

SOWETO SCHOOLS MAGAZINE

MONTHLY PUBLICATION

**PRINCIPAL
OF THE
MONTH
SIBONGILE
MKHULISE
LEADING WITH
PURPOSE**



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From educator to principal, Glory Sibongile Mkhulise reflects on her growth, qualifications, and vision for building a stronger school community.

Leading with Purpose: Principal Mkhulise's Journey

In this month's Principal of the Month feature, we spotlight a passionate and committed leader from the heart of Orlando East. Glory Sibongile Mkhulise, Principal of Zithathelo Primary School, known for her focus on holistic education and meaningful learner development, has been making a remarkable impact on the school and surrounding community.

Can you tell us about your journey in education and what led you to become the principal of Zithathelo Primary School?

I have been the principal of Zithathelo Primary School for four and a half years. I started my journey at the school as a PL1 educator and gradually progressed through the ranks.

From classroom teaching, I moved into a leadership role as a Head of Department, and later became the Deputy Principal. In 2020, I stepped into the role of Principal, a position I hold with pride and dedication.

Throughout my career, I have committed myself to personal and professional growth. I strongly believe in lifelong learning, and I have never allowed myself to stop studying. I hold a Junior Primary Teacher Diploma, an Advanced Diploma in Computer Literacy, a Diploma

in Leadership and Management, an Honours in Training and Development, and an Honours in Leadership and Management.

These qualifications have shaped the leader I am today and continue to guide my work in building a strong and effective learning environment at Zithathelo.

What are some of the biggest challenges and successes you've experienced while leading Zithathelo Primary?

Our school is facing ongoing vandalism, with intruders damaging electrical infrastructure by stripping wiring.

This, combined with the age and poor condition of the building, is disrupting learning and creating serious safety concerns.

How do you promote a culture of learning, respect, and community involvement at your school?

As the School Management Team (SMT), we have systems in place to ensure smooth operations—everyone knows their role and responsibilities.

However, we are struggling to get the same level of cooperation from the broader community. We need to instill a culture of respect and appreciation for schools within the Orlando community.

Schools are not just buildings; they are centres of hope and development. To improve our facilities and learning environment, we also need strong support for fundraising. If the school and community can come together and commit to big development projects, we can achieve so much more.



Zithathelile recently held a powerful Human Rights Day assembly—why do you believe it's important for schools to celebrate such days meaningfully?

Human Rights Day is one of the most significant milestones in our country's history. It serves as a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by those who fought for freedom and justice.

It's important that learners are continuously made aware of the meaning behind this day and why it matters.

The rights and opportunities we enjoy today are a result of that struggle, and educating our learners about this history helps them appreciate and protect the values of dignity, equality, and respect.

What message would you like to share with parents and the Orlando East community about their role in supporting the school and learners?

The Orlando East community must understand that schools do not have the financial resources to develop on their own—we need their support to grow and improve.

When the community stands with the school, we can build strong, successful institutions that truly serve our children.

Supporting local schools isn't just helpful—it's essential for creating great schools and a brighter future for our learners.

DITAWANA CELEBRATES GLOBAL RECYCLING DAY



On Global Recycling Day, Ditawana Primary School in Orlando East buzzed with excitement as students, teachers, and members of the non-profit organization Sikhulisa Intsha Yethu came together to promote sustainable practices and raise awareness about the importance of recycling. The event highlighted the environmental and economic benefits of recycling, such as reducing waste, conserving natural resources, and fighting climate change.

Through engaging activities like waste-sorting workshops and interactive talks, students learned about the global waste crisis, with millions of tons of waste harming ecosystems each year. The partnership with Sikhulisa Intsha Yethu inspired the school community to embrace a circular economy and take actionable steps toward a greener future.

The day was filled with hands-on initiatives, including a school-wide recycling drive where students collected plastic, paper, and glass to be properly sorted and recycled.

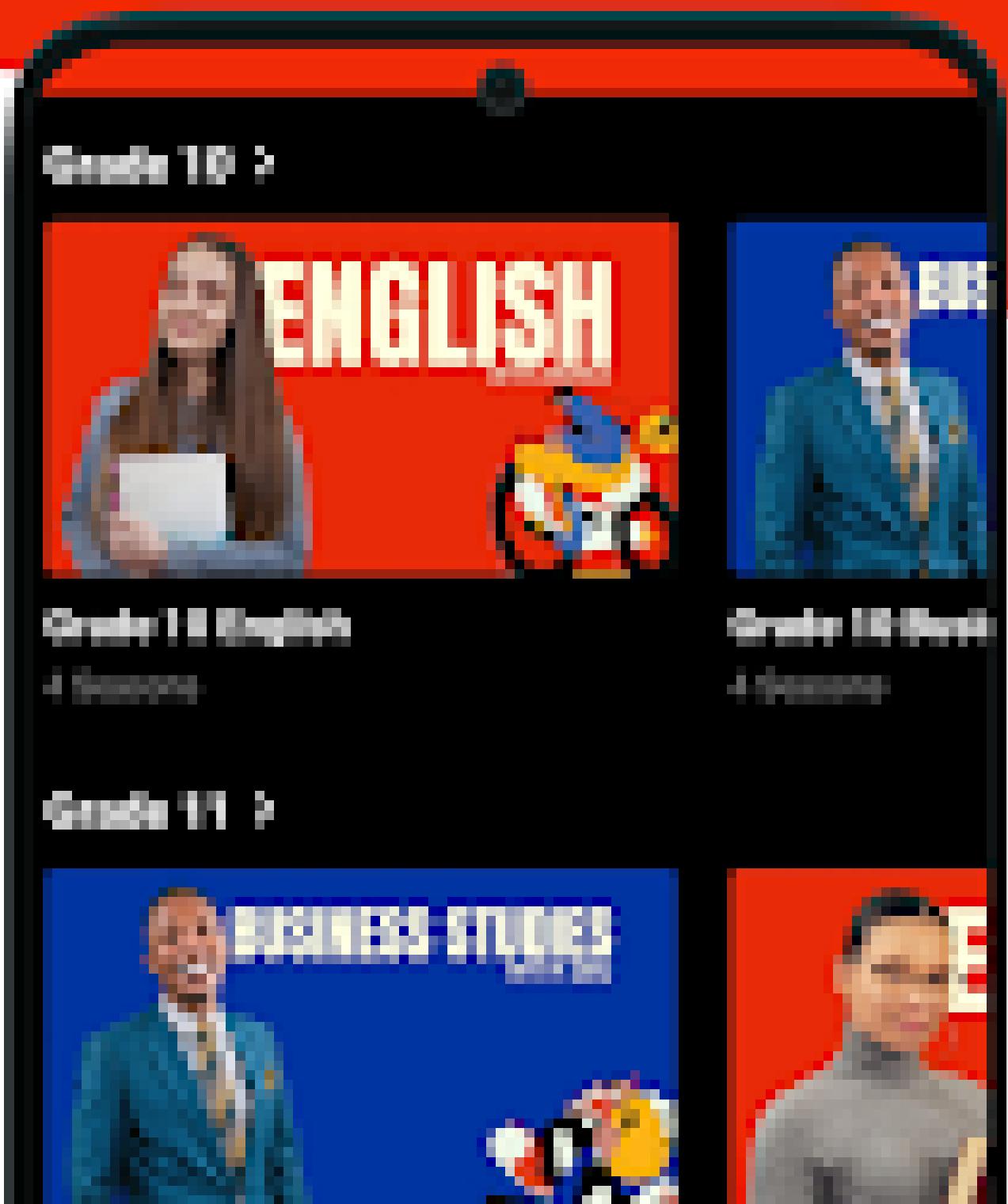


By fostering a sense of responsibility and enthusiasm among the students, Ditawana Primary School and Sikhulisa Intsha Yethu demonstrated how collective action can drive sustainable change in Soweto and beyond.



Spongein is an online streaming platform that offers students the entire CAPS curriculum in video format.

Each lesson is presented by teachers as well as tutors who are well versed in the various subjects (Mathematics, Sciences, languages and more) in a way that engages learners & helps them do better at school.



SADTU's New Leadership in Soweto



The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) plays a crucial role in representing educators across the country, and its presence in Soweto-East is both active and influential.

As the largest teacher union in South Africa, SADTU advocates for the rights and working conditions of teachers, while also promoting quality public education for all.

In Soweto-East, the union supports educators in various schools by engaging in policy discussions, labour matters, and professional development – ensuring that teachers are empowered, protected, and able to deliver their best in the classroom.

Recently, Mr. Sibusiso Jwili was elected as the new chairperson of SADTU in the Soweto East Branch. With a background in teaching and union activism, Mr. Jwili takes on the leadership role at a critical time, as educators continue to navigate challenges within the public education system.

In this short interview, he shares his vision for SADTU Soweto-East Branch, his priorities as chairperson, and his message to the broader community.



**Sadtu Chairperson in Soweto-East
Sibusiso Jwili**

SCHOOL NEWS

Congratulations on your election, Mr. Jwili. Can you tell us about your background and how you got involved with SADTU?

I'm a born activist who subscribed to Marxian ideology—Class Struggle—at a tender age. Hence, when I became a teacher, I realized that SADTU is the only movement for workers in education that advocates for workers from a class point of view.

What does your role as the chairperson of SADTU in Soweto involve, and what are your immediate priorities for this term?

It involves giving the branch I'm leading a class informed revolutionary path. Is to eradicate divisions among strata in the branch which emanates from class unconsciousness.

How does SADTU support teachers in Soweto schools, especially in terms of working conditions, training, and advocacy?

It organizes workshops and also forges fraternal relations with structures such as SGBs, NGOs etc.

What are the key challenges currently facing educators in Soweto, and how is SADTU helping to address them?

Overcrowding in classrooms which is due to anti-working class budgeting that embraces austerity measures, casualization, stagnant salaries in spite of high cost of living among others.

Lastly, what message would you like to share with parents about their role in supporting teachers and the education of their children?

There's an Afrikan proverb which says "it takes a village to raise a child", teachers cannot make it without the active support of parents and the community at large.

As Mr. Jwili steps into his new leadership role, his focus on unity, advocacy, and support for teachers is clear. His message to parents and the broader community serves as a reminder that education is a collective effort — one that requires strong partnerships between educators, families, and stakeholders.

With SADTU continuing to be a strong voice for teachers in Soweto-East, the future of education in the region remains in passionate and capable hands.



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Understanding the Role of the SGB in our Schools



School Governing Bodies (SGBs) are an essential part of our education system, ensuring that parents and communities have a voice in the running of public schools. But many people are still unaware of how these structures work or who supports them behind the scenes.

That's where the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) comes in. This organisation plays a vital role in strengthening and guiding SGBs across South Africa, particularly in townships like Soweto, where schools face unique challenges.



Mr. Pat Matome Mamabolo
Chairperson of Diepkloof NASGB Branch

To help us understand more about the work of NASGB and how it supports school governance, we spoke to Mr. Pat Mamabolo, Chairperson of the Diepkloof Branch.

In this interview, Mr. Mamabolo breaks down how NASGB is structured, what their core duties are, and how they help parents, principals, and communities build stronger, better-run schools.

Can you please tell us about your role as Chairperson of NASGB in Diepkloof branch?

At the branch level, my role is to support proper governance across 28 schools in Diepkloof, including assisting school management and School Governing Bodies (SGBs).

At the regional level, I also provide support through activism initiatives.

For those who don't know, what is the NASGB and what is its core mandate in South African schools?

The NASGB is a well-structured and regulated organization, with policies aligned to school governance and supported by the Department of Education.

It operates within a democratic and constitutional framework that upholds learners' rights and advocates for the interests of School Governing Bodies.

What kind of support does NASGB provide to School Governing Bodies (SGBs), especially in township schools?

NASGB provides a range of support to schools, we offer resources, training, advocacy, and a platform for collaboration among school members

What challenges do you see most frequently in the functioning of SGBs, and how does NASGB step in to help address them?

Newly elected SGB members need to be well-informed and capacitated. It's important for them to understand that serving on the SGB is a voluntary role driven by a commitment to our children's education and best interests.

They require proper and adequate training, including how to handle challenges such as unfamiliarity with meeting procedures, appropriate language for conducting meetings, and managing large volumes of paperwork.

How do you ensure that parents are empowered and knowledgeable enough to play an active role in school governance?

We promote good governance in schools by advocating for rights, providing resources, and fostering collaboration.

This is achieved through strategies such as advocacy, representation, training, and capacity building.

What are some of the recent successes or initiatives by NASGB in Soweto that you're particularly proud of?

Since the 1976 Soweto Uprising, NASGB has worked with parents and educators to promote equal education and protect school assets. I'm proud of the positive changes we've made in school governance and policy.

Our current projects include helping learners get ID books, teenage pregnancy awareness, promoting patriotism through the national flag, and improving school safety with CPF patrollers.

We also served as observers during the successful SGB elections in March 2023.

We also extend our sincere gratitude to Mr. Matakanye Matakanye, our National Secretary-General, for championing NASGB against all odds. He has done tremendous work and continues to lead strong collaborations between SGBs and schools.

There is sometimes confusion between the roles of school management and the SGB – how does NASGB help clarify these roles to avoid conflict?

NASGB helps clarify roles by emphasizing that the School Governing Body (SGB) is responsible for overall governance and policy-making, while the School Management Team (led by the principal) handles day-to-day operations, professional management, and curriculum delivery.

The SGB ensures the school operates within set policies, promotes the school's best interests in the community, and oversees property and finances. Teaching and learning are managed by the school staff. NASGB encourages collaboration between SGBs and principals to ensure the school functions effectively.

Finally, what message do you have for parents and community members about the importance of participating in school governance?

All parents, no matter their background, must get involved in school governance. By participating in SGB elections and meetings, you help shape policies, budgets, and the learning environment for your child's future. NASGB members volunteer because every child is our child, and education is a shared responsibility.

National Teaching Awards

The National Teaching Awards (NTAs), established by the Department of Basic Education in 2000, celebrate the dedication and excellence of South Africa's teachers.

Now in their 25th year, the NTAs recognize educators who make significant impacts in their classrooms and communities, often under challenging circumstances.



**National
Teaching
Awards.**

With 15 categories—including Excellence in Primary and Secondary School Teaching, Special Needs Education, and the Kader Asmal Lifetime Achievement Award—the awards highlight the diverse contributions of teachers across the nation.

The nomination process begins at the school level, where peers and school communities identify outstanding educators. These nominations progress through district and provincial evaluations, culminating in a national ceremony hosted by the Minister of Basic Education.

This structured approach ensures that exceptional teaching practices are acknowledged and shared, fostering a culture of excellence within the education system. The 2025 National Teaching Awards ceremony is scheduled for 9 October 2025.

Parents play a crucial role in this recognition process. By participating in nominations and supporting teachers, parents contribute to a supportive educational environment.

Simple acts—such as expressing gratitude, attending school events, and collaborating with teachers—can significantly boost teacher morale. As the adage goes, "It takes a village to raise a child," and honoring our teachers is a vital part of that village's responsibility.

How Meditation can Transform Behavioural Health in Class

By Tyler Boyle

Let's talk behavioural health. Mental and physical health are often top of mind, but now more than ever, we need to be speaking about behavioural health too.

Let's face it, something about the classroom has changed. We can speculate all day about the causes. It could be any number of factors: technology, mental health crises, ripple effects from the pandemic, or all of them compounded together.

No matter the reason, teachers have had to adapt to this change more quickly than ever, and the transition has not been easy.



The term "behavioural health" is one that I came up with when I founded [Dreamwalkers Meditations](#)—an organization that brings child-friendly guided meditations and curriculum-aligned SEL activities into schools. Behavioural health describes the interplay of our behaviours (conscious and subconscious) and how they contribute to our character, social skills, and overall well-being.

In a classroom context, the term acknowledges that students' actions have outcomes that can be unhealthy for their goals, relationships, and even their mental and physical health.

Key elements of behavioural health include: self-regulation, resilience, empathy, body awareness, and an understanding of how their actions affect themselves and others. Poor behavioural health stems from when a child's inner world feels chaotic. In this state, emotions are hard to manage, actions often feel out of control, and meaningful connection with others becomes difficult.

[This Article was first published on teachmag.com](https://teachmag.com)
[click here to read more...](https://teachmag.com)

The Power of Fasting and Meditation for Learners

Pastor J. G. Motlana

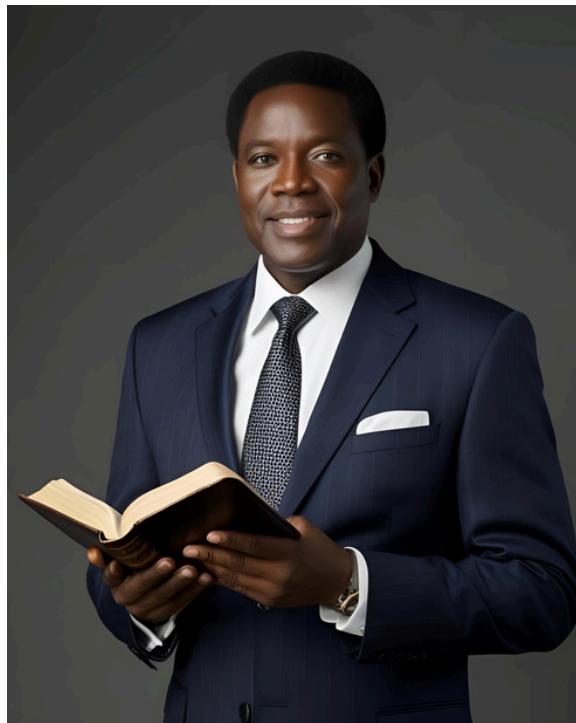
As parents, we carry the deep responsibility of guiding our children not only academically, but also spiritually and emotionally.

In today's fast-moving world, many children face pressure, distraction, and anxiety that can affect their school performance. One ancient and effective practice that can offer clarity, discipline, and inner peace is fasting, combined with meditation.

While often viewed as religious, fasting also teaches self-control and strengthens focus—qualities that are key for learners during study and exam periods.

Fasting is not just about going without food—it is about removing distractions. For young learners, fasting can be adapted to include reducing time spent on television, social media, or video games, and instead, dedicating that time to reading, prayer, or quiet reflection.

Meditation, on the other hand, is a powerful tool to calm the mind. When children take a few minutes daily to sit in silence, breathe deeply, and focus their thoughts, it improves their concentration, reduces stress, and opens their minds to learning.



As parents, let us encourage our children to develop habits that nurture their mental and spiritual well-being. Let's guide them in simple practices of silence, reflection, and sacrifice—even if it's just a short break from daily noise.

These practices can build resilience, improve discipline, and allow them to approach their schoolwork with renewed strength and purpose.

In every Soweto classroom, we must raise not just clever learners—but balanced, wise, and focused children.

**God Bless you all
Pastor J. G. Motlana**

BOOK REVIEW

BOOK: Education and the Working Class

AUTHOR: Prof. Naicker

Why do so many working-class and vulnerable children struggle in the education system?

Education and the Working Class argues that education remains centred on a middle-class narrative that ignores the lived realities of the poor and marginalised.

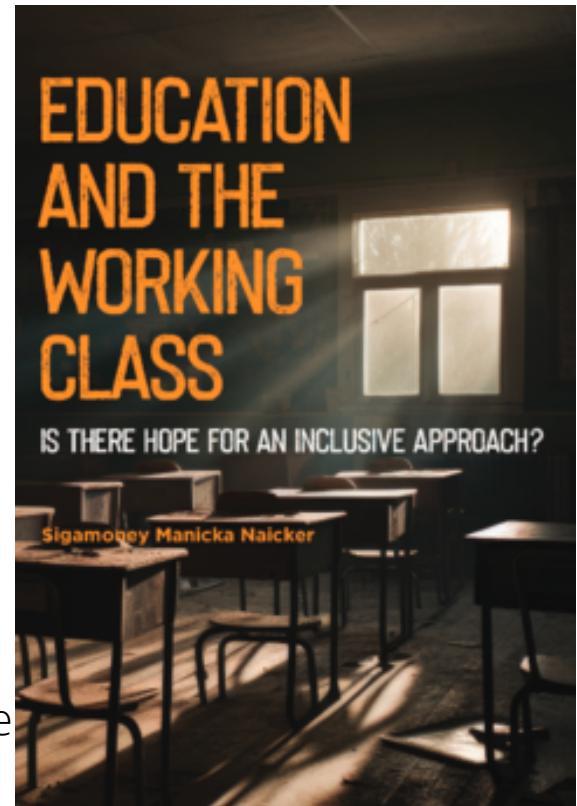
We dissect how a lack of sociological perspective and commitment to social justice has perpetuated an inflexible system that is failing vulnerable communities.

This book provides a cutting analysis of why interventions have failed to solve various issues and explores the limitations of special education and current inclusive policies.

The bureaucracy itself is scrutinised, calling for reformed teams combining disciplinary knowledge and project management skills.

Ultimately, a new social justice model is proposed for education planning. This would entail systemic changes like reworking the foundation phase around socio-emotional development, embracing contextual realities, and compensating for the lack of social/cultural capital.

Featuring insights from theorists like Bernstein and Bourdieu, alongside the author's own writings and speeches, the book initiates a vital debate. It envisions transforming education to empower rather than marginalise the working class through a transformative philosophy grounded in their unique needs and circumstances.



[CLICK HERE TO BUY THE BOOK](#)

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Soweto Schools Magazine is distributed to more than 5000 parents in Soweto via Email & WhatsApp.



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