

## Leadership in Education

### Looking back on 2016



A BRIDGE Knowledge Product



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons  
Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License



BRIDGE's partnership with online radio CliffCentral.com's Leadership Platform brought listeners useful information and new perspectives as principals and other leaders in education shared their stories, experiences and insights on a variety of topics.

Here we highlight some of the main themes from 2016's shows.

### Key leadership themes in 2016:

- Leadership for achievement
- Leadership principles and practices
- Leadership in teacher development

There is a list of 2016 topics and guests, with links to the podcasts, on the last page.

## Leadership for achievement

Several shows explored what enables some schools and learners to beat the odds and achieve exceptional results despite their difficult conditions.

- 2016 began on a high note with principals **Mocheke Thoka** of Phomolong Secondary School, Tembisa, and **Wandile Makhubu** of Unity Secondary School, Daveyton, discussing the strategies that have led to consistent achievement of excellent matric results. In addition to high levels of functionality, these successful school leaders identify accountability at all levels, early identification and targeted support for at-risk learners, on-going teacher development including mentoring, and an entrepreneurial approach to school management as essential contributors to learner achievement. They also strongly emphasise the importance of building their learners' self-esteem.
- The vital role of principals and teachers in creating the conditions that enable learners to achieve is confirmed by a trio of high achieving Unity Secondary School matriculants. This conversation highlights the importance of a positive mindset and reveals these learners' extraordinary dedication and effort, their sense of hope for the future and their readiness to accept responsibility for their own progress.

**"Our principal is more like a father – he's always around, monitoring, motivating, giving advice, sharing life experiences with us. He knows our names. Our school does not accept excuses – we are not allowed to blame our environment, other people, our situation. We have learnt that we must not let our circumstances limit us, but look beyond them."** Matriculant (Unity Secondary School)

- A broader perspective on the conditions that impact on learner achievement is provided by **Mr TM Godzana**, principal of Daliwonga Secondary School in Soweto. While confirming factors already mentioned, he calls attention to the role that extra mural activities play in helping learners develop self-discipline and dedication, and the transfer of these positive attitudes to academics. This podcast also emphasises the value of partnerships with enabling organisations and collaboration with neighbouring schools aimed at sharing good practice and building capacity.



Barbara Dale-Jones and Lindelwa Nqezo

## Improving learning outcomes with ICTs

The interview with **Lindelwa Nqezo**, principal of Tamaho Primary School in Katlehong, shows what a leader with vision and the determination to **make a real difference** in the lives of her learners is able to achieve. The key has been the successful implementation of ICTs to support teaching and learning, accomplished through entrepreneurial thinking to maximise opportunities, careful planning and organisation, and enlisting the support of a wide range of people and organisations.

## Leadership principles and practices

The podcasts are a rich source of information on tried-and-tested leadership approaches and best practices that principals and others in leadership positions could use to change or improve their working practice.



Dr Anthea Cereseto

- **Dr Anthea Cereseto**, principal of Parktown Girls' High, describes her **approach to leadership** in a school context that combines tradition with innovation to ensure learning that is relevant for the 21st century. Key aspects include a 'care and grow' style that both supports and stretches teachers and learners, effective communication to build understanding, the creation of many leadership positions coupled with empowering teachers as leaders within their own contexts, and an emphasis on the principal's primary role of instructional leadership.
- In a second interview Dr Cereseto discusses the **critical importance of planning** in the life of the principal and the school, showing how it builds on and incorporates evaluation, monitoring and reflection, while infusing into and strengthening every element of the leadership and the school.

**"We don't know what the future will be, so we work on making sure our learners learn skills that are transferable and would be applicable in any context: generic skills like problem solving, decision making, communicating, knowing how to find and work with information..."** Dr Anthea Cereseto

- **Dr Siphwe Mthiyane** of the Wits School of Education describes key **instructional leadership practices** that have been shown to have impact – for example, principals teaching an examination subject, including extra lessons, thereby serving as models for the teaching staff. Effective teaching and learning is also supported by maximising teaching time, mentoring and developing teaching staff, establishing and maintaining firm routines and empowering HODs to monitor teaching and learning. It is also vital that principals have high expectations of staff and learners, and accept accountability for what happens in their schools.



Dr Siphwe Mthiyane

- In a later show Dr Mthiyane examines issues of **ethics and ethical leadership**, including some of the challenges and contradictions. He stresses that an ethical school culture starts with the principal, whose manner in carrying out responsibilities and behaviour towards people sets the tone for the whole school.

**"Our research showed that school principals do understand what ethical leadership is, but that they frame their conceptualization of ethics and ethical leadership within their contextual realities, within which endemic corruption, nepotism, and patriarchy are rife."** Dr Siphwe Mthiyane

## Leadership in teacher development

Several podcast guests explored aspects of this topical theme:

- **Zonke Mpotulo** of LEAP Schools describes the philosophy and structure of LEAP's Future Leaders Programme for **pre-service teacher training**. Potential teachers are identified and recruited while still at school. In response to the challenge that young people tend not to be attracted to teaching and that many who enter the profession don't stay, LEAP focusses on selling the bigger vision of bringing social change and value to children and communities. This approach is attracting top performing students. Trainee teachers enrol with UNISA and intern at LEAP schools, where they are paired with experienced teachers for practical training and mentoring. Facilitated processes and reflection groups promote personal growth, socio-emotional awareness and skills, and leadership abilities.



Zonke Mpotulo

- The DBE has emphasised **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)**, as platforms for the professional development of teachers. **Dr Razia Ghanchi-Badasie**, principal of Brenthurst Primary which has successfully implemented PLCs as a means of improving results, provides practical guidelines for setting up and running PLCs. She describes the principal's role in establishing and supporting PLCs and highlights some of the challenges and critical success factors.

**"A professional learning community is an innovative and empowering model of teacher collaboration. It enables teachers to work together in a systematic yet democratic way that leverages their capacity and develops their instructional knowledge and skills. Teachers share the workload and learn from their peers and management."** Dr Razia Ghanchi-Badasie



Adriaan Groenewald of the Leadership Platform with Mpho Matlala and Marcelle Ravid of ORT SA

- **Mpho Matlala** and **Marcelle Ravid** describe ORT South Africa's programmes to **improve teaching quality and outcomes**. Active mainly in Alexandra, ORT SA provides training and support to principals, SMTs and teachers, focussing on pedagogy and content for maths, science and technology. ORT SA also offers programmes on using ICTs for teaching and administration tasks, and on leadership and management to support whole school development.

- **Murray Thomas**, incoming principal of Roedean School, reflects on the responsibility of school leaders to identify and **develop young teachers with leadership potential**. This involves keeping an open mind about how leadership talent reveals itself, creating a variety of structured and informal developmental opportunities including allowing mistakes to be made, and encouraging reflection with a partner.

**"Moving from being a teacher to being a school manager is a big jump as there are a whole range of unlearnings and new learnings to go through – but one hopes the person does not lose touch with the main idea, which is classroom practice."** Murray Thomas

## Doing education differently ...

What does the future hold? **Melanie Smuts**, founder and CEO of Streetlight Schools points to the potential for **innovation** to radically **improve the quality of education**.

Streetlight Schools' highly innovative model brings quality primary education to low-income communities. It empowers learners to master core skills and inspires curiosity and a love of learning through collaborative, inquiry-based learning that is relevant to the children's experience, technology-enabled learning and targeted instruction.

Costs are contained by making the most of available resources, using tutors to support core teachers and partnering with an affordable housing developer.

The model calls for strong leadership to create a clear vision, a supportive environment that enables teachers to grow creatively and improve their teaching practices, and good systems as a foundation for innovation.



Melanie Smuts, founder and CEO of Streetlight Schools

**“The essential question we are trying to answer is: how do we provide really high quality education in communities that currently don't have access to quality education, and how do we do that within the existing resources of the country? The good news is that if you take a very innovative approach, it is possible to create an education model that both controls costs and improves quality.”** Melanie Smuts

Click on the links below to go to the podcast keypoint summaries on the BRIDGE Knowledge Hub and from there to the podcasts on CliffCentral.com.

### Leadership in Education Podcasts - 2016 Topics and Guests

Topics	Guests
<a href="#">Leadership for extraordinary matric results</a>	Mocheke Thoka (Phomolong Secondary School) & Wandile Makhubu (Unity Secondary School)
<a href="#">Tips for successful leadership</a>	Dr Anthea Cereseto (Parktown Girls' High School)
<a href="#">Overcoming challenges with vision, commitment, hard work</a>	Unity Secondary School 2015 matriculants
<a href="#">Importance of professional development</a>	Theo Tholo, SACE
<a href="#">Planning for successful leadership</a>	Dr Anthea Cereseto (Parktown Girls' High School)
<a href="#">Award winning leadership</a>	Kope Malatsi (St Paul's High School)
<a href="#">Leadership through Professional Learning Communities</a>	Dr Razia Ghanchi-Badasie (Brenthurst Primary School)
<a href="#">Developing young leaders with vision</a>	Zonke Mpotulo (LEAP Future Leaders Programme)
<a href="#">Leadership to empower learning</a>	Melanie Smuts, Streetlight Schools
<a href="#">Introducing ICT to enhance teaching and learning</a>	Lindelwa Nqezo (Tamaho Primary School)
<a href="#">Training and empowering teachers and SMTs to improve teaching and learning</a>	Mpho Matlala & Marcelle Ravid (ORT SA)
<a href="#">Award winning teaching</a>	Jason Fisher (HOD, Randfontein High School)
<a href="#">Award winning teaching – Part 2</a>	Tasnim Muradmia (HOD, IR Griffiths Primary School)
<a href="#">Instructional leadership practices for school principals</a>	Dr Siphwe Mthiyane (Wits School of Education)
<a href="#">How to deal with school bullying</a>	Gordon Cooper (Phoenix Foundation)
<a href="#">Ethical leadership</a>	Dr Siphwe Mthiyane (Wits School of Education)
<a href="#">Corruption in schools</a>	Ronald Menoe (Corruption Watch)
<a href="#">Reflections on leadership in education</a>	Murray Thomas (incoming principal, Roedean School)
<a href="#">2016 Bafundisa Conference</a>	Dr Daya Chetty (SAPA)
<a href="#">Passion, purpose, planning and partnerships</a>	TM Godzana (Daliwonga Secondary School)
<a href="#">Taking the initiative in using ICTs</a>	Thembi Mkhonza (Esithebeni Lower Primary School)