

## **FRIENDS of AMASANGO UK AGM, Oct 2021**

### **THE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT by Dr Girlie Shadaya (Acting Principal)**

I wish to begin by thanking the trustees for their ongoing support.

#### **ACADEMIC YEAR**

Our academic year runs from January to December and we have 4 school terms in the year. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, start dates and finish for the terms are not static.

In January school opened on the 25<sup>th</sup> with the School Management Team (Principal, Deputy principal and the Departmental Heads) as well as all the support staff. The rest of the teaching staff came on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February while the learners started on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February. The term ended on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April and this was also Linda's last day at school as her retirement was on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> term was from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May to the 9<sup>th</sup> of July. With the high numbers of new covid infections, we were forced to break earlier on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July. We reopened on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July for the 3<sup>rd</sup> term. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, the Department of Education mandated all primary schools and Special schools to start attending at full capacity daily. We could not do so because of shortages in classrooms and the school yard is small making it difficult to implement the covid-19 prevention protocols. The third term ended on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October and we will open for the 4<sup>th</sup> term on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October to the 15<sup>th</sup> of December.

#### **STAFF AND LEARNER ATTENDANCE**

Covid19 has negatively impacted on attendance. Daily attendance has dropped, with 93 of the 106 learners being our weekly average. The high school and past pupils' group has had a good attendance, all 20 students are attending well. Both learners and teachers have not been attending school if one has influenza. The good news is that we have not had any member testing positive for covid.

#### **LEARNER ENROLMENT/ADMISSION**

The nature of the school's intake is that the new learners are introduced to Amasango by the Department of Education, through referrals by Social Development or mainstream schools, rather than turning up unannounced. This system of learner admission is affecting our enrolment greatly. Although mainstream schools, Social Development and other stakeholders send referrals to the Department of Education for assessment and placement to Amasango, the Department is slow in effecting this. The process of assessment is very slow as there is only one Educational Psychologist to service the whole district.

#### **STAFF ESTABLISHMENT**

There are 18 educators, 13 permanent paid support staff, and 5 stipendiary support staff. Of the 18 positions for educators, one is the vacant post left by Linda on retirement at the end of April. There is progress towards filling in of this post. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September we had interviews for the filling in of this post. Interviewed were 5 candidates of whom I was one of them. I would expect that by the 1<sup>st</sup> of November, the position of principal will be filled.

#### **TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL CURRICULUM**

On vocational training, sewing, pottery, fabric painting, beadwork, knitting, computer skills and crochet are offered, and learners are doing very well. As a school we wish to thank FRAMA UK for their generosity. They are paying towards WIFI in the new computer lab monthly. Learners are now able to do their typing and print work with ease. Some lessons can be projected and staff can hold projected meetings in the new computer lab.

FRAMA UK is the process of buying us a container that we will be using as a Beauty Salon Training Centre. The container will be customised to a classroom/training centre. Christina Thomas and the

Kanya group are assisting us with the training of teachers for the skills of Hair and Beauty Therapy. They have sent us the money for tuition; however, the training has not started. The logic behind the delay in training of teachers is that the training be done towards such time the container functioning is close by. Earlier training may have an effect where teachers get trained and they do not use the knowledge while they can still remember what they have learned.

The Department has given the school a container which we intend to convert to a classroom.

### **SPORT**

Sporting has not been taking place since the outbreak of covid-19. All sporting activities were cancelled at the onset of Covid-19, however of late learners have started taking part in non-contact sport.

### **THE NEW SCHOOL**

The site for a new school and hostels is now transferred to the Department of Education and registered with the local municipality. The Department of Education has indicated that it does not have funds to start building the new school in this Financial year (2021/2022)and it doesn't look like they are going to in the next Financial year (2022/2023).

### **SUCCESS STORIES**

We have some of our past pupils who are gainfully employed. An example is Saki Siggibo who is working at the African Musical Instruments (AMI). We see Saki working and tuning a hand played marimba. And because of his good conduct, the school has been given the opportunity of taking our Marimba instruments for fine tuning and repairs at AMI.

Sive Bavuma is doing well at Rhodes University and Nkosinathi Sododo is doing well at Eastcape Midlands College.

### **OTHER NEWS**

#### **1. BEREAVEMENT**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September we lost one of our own learners after he drowned in a flooded construction trench. Asanele Qomfo was in grade 4. The school and in particular his class were hurt deeply. I want to thank the staff at the school who did their best in providing counselling to the other learners. As a school we helped the family with food provisions, bought flowers and provided with transport on the day of burial. The Department of Education visited the school, Asanele's family and the constructor on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September even though I had informed them of the tragic incident of the day it happened. Processes are underway to sue the constructor for negligence.

On its part, the constructor paid R25 000 towards other funeral costs such as food and for the burial, they conducted the burial lead by the family. Asanele was laid to rest on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October at the Mayfield Cemetery. Makana municipality gave the family the land for which he was buried.

#### **2. UPCOMING EVENTS**

- a) On Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of October I will be attending an assembly led by Rev Kate. The assembly is for her primary school and I will be telling the children about Amasango school. The assembly will be conducted via ZOOM.
- b) On the 18<sup>th</sup> of October I will be attending a ZOOM meeting with the Pavilion school. I am looking forward to participating in both meetings.