

## BRIDGE Western Cape leadership Focus Group



### Meeting Report

9/10/2014 14:00:00

#### **Details and Topic Area**

This was the first meeting - 8 people attended representing 6 organisations, all involved in leadership development in the Western Cape.

- We introduced ourselves and the work of our organisations.
- We shared our celebrations with regard to our work in leadership development
- We shared our challenges and fears with regard to our own work
- We asked ourselves who else should be in the focus group
- We reflected and committed to active collaboration in the months ahead.
- We set a new meeting date for 16 October at 14:00 at LEAP

#### **Key Learnings**

We agreed that the following areas of focus were essential in any leadership development process:

- Focus on interpersonal management skills of the leaders
- Focus on the potential layers of supporting leadership within the school right down to post level 1 teachers and including the SGB
- Focus on potential layers of supporting leadership within the school community
- Focus on potential layers of supporting mentoring and leadership from the business and extended community
- We must take a long view on leadership development

We had much to share and celebrate:

- Low attrition rate in the Principals Academy
- IQAA had success in improving leadership at management level
- Symphonia P4P shared their amazing turn around success through inspired activated leaders
- LEAP Teach With Africa and the Global Teachers Institute – voiced great hope in layers of emerging young leaders



- PSP celebrates that their teacher/leaders sat in the programme and the profession
- NELI was able to devote time and energy in designing a model of leadership development specifically for SGB's

We agreed that the following challenges were common struggles facing all of us:

- The current national and regional focus on results [ANA and MATRIC] as the only measures of school progress, is counter-productive and damaging to real deep leadership development work ["You don't make an animal fat by weighing it over and over"]
- Competitive feelings and practice in ourselves within the NGO sector is limiting and counter-productive.
- Leading NGO's can be lonely work – leading schools can be lonely work
- Measurement of progress within the field of leadership development is difficult using current available measurement tools and constructs – we need to take a long view on development
- Leaders are often dealing with people deeply resistant to change – “writing off” people who won't change seems to be an increasingly inevitable choice
- Many expressed a greater challenge in the field of resistance to change working with older and more experienced teachers and leaders
- There is often a great disconnect between school leaders, SGB's, staff and community leaders.
- It seems as though the highest performing schools are often very tightly managed in quite a dictatorial manner – is this really the only option?
- Sharing our work and working in real partnerships is more difficult than we would like it to be

### **Suggested Future topics and Speakers**

Dr Al Witten from Manyana Schools in Eastern Cape  
 Thabisa Ndlazi from The British Council  
 Johnny Gevisser from EMEP <http://www.emep.org.za/>  
 Sam Christie from SAILI

Possible topics:

- Sharing the work we do more deeply. Sharing resources, ideas, tools and distilled learnings.
- How do we define "leadership"?
- What are the areas of leadership focus that we wish to select for ourselves?
- How do we take the next steps in shared actions, programmes and projects?

### **Collaboration Opportunities**



We took a commitment to make this the focus of our next meeting. Kerry agreed to co-ordinate the creation of a list of all schools with which the focus group members were working.

**Links to Resources and Presentation**

[http://symphonia.net/symphonia\\_leadership\\_development.htm](http://symphonia.net/symphonia_leadership_development.htm)

<http://www.leapschool.org.za/>

<http://www.psp.org.za/>

<http://iqaa.co.za/>

<http://www.principalsacademy.ac.za/>

<http://www.teachwithafrica.org/>

**Apologies for not being able to attend the meeting came from:**

Ongezwa Mbele ASSITEJ South Africa:Theatre4Youth Coordinator ( Western Cape region)

<http://www.theatre4youth.co.za/>

Kevin Wildschutt Taurus Schools

<http://www.taurusschools.co.za/>



Reminder: Date for next community meeting will be **16 October for 14:00 start at LEAP**

End