



AEC

ANNUAL 2023
REPORT

*Forging economic dignity
for children of Alexandra*

FORGING

economic dignity for children of Alexandra

“Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mine worker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another.”

– Nelson Mandela



Table of Contents



DEAN YATES
Founder



JUSTICE EDWIN CAMERON
Patron (National Order of the Baobab - Gold)

Established :

1996

Registration :

Public Benefit Organisation: 930-000-698-PBO

Non-Profit Organisation: 025-968-NPO

The Alexandra Education Committee	1
Schooling Challenges in South Africa	3
The Purpose of The AEC - Crossing the Bridge	5
But More Than Just a Bursary Programme 3 Intervention Programmes	7
Message from the Chairperson	9
Director's Review 2023	10
Challenges	15
Academic and Pastoral Report	17
Comments from Parents	23
Educator Workshop Report	24
Thanks	26
AEC Council and Staff	27
Donors 2023	31
Gallery	33

The Alexandra Education Committee



ALEXANDRA

Alexandra is the oldest township in Johannesburg

The history of Alexandra began in 1912, and, 110 years later, it has become a poor and overcrowded square mile existing in stark juxtaposition to the richest square mile of Africa, Sandton, which lies within walking distance. Estimates as to the numbers of people in "Alex" range from 750 000 to one million.

For many, Alexandra is viewed as a place of transience, with the hope, often fruitless, that better opportunities will open up. "Alex" is ill-equipped to manage the constant arrival of increasingly more desperate and indigent victims of the widespread unemployment affecting the country.

The escalating unemployment rate in the township also deepens the existing socio-economic inequalities which are all too evident. There are too many hungry households, with many living on social grants without the means to provide for their most basic needs.



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The Alexandra Education Committee

SCHOOLING IN ALEXANDRA

The 5 high schools have to cope with school numbers never intended for the size of the premises; the class sizes are often 3 or more times that of their suburban counterparts.



Primary school classrooms can have 80 children in them. Teaching a class of so many, effectively, poses many challenges even for the most gifted teacher.

Of course, the issues concerning schooling in Alexandra are part of wider concerns about the South African educational system especially as they pertain to the township and rural schools.

The Alexandra Education Committee

SCHOOLING CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA



The article continues:

More than 80% of our Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in any language. In 2019, only 37% of Grade 5 learners had some basic mathematical knowledge. In 2021, more than half of Grade 1 learners did not know all the letters of the alphabet after a year of schooling.

South Africa performs very badly in international tests compared to other countries, many of them poorer than us. In the 2019 Trends in Mathematics and Science Study, South Africa's Grade 9 learners — on a maths test designed for Grade 8s — placed us stone last out of 39 participating countries. Similarly, in the 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, South Africa had the lowest average reading literacy score out of 50 participating countries.

In the 2019 *OECD analysis of Education in South Africa – “Education at a Glance”*, the following concerns are raised in respect of poor tertiary qualifications and the implications of this for employment in a country where the unemployment rate is officially given as 32%:

Ann Bernstein of the CDE commented after the 2023 matric results were announced:

What these pass rates hide is the reality of large numbers of learners dropping out or staying behind for a year or more before writing their final exams. The throughput rate at which learners starting in Grade 8 (the first year of high school) pass matric in the expected five years is equally sobering. Only 50% get through matric in the expected time. The rest fail, drop out or repeat years. A 2021 paper by education experts at the University of Stellenbosch found that between 55 and 59 percent of learners are over-age in Grades 10 to 12. Researcher Martin Gustafsson has shown that only 55 percent of young people aged 23 to 27 successfully completed 12 years of schooling.

Tertiary attainment in South Africa is the lowest across all *OECD* and partner countries, with the majority of the population having an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualification as their highest level of education.

More adults are attaining upper secondary education in South Africa than a decade ago. The share of young adults without upper secondary education dropped from 27% in 2008 to 18% in 2018.

Those with an upper secondary qualification are less likely to be employed and are more at risk of being neither employed nor in education or training at a young age than those with a tertiary degree.

While tertiary education is not widespread in South Africa, the country spends a larger share of its wealth on the public funding of primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education than most *OECD* and partner countries.

The Alexandra Education Committee



The report concludes:

Tertiary education pays off in South Africa. The employment rate among 25–64-year-olds with a tertiary qualification was 85%, 30 percentage points higher than for those with only upper secondary qualification.

UNICEF highlights another issue, namely that of gender disparity.

While providing quality early learning and basic education has its own challenges, keeping children in the education system to complete their education

The report further comments:

Tertiary qualifications are less common in South Africa. Only 7% of adults have a tertiary education, the lowest among all *OECD* and partner countries. Tertiary attainment is equally low among younger adults: only 6% of 25–34-year-olds were tertiary educated, also the lowest across *OECD* and partner countries and well below the G20 average of 38%.

(Matric), is another. Just over a quarter of South Africa's cumulative cohort drop out of school before the end of Matric – the majority of whom are from poor areas and vulnerable to numerous barriers to education. Data shows that learner drop-out becomes a serious problem after grade nine, but that the underlying causes build up during earlier grades. This inequality of access is worsened by a gender inequality that impacts young girls especially. With only 28.5 per cent of young women graduating tertiary institutions in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)-related careers, a widening gender gap in schools must be addressed.



The Purpose of The AEC

There is a highway from Johannesburg to Pretoria. Shortly after one leaves Johannesburg, one travels under a pedestrian bridge. Were you to go to the left you would soon encounter Sandton, “the richest square mile of Africa”; were you to turn right, you would encounter one of the poorest square miles, an area known by some locals as “Gomorrah”.

OUR MISSION

It is generally accepted that **quality education** is the only way to break the cycle of poverty, inequality and unemployment. Our goal is thus to help more of the young people from Alexandra gain the qualifications necessary to cross the bridge to Sandton and attain meaningful employment.

OUR OBJECTIVES

The AEC seeks to forge more economic dignity for the youth of Alexandra where the current unemployment rate for 16–25-year-olds is a major factor behind growing social unrest.

The AEC aims to impact directly the lives of young people in Alexandra so that they are able to benefit from tertiary and professional opportunities denied to most of their parents and family members.

BUDGET AND FUNDING

The AEC pays for the bursars' school fees, transport, school uniforms, text books, stationery and the necessary IT devices, such as laptops and tablets. Essentially, this comprehensive bursary allows the child to focus on his or her studies and achieve excellent results.

In short, the more financial support received, (through bursaries or non-specific donations), the more children we can offer quality education to.

We operate according to a breakeven budget with low overhead costs, and only 3 full-time members of staff (the Director, Financial Administrator and General Administrator).

OUR VISION

The Alexandra Education Committee contributes to the economic and social development of Alexandra and wider community through enabling individuals with high academic potential from severely disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve their potential through obtaining quality education.

IMPACT

The AEC supported 242 learners, the majority of whom were girls, with bursaries in 2023. There were also a large number of primary school learners in our Saturday School programme. Working on the usual impact consideration, the AEC is contributing to the long-term economic benefit of some 2814 people.

Crossing the Bridge

At the close of business every day, Sandton is emptied as the better paid employees head home to the suburbs while many of the lowest paid workers head home to Alexandra in taxis or across the pedestrian bridge.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

- Numbers of high school bursars supported and fully sponsored
- Numbers of primary school learners assisted
- Number of teachers attending training workshops
- Percentage pass at matric with special attention paid to number of Bachelor Diplomas (university passes)
- Attendance at support programmes such as Saturday School and holiday schools
- School performance – we monitor reports on a termly basis to ensure that our bursars are progressing in line with our expectations



But More Than Just a Bursary Programme:



3 Intervention Programmes

BURSARIES

1. This is the focus of the AEC: identifying high school learners of promise from the township of Alexandra who come from households with very limited means.
2. Our intention is to increase the present number of bursars significantly over the next 5 years.
3. We constantly evaluate the quality of the schools we send our bursars to, and investigate new possibilities. In respect of the independent schools we use, our contribution is generally subsidised by the schools themselves.
4. We ask our sponsors to commit to supporting a child throughout high school (Grade 8 to Grade 12).
5. Our bursars attend weekly Saturday schools for lessons in Maths, English, Physical Science and Accounting.

PRIMARY SCHOOL ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMES

Above and beyond our Saturday School programme for our high school learners on bursaries, we operate classes for grade 5s, 6s and 7s on Saturday mornings in Maths, English and coding for those learners recommended by our partner primary schools, and who meet our entrance requirements. We assess the learners' progress throughout the year and offer bursaries for high schools where all criteria, foremost being academic potential, are met.

While not all of the grade 7s will be offered bursaries, they will gain much from the year's formal learning combined with some fun activities through which they interact with other children their age from different schools.

The quality of teaching will assist them with their preparation in the gateway subjects for high school.

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

We host workshops in Maths and English for teachers from schools in and around Alexandra when funding allows. This programme helps strengthen education in Alexandra for maximum impact beyond our core business of selecting children of talent for bursaries.



● PROGRAMME 1

● PROGRAMME 2

● PROGRAMME 3

Message from the Chairperson:



Yolisa Mvunyiswa
CHAIR

“ SUSTAINING A SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATION SUCH AS OURS REQUIRES SERIOUS COMMITMENT FROM SO MANY STAKEHOLDERS. ”

I firmly believe that the AEC is making a real difference in providing educational opportunities for many young people from the underserved community of Alexandra. The recent matric results bear testimony to how many young people are now successfully placed to lead a life of significance as they take their place in society.

Sustaining a successful organisation such as ours requires serious commitment from so many stakeholders. We are blessed to have wonderful sponsors and donors, hands on mentors, supportive Council members and a dedicated Director and staff. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all these friends of the AEC. We are also grateful to Justice Edwin Cameron, as our patron, for his ongoing support.

Our founders would be proud of what has been achieved at the AEC in 27 years, with nearly 250 bursars and a thriving primary school academic programme which takes place every Saturday.

While there is a clear emphasis on the academic success of the AEC bursars, increasingly there are other needs such as medical care, pastoral support including counselling, and provision of groceries where home circumstances are especially dire. Attention has to be paid to the whole child's needs if he or she is to thrive.

I hope the impact provided by the AEC grows ever stronger and that more and more students are, indeed, able to thrive.

Director's Review



1. LEARNERS

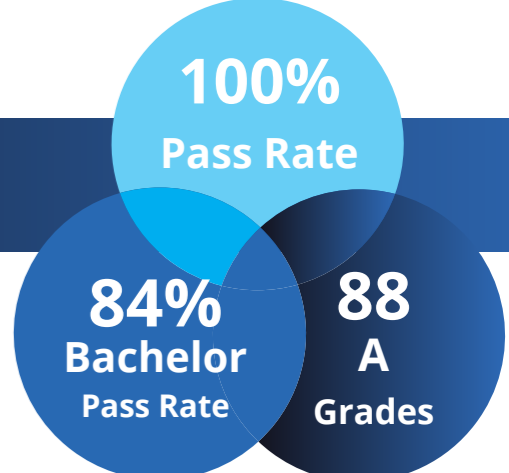
In 2023 we had

242 Sponsored bursars together with a further 40 Grade 6 learners and 120 Grade 7 learners

on our primary school programme.



2. MATRIC RESULTS



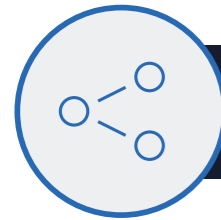
Top Achievers:

As

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Tshepiso** Tsotetsi
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 **Wandile** Motsamai, **Mavis** Ndlovu
- 1 2 3 4 5 **Obinna** Egele
- 1 2 3 4 **Melissa** Dlomo, **Tshepang** Sibanda, **Annet** Ncube, **Thabang** Talane,
- 1 2 3 **Yannis** Patu, **Kevin** Mofokeng, **Nnaniki** Matlala, **Karabo** Ngwenya, **Pebetsi** Malebana, **Marlena** Chauke, **Wandile** Dlamini

Well done, the Class of 2023!

Director's Review



3. FUNDING

Funding is a source of ongoing concern as it is challenging for our income to keep pace with our expenditure (affected in no small measure by inflation) and the placement of children at more expensive private schools, even though we pay a heavily discounted rate at these schools. I would like to thank the schools involved for all their support.

Our 3 major expenses are staffing (for Saturday School teachers) as well as school fees and transport for the learners. The number of bursaries we can offer is directly in proportion to the funds we are able to raise.



4. SCHOOLS



NEW PARTNER SCHOOLS

We have been delighted to set up partnerships with 4 new schools: Jeppe Girls, St Teresa's, St Stithians Girls' Collegiate and St David's Marist Alex.



ST JOHN'S

We were further delighted that, after St John's tested all our grade 7 boys, two of the boys were offered Centennial scholarships.



JEPPE BOYS & GIRLS

Two of our girls were also offered Ruth First scholarships in grade 8 at Jeppe Girls' School and one of our grade 8 boys was offered a Theo Jackson scholarship at the boys' school.



“ FUNDING IS A SOURCE OF ONGOING CONCERN ”

Director's Review



5. "WRAP AROUND" SUPPORT

Our role is far from confined to paying the school fees and providing academic support. We offer our learners intensive "wrap around" support. Our support extends to the provision of groceries (where the needs are particularly severe), medical support including appointments with optometrists and payment for glasses, as well as dental/orthodontic work, and counselling.



A. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Our learners benefit from our mentor programme. They benefit from having someone supportive outside of the family structures to talk to.

It is apparent that mental health issues seem to be on the rise or, at least, more obvious. We are having to make regular use of the services of a social worker. Several of the concerns are extremely serious. Each year we find that some of the matrics feel under enormous pressure to achieve and this can render a few being to a greater or lesser extent dysfunctional. Pressure primarily comes from home as the learners are likely to be the first in the family to have the possibility of a tertiary qualification followed by a career with a potentially good income.

We have found that some of the young alumni find the transition from high school to university also challenging, and some have come back to the AEC for advice and counselling. The Alumni Committee have been proactive in putting in measures to assist those in need.

As a staff, we have been discussing how best we can manage such mental health issues. Our Saturday School programme has been set up for academic support but we will have to build in more emotional support. Our first step has been to set the learners up with a well-being app that allows them to monitor their feelings and to be in contact with support when necessary.



Director's Review

B. VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

We have conducted vocational/aptitude assessments for all our grade 11s after which they receive a report and individual in-person feedback. These assessments are of immense value as the bursars embark on tertiary and bursary applications. Moreover, we offer them the benefits of the Gradesmatch/Bridge programme which

uses artificial intelligence to guide the matrics through the tertiary application process, ensuring fit between results, aspirations and institutions. The matrics are further guided as to bursaries pertaining to their chosen field of study.

C. MEETINGS WITH PARENTS

We hold meetings with the parents of learners in grade 9 to discuss subject choices for grade 10. We also held a meeting with the parents of grade 11 learners to discuss matric preparation. After our selection of the new grade 8s each year, we hold an orientation for the learners and their parents.

D. MATHS CAMP

A very successful grade 8 Maths Camp, with some fun outdoor activities, took place at Camp Discovery in Limpopo. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to acquaint ourselves with the new grade 8s and for them to get to know one another. It provides a sense of belonging to the AEC.



E. HOLIDAY SCHOOLS

Holiday programmes took place during each of the 4 term school holidays. These have included lessons in Maths, Life Sciences, History, Accounting, aerobics and life coaching.

F. WORK SHADOWING

MODO kindly helps in the organisation of work-shadowing for our grade 11s and grade 12s in the holidays. MODO allocated learners to professionals in the careers the grade 11s and grade 12s have shown interest in.



6. TEACHER WORKSHOPS

We continue to hold teacher workshops in literacy and numeracy for primary school educators from Alexandra.



7. IN CONCLUSION

The vibrancy of the AEC programme at work is best witnessed at our Saturday School programme when some 400 learners from grade 6 to matric come together at our "school within schools" for personal and academic support. I cordially invite anyone who would like to see our programme in action to join us one Saturday morning.

Paul Channon
Director

1. The AEC would ideally expand its programme to increase the impact; this, however, is compromised by a lack of available funding. A major challenge is procuring sponsorship for bursaries.
 - a. Support from corporates and trusts typically has a focus on the ECD and tertiary sectors – both worthy of funding. That, however, leaves the missing middle years which build on the benefits of the ECD years and prepares children for tertiary opportunities.
2. Selection of appropriate candidates is not an easy one given that the Alexandra primary schools are so large that able children often slip through the system.
 - a. Equally the choice of children can be a subjective one, relying on the staff involved at the school.
 - b. A further complication is that aptitude doesn't always translate into results owing to a number of factors including emotional issues and inadequate teaching preparation.
 - c. The above pertains even more so to boys owing to a general immaturity at this stage of development.
 - d. Age complicates selection further as those in grade 7 will range from 11-13 years with the older children more likely to fare better than their younger peers.
3. Choosing the right schools for children is also a balancing act in terms of the right fit.
 - a. The schools should be affordable and show evidence of good leadership, a culture of learning as well as opportunities for personal growth.
 - b. There needs to be a “fit” between the school and the child. This is a balancing act between the resilience of the child and the care of the school given the humble background of the learners. As we increasingly place children at IEB schools, the children encounter new challenges socially and academically.



4. The AEC has a small complement of staff and the burdens of managing an organisation of over 400 learners is demanding.
5. While we pride ourselves on our consistent 100% pass rate and high Bachelor Pass rate, there are those who will battle in the post-matric world. We provide as much support as possible in this regard.
6. As alluded to elsewhere in this report, the difficulties of mental health, which are becoming increasingly apparent, intrude upon the learners' well-being and the learning process. This requires us to provide more emotional and pastoral support.
7. Involvement of other stakeholders:
 - a. There is often limited support from parents as they would typically not have any experience in tertiary preparation to assist the children.
 - b. Some AEC alumni support us as best they can, typically by showing continued interest and assisting on Saturday mornings. It would, however, be pleasing to see even more of a culture of giving back.
 - c. We are blessed to have the support of many mentors. As it's a voluntary role, however, some mentors are inconsistent in connecting with the children as regularly as we would like. Some also battle to commit to the 5 years of the child's schooling, compromising the relationship that has been built up.



Academic and Pastoral Report - Mrs Kate Wong

SATURDAY SCHOOL

Saturday lessons are given in Maths, English, Physical Sciences and Accounting and for the first time in 2023, Further Studies in Mathematics. In addition to the High School Programme, 120 Grade 7s and 40 Grade 6s attended Saturday school on a weekly basis for a full morning of lessons and activities.



Grade 11s helping a Grade 10 with Physical Sciences at Saturday School



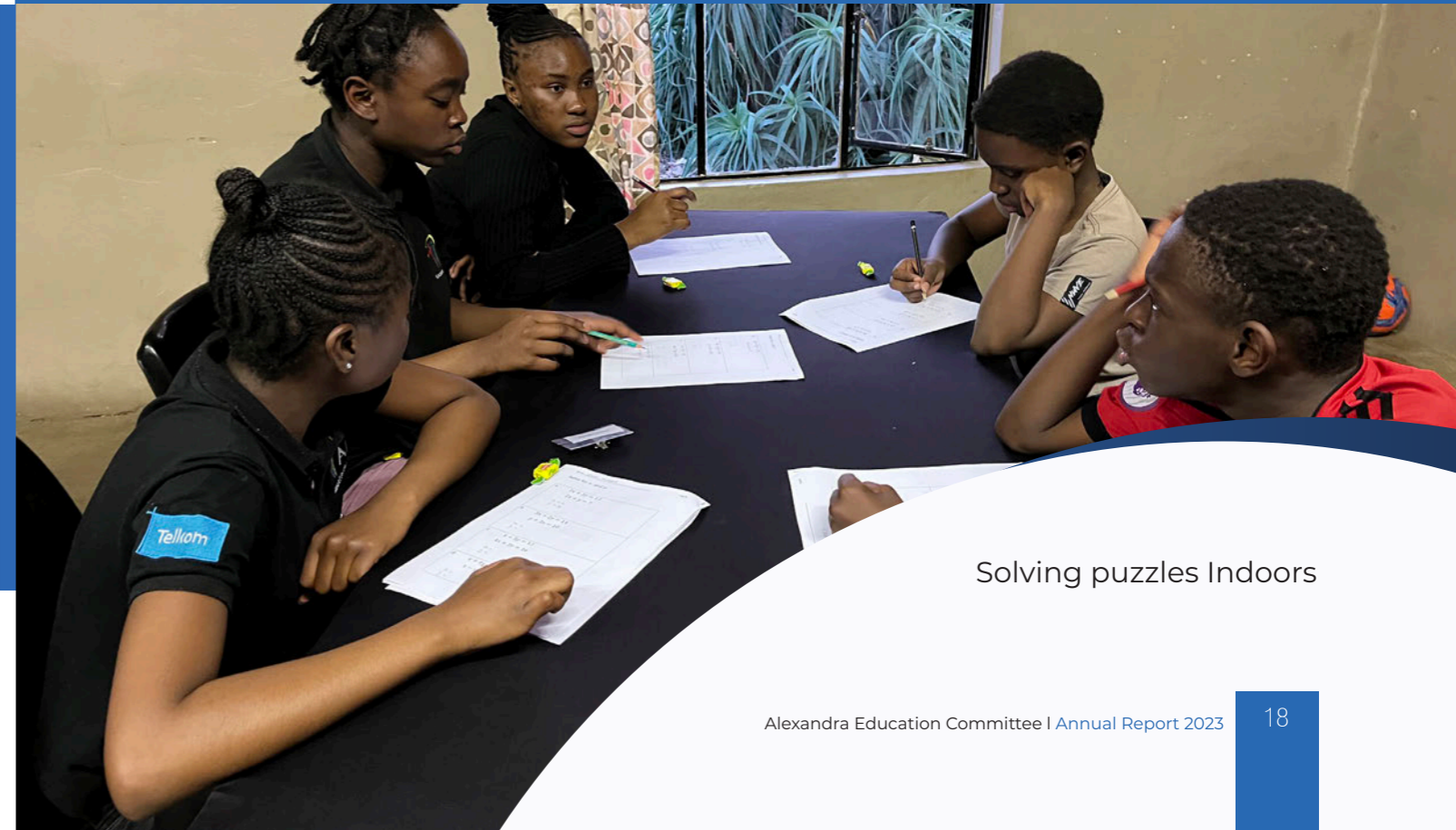
MATHS CAMP

A very successful Grade 8 Maths Camp, with some fun outdoor activities, took place at Camp Discovery in Limpopo. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to acquaint ourselves with the new Grade 8s and for them to get to know one another. It provides a sense of belonging to the AEC.



Reflective Learning in action on a Saturday.

“Reflective Learning is an online maths programme that helps build a strong foundation in the subject and addresses any learning gaps.”



Solving puzzles Indoors

Academic and Pastoral Report - Mrs Kate Wong

JOB SHADOWING

MODO kindly helped in the organisation of work-shadowing for our Grade 11s and Grade 12s in the holidays. MODO allocated pupils to professionals in the careers the Grade 11s and Grade 12s have shown interest in.



BENEFITS OF JOB SHADOWING



- Real-world work exposure
- Skill Development
- Networking Opportunities
- Resumé Enhancement

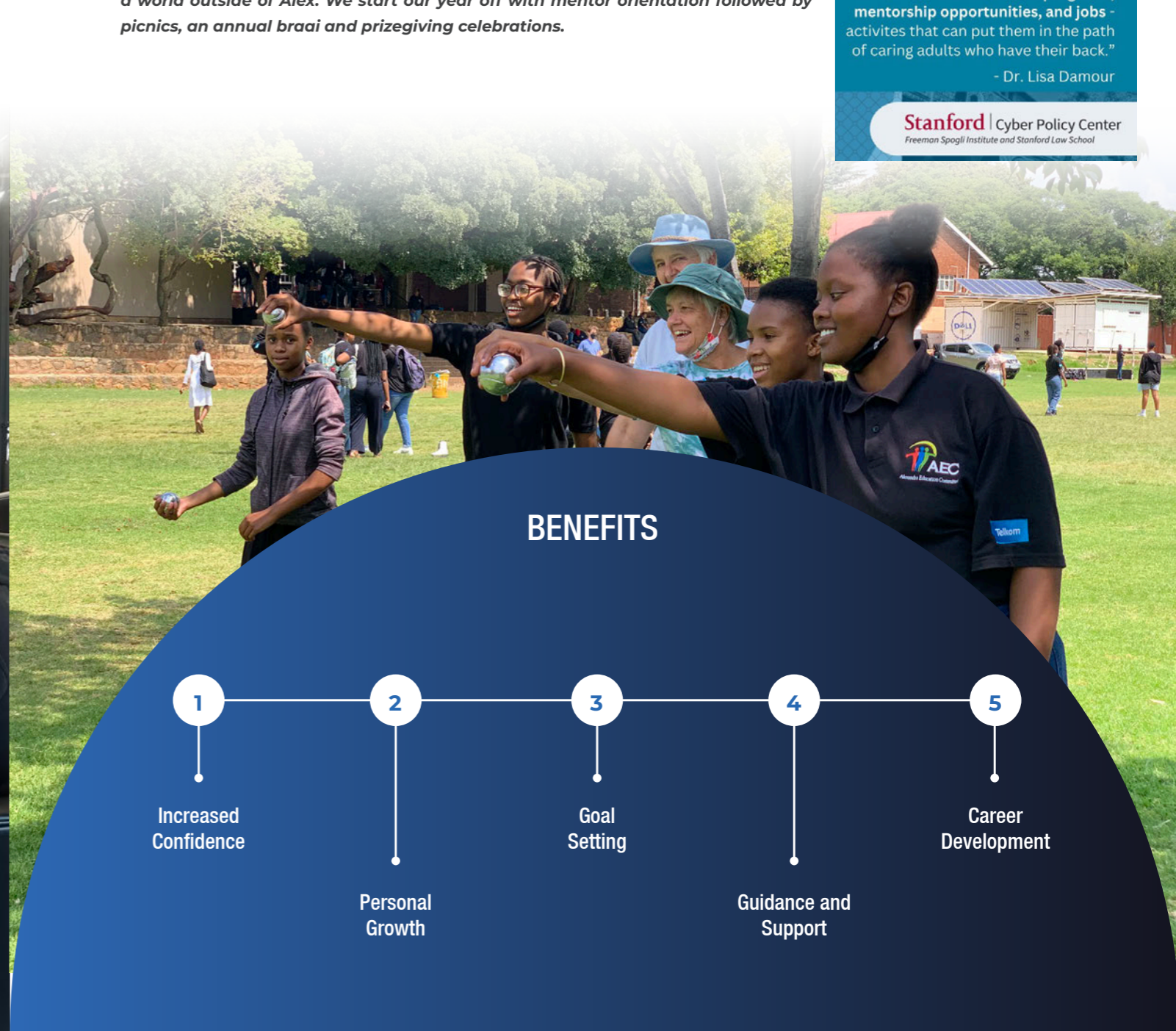
Academic and Pastoral Report - Mrs Kate Wong

MENTORING PROGRAMME

At the AEC, our goal is to match each boy and girl to an adult mentor. The mentor walks alongside our bursars and acts as a sounding board and provides view to a world outside of Alex. We start our year off with mentor orientation followed by picnics, an annual braai and prizegiving celebrations.

"Teenagers, especially, need relationships with good, caring adults who are not their parents. When we talk about mental health interventions for teens we need to talk about arts programs, mentorship opportunities, and jobs - activities that can put them in the path of caring adults who have their back."
- Dr. Lisa Damour

Stanford Cyber Policy Center
Freeman Spogli Institute and Stanford Law School



BENEFITS



Academic and Pastoral Report - Mrs Kate Wong

PROMOTING LITERACY IN GRADE 6 AND 7

Making the most of every opportunity to read



Hooked on Books performing for the Grade 6s and 7s



Children's Author Refiloe Moahloli reads to our Grade 6s



Academic and Pastoral Report - Mrs Kate Wong

WORDQUEST

Word Quest is an AEC programme that is designed to address backlogs in reading and writing in English.

We play a range of language-based games to develop vocabulary, spelling, fluency and knowledge of syntax. The games are a source of great fun and excitement. Learners are treated to a short read aloud or storytelling session to build listening comprehension, reading comprehension and vocabulary. Learners then have an extended period of time for independent reading. Despite much of the curriculum focus on reading, learners rarely spend time reading on their own, for

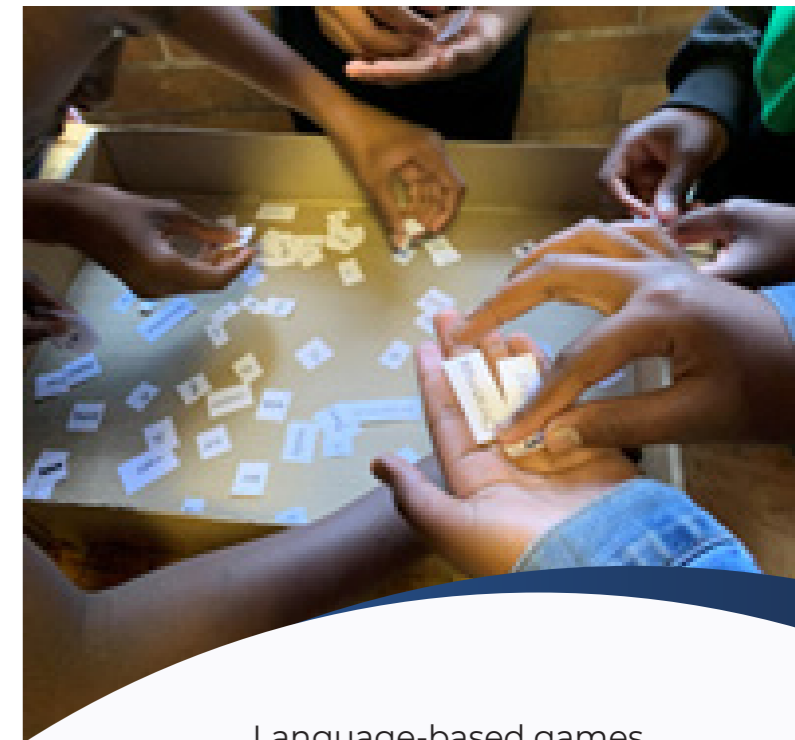
pleasure, at their level of interest and ability - the very thing they need to do to build their reading stamina. They are given this opportunity through a range of engaging materials including magazines, newspaper supplements and books. Every couple of weeks we focus



on writing activities, particularly poetry and rhymes, to build phonemic awareness and syllabication, as well as bookmaking, to develop their knowledge of story structure and help learners believe that they too are authors.



Lungile Ncube, Top Grade 11 learner at Sacred Heart College holding all of her awards.



Language-based games

Comments from Parents

“ Having my child attend a public school, since she has started the programme with the AEC I noticed that she has become more independent compared to prior to starting the programme.

The programme has benefited her so much as she is now able to work independently, her self-esteem has grown and she has become more responsible. She has improved in her writing, reading and numeracy skills as this has become evident in her school work.

“ Good day is 's mother i would like to say i am grateful for the opportunity you gave my child to attend school at aec. She has improved in her school work and more confidence about herself. As a single mother you have given my child the best education that i cannot afford and that was the best gift every parent pray and wish for her child. Aec showed my child that it doesn't matter where you came from you can achieve anything if you put your mind on it and hard work pays off. i am happy to say that because of this school she can be able to face everything challenge and overcome. i will be grateful if she can be given the opportunity to continue with the school. i believe that can be key to her future and it will help her to be something in life.

Thank you from Virginia

“ Good afternoon. I am parent to. I can proudly say that I am so grateful for the improvement on her Maths and English marks. It is so fulfilling to see her getting distinctions for Maths especially in that she even got a certificate for getting 80% this term.

Thank you so so much

“ I really appreciate the Saturday school program, it has installed drive to my son. He has so much hope and aspiration for the future. I am determined he will be some one important in future, I even believe that he can be a doctor he has always wanted to be besides the township environment we are in. Thando has big dreams and I am a very proud mom inspired to lift him up every time so he may continue to fly high. I'm glad he finally met his peers who are as brilliant and driven as he is. Thando knows how to interact with his peers now and has always been positive about the competition he got at Saturday school. he won a challenge once, and every week he would come back and tell us who won that week. and how close came to winning Dir Pitsi's coding challenge, and swore he will win the next week's challenge.

Thank you for the opportunity you've given our kids

“ Feedback:my child benefitted a lot while attending AEC and she was even more focused and enjoying school and she has been the highest in class the whole year. Thank you so much AEC TEAM

“ Hi.. she has improved in almost everything her reading, spelling and alot on her Math .. and her confidence in speaking English..

“ Good Morning, I'm Mother. has improved a lot, when it comes to Maths long division, and also her pronunciations you can hear her clearly, it has improved her self esteem to engage with her peers.

“ I will forever be grateful about the progress that I am observing from my child, she is now doing well in maths and English compare to last, there is a huge difference, particularly in English....

Grade 6 and 7 Saturday School Programme



Educator Workshop Report - Mr Kevin Agnew

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR WORKSHOPS 2023

A total of eight (8) educator workshops were run in 2023.

1. Workshop Scheduling
2. Cyclic Reading
3. Vocabulary Building for the Foundation Phase
4. Reading with Comprehension for the Foundation Phase
5. Reading with Comprehensions for the InterSen Phase
6. Introduction and Development of the Concepts of Division
7. Writing a Paragraph
8. Artificial Intelligence (AI)



A total of 196 participants from 16 different schools registered and 137 actually attended.

I would like to believe that we were able to reach over 5 000 learners through these workshops. Funding has been limited and focus has been on literacy and reading with comprehension.

Mathematics has been covered by the creation of 50 Math micro-lessons on the AEC Google Workspace Drive. Links are sent to interested schools.

Workshop Highlights

For the Vocabulary Building and Foundation Phase, Magri Genovese gave a live demonstration of how to teach the Grade 2 learners from Ekukhanyisweni. This was most successful.

For the AI Workshop on 30 October, we had two special guest participants: Dr Francine De Le Clercq, a senior researcher in the WITS Education Faculty, and Ms Juliet Tembe, HOD Training from the Johannesburg East GDE.

The AEC was invited to apply for the funding of a Literacy Programme by Rotary International

Educator Workshop Report - Mr Kevin Agnew

Interactive Workshops

Magri Genovese from the Magri Institute of Languages presented Foundation Phase interactive workshops where she taught Grade 2 learners from Ekukhanyisweni Primary Schools.

These workshops focusing on Foundation Phase Educators on "Vocabulary Building" and "Reading with Comprehension" were well received and will definitely be repeated in 2024 covering Intermediate and Senior Phase educators.

Analysis of teacher workshop evaluation forms shows that there is a need for more workshops.



In April 2023, the [Mail & Guardian](#) reported that South Africa budgeted R298.1 billion (4.63% of GDP) for basic education during 2022-2023. This represents an expenditure of R22,213.16 for each of the 13,419,971 learners in the public school system. Despite this allocation, South African public school learners are not receiving improved standards of education.

In a country where 63.9% of 15-24-year-olds are unemployed, and there are ever-increasing costs of living, trying to empower youth off rocky educational foundations is precarious. As President Cyril Ramaphosa emphasised in his State of the Nation Address: "Access to quality education for all is the most powerful instrument we have to end poverty".

And it is that access that feels so far away from many South African children, facing crumbling infrastructure, lack of resources, and economic inequality. Overcoming these challenges would be doable with well-skilled teachers in classrooms. Yet, in 2022, 1,575 unqualified and underqualified teachers were identified in public schools (according to a Teacher Demographics Policy Dialogue report by research and socioeconomic policy researchers at Stellenbosch University).

Mail & Guardian, Author: Rosa Sommer, Photo: (Darren Stewart)

Thank You

We would like to express the AEC's thanks to our Chair and all the Council members for their consistent support and encouragement, and for providing sound governance while overseeing the direction and well-being of the AEC.

To our many other social partners, our various volunteers and mentors, a hearty thank you for your important contributions. Indeed, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders of the AEC for their continued support.

As a small NGO, the AEC is very dependent upon funding and thus we are extremely grateful to all our sponsors and donors who are the lifeblood of the AEC's functioning.

Thanks also go to Waverley Girls' High School for allowing us to use office space and classrooms at the school. We also thank our partner primary and high schools for their contribution to our bursars' achievements and welfare.

Finally, I would like to thank our staff and teachers for their significant contributions. We acknowledge with sincere gratitude the hard work which occurs behind the scene with such dedication and goodwill.

Yolisa Mvinyiswa
Chairperson of Council

Paul Channon
Director & Member of Council

AEC Council and staff

COUNCIL



MS YOLISA MVUNYISWA
AEC Council Chairperson



MRS LYNNE RIVETT-CARNAC
Vice Chairperson



MR PAUL CHANNON
Director

AEC Council and staff

SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS



MS JANE MACGREGOR
Mentorship



MS FIKILE OLIPHANT
Alumni



MR DANIEL PRETORIUS
Legal advisor



MR DARLINGTON NDLOVU
Finance



MR NIGEL MCCLURE
Finance



MS YOLISA MVUNYISWA
Primary Schools



MR MARTIN PIENAAR
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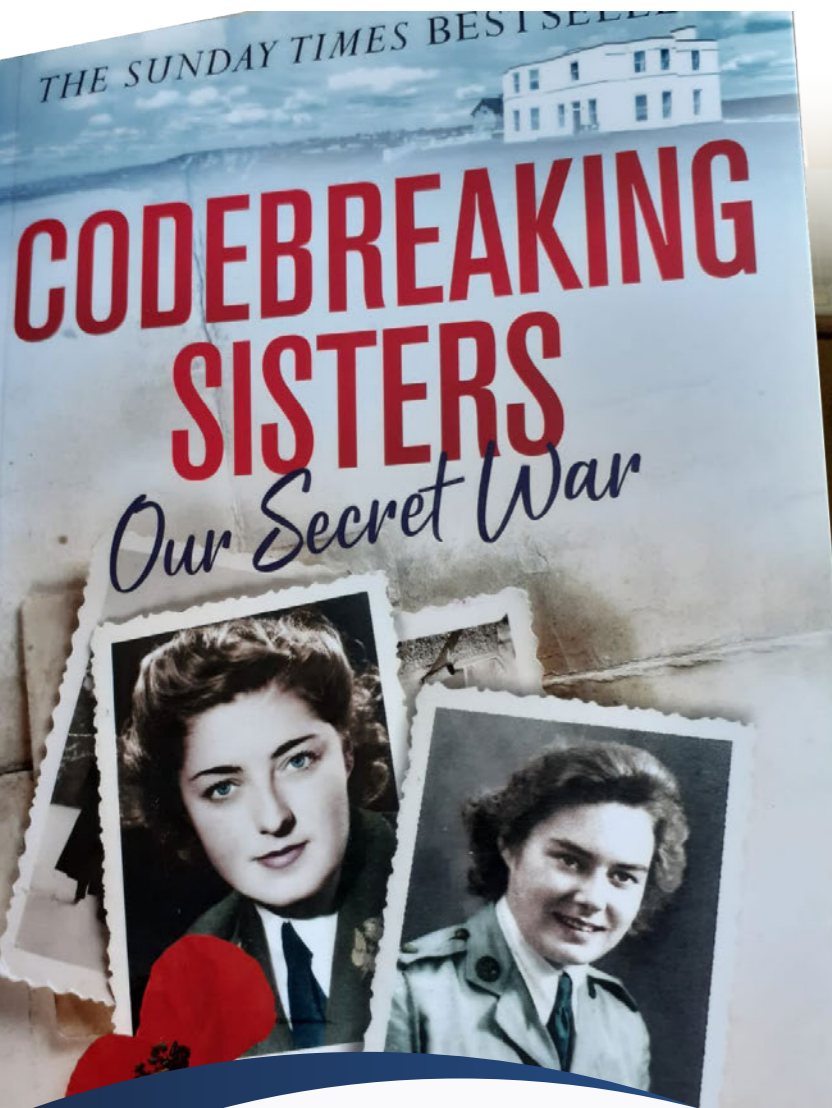
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*Grade 7 Saturday School
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MS JACKIE WELCH
*Afternoon programme
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Donors 2023

The AEC has over 42 individual donors, either funding full bursaries or making substantial donations. The AEC has over 170 volunteers contributing to its work.



Our oldest donor turned 100 years old in 2023. She has a fascinating history of working in the intelligence services in the Second World War as described in her book, "Codebreaking Sisters".



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