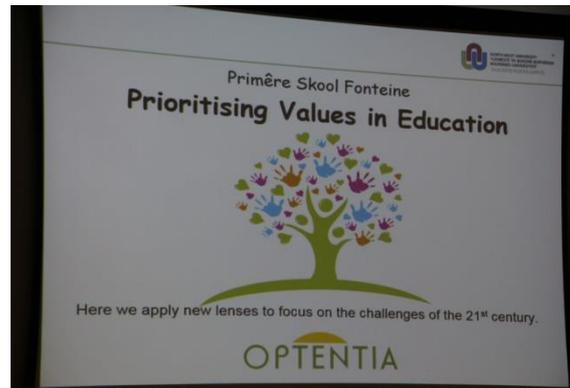
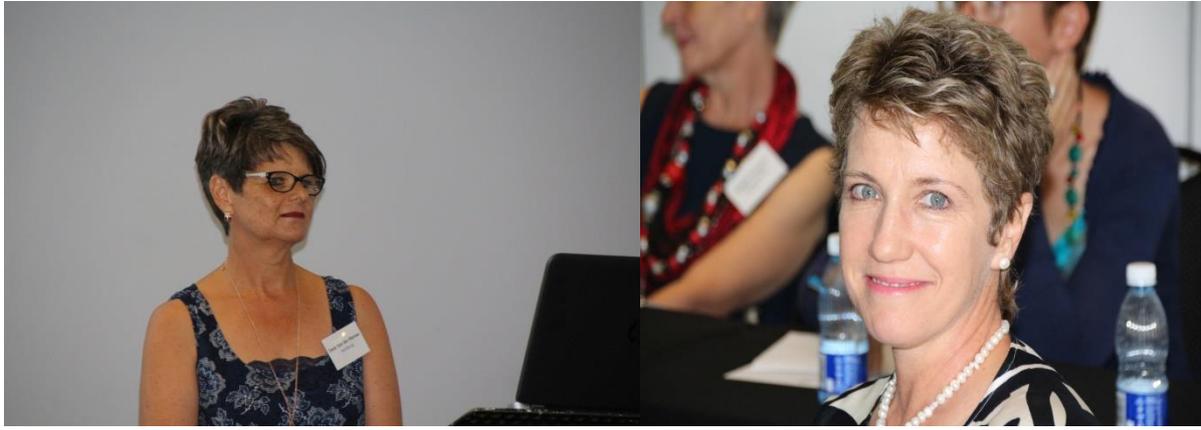


An Update on The Schools as Thinking Communities Project at Primêre Skool Fonteine Sasolburg

Prioritizing values in education Mary Grosser



Since February 2016, teachers and learners at Laerskool Fonteine, Sasolburg, collaboratively decided on integrating “*respect*” intentionally as part of character education into the life and culture of the entire school. Two aspects of respect, namely adhering to rules, and reverence have been integrated intentionally into all curricular and extra-curricular activities at the school, and reinforced by many of the parents at home, since February 2016. At the 2017 IACESA conference (22-24 February 2017), two of the staff members, Mrs Ewie Van der Merwe and Mrs Corné Prinsloo, presented the initial pre- and post-questionnaire findings for adhering to rules, as well as the pre-questionnaire findings for reverence. Pre- and post-questionnaire data were collected from the learners to establish growth and development in terms of their understanding of the importance of rules and their effectiveness in applying rules in daily life (at school and at home). A few examples of important themes that emerged from the data: learners noted an improvement in their conduct that specifically pointed to becoming better members of the school community and behaving better towards others. Many learners indicated that they stopped bullying others and value the possessions of others more. A second theme related to positive behavioural change that involved improved discipline, listening to others and considering the consequences of actions. Thirdly, learners indicated that they experienced the learning environment as more positive and that they feel happier at school. Finally, responses in relation to positive personal development were noted, that referred to taking more pride in work that has to be completed. The results as seen in the research findings drive teachers and learners to continue on their journey to prioritise values in education. spurring them on to achieve our initial goal of assisting the learners to become effective. The presentation was applauded by the conference delegates and suggestions were made that the school’s approach to the development of values could serve as a model for other schools that wish to develop values/attributes/dispositions among learners.



Teachers, Ewie van der Merwe and Corné Prinsloo, from Laerskool Fonteine presenting at the IACESA conference