/her dealings with public administration at the national level of government in any official South African language of his/her choice

Section 3 (3)

1996 - FINAL CONSTITUTION

National and provincial governments may use particular languages for the purpose of government taking into account usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances and the balance of needs and preferences of the population as a whole....

Section 6 (3)
Section 6 of the South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA, 1996b)

The Act confers on school governing bodies (SGBs) the power to determine the language policy of a school, *albeit subject* to the Constitution, SASA and any applicable provincial law.
Case law refers to the rulings of judges.

It is a practical interpretation of promulgated laws, statutes, acts, ordinances and the enactment thereof.
Middelburg Primary School v Head of Department, Mpumalanga Department of Education

The provincial education department forced the single medium Afrikaans primary school to admit 26 learners to Grade 1 to receive education in English.

Judge Bertelsmann found that the actions of the Mpumalanga Education Department were in flagrant contravention of the South African Schools Act.
Western Cape Minister of Education v Mikro Primary School

The governing body of this Afrikaans-medium public school had refused to accede to an order of the Western Cape Department of Education to change the language policy converting the Afrikaans medium school to a parallel medium Afrikaans/English school.

Judge Thring ruled that to switch from a single-medium school and to introduce English as a second language would indeed have a profound influence on the customs, the traditions ‘and almost every aspect of the atmosphere which pervades in the school’.
Ermelo vs Mpumalanga Department of Education

The Mpumalanga Department of Education then made the controversial decision to withdraw the school governing body’s competency to determine the school’s language policy.

Language is a sensitive issue. Great care is taken in the Act to establish a governing body that is representative of the community served by a school and to allocate to it the function of determining the language policy. The Act authorises only the governing body to determine the language policy of an existing school and nobody else. Nobody else is empowered to exercise that function.
OBSERVATION

The South African Schools Act seems to defeat the intended purpose of achieving the ideals of laying a strong foundation for democratic transformation, combating discrimination and intolerance.

SGBs act as gate-keepers to maintain the status quo.
Table 5: Percentage of learners by language of learning and teaching and grade: 2007

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Source: DoE 2007 Annual School Survey
IMPLICATIONS

Languages and learning across the curriculum

Support and sustain languages across the whole curriculum

Embrace and find innovative ways of working with the concept of multiple intelligences
5. CONCLUSION

Most of our learners learn through the medium of a first or second additional language affects comprehension of content subjects in other learning areas.
THANK YOU