

#### 11 - 13 September

Boardwalk Convention Centre, Gqeberha, Eastern Cape



# 2025 Programme

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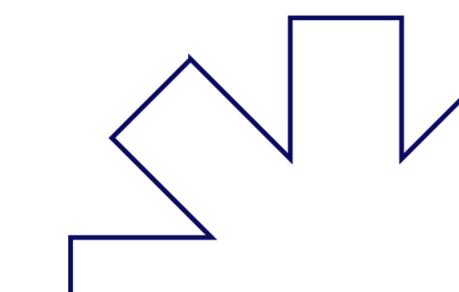




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# Leading the Change from the Heart of the Eastern Cape



It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2025 SAPA National Conference, hosted here in the beautiful city of Gqeberha at the Boardwalk Convention Centre from 11 – 13 September.

This year's theme, Lead the Change: Transformational Leadership for Skills Development & Growth, reflects the very essence of what school leaders do every day — guiding learners, shaping school culture, and driving meaningful progress within our communities.

The SAPA National Conference is more than a professional gathering. It is a unique opportunity for principals, senior school leaders, educators, and policymakers to come together, exchange ideas, and collaborate on reimagining public education in South Africa. Here, we celebrate our collective commitment to building schools that are centres of excellence, innovation, and opportunity.

As a principal or senior leader, you are at the forefront of change. You are the visionaries, the catalysts, and the changemakers who inspire transformation in every classroom and community you touch. This conference is designed to equip you with practical strategies, fresh ideas, and meaningful connections to help you lead with confidence, courage, and clarity — especially during times of challenge and change.

But leadership is not a journey we take alone. I invite you to join us, to share your voice, your experience, and your passion for education. Together, we can lead the change, shaping the future of South African schools and the learners we serve.

#### Asambeni! Be part of something bigger.

We look forward to welcoming you to Gqeberha and to a conference filled with inspiration, learning, and collaboration.



Eastern Cape President, South African Principals Association (SAPA)







#### Uniting Leaders, Inspiring Change



#### It is a privilege to welcome you to the 2025 SAPA National Conference.

This year, school leaders from all provinces are converging in the Eastern Cape, bringing together a wealth of experience, ideas, and passion for education. Whether you are a long-standing SAPA member or joining us for the first time, you are part of a shared purpose: to shape the future of South African schools and learners.

Our theme, Lead the Change: Transformational Leadership for Skills Development & Growth, recognises the critical role you play in guiding learners, building strong school cultures, and driving progress in your communities.

Over three days, this conference will offer practical strategies, fresh perspectives, and invaluable opportunities to connect with colleagues from across the country.

SAPA membership connects you to a national network of school leaders dedicated to championing educational excellence — but the energy of this conference comes from everyone in the room, members and non-members alike.

Together, we create a space where ideas are shared, challenges are explored, and new solutions take root.

Leadership is about courage, vision, and the determination to make a difference. I encourage you to fully embrace this experience: engage with peers from every province, participate in discussions, and take home insights that will empower you to lead change in your schools and communities.

Together, as a united body of South Africa's school leaders, we can reimagine education and build a future where every learner thrives.



National President, South African Principals Association (SAPA)









At the heart of this year's SAPA National Conference is a compelling call to action: "Lead the Change."

This theme celebrates the pivotal role of school principals and educational leaders as the primary catalysts for transformative change within South Africa's education system.

#### **Empowering Leaders to Shape Futures**

"Lead the Change" is not just about management; it's about dynamic leadership that inspires, innovates, and implements substantial changes that prepare schools for the future. Our educational approaches must evolve as the world experiences rapid shifts in technology, economy, and workforce demands. This theme focuses on equipping leaders with the necessary tools and insights to develop the skills that learners, teachers, and entire communities need to thrive in this changing landscape.

# **SAPA 2025**

National Conference









## Programme Tracks

#### **Safety and Wellness**

This track is designed to equip school leaders with the tools, strategies, and support systems they need to lead with strength and compassion in the face of adversity. From the growing mental health challenges experienced by educators and learners to the escalating threats of violence, bullying, gangsterism, and drug abuse, South African school environments demand more from principals than ever before. Through interactive, solutions-driven sessions, this programme addresses both personal resilience and institutional safety, offering practical guidance for fostering emotionally supportive, mentally healthy, and physically secure school communities. Participants will leave empowered to champion the well-being of their staff and learners while safeguarding their own mental and emotional fortitude.

#### Leadership & Entrepreneurship

POWERED BY



This track explores how entrepreneurial thinking and innovation can equip school leaders to respond creatively to challenges, drive meaningful change, and reimagine what's possible in education. In a landscape defined by complexity and constant change, principals must be able to think on their feet, identify opportunities, and lead with boldness and adaptability. Through thought-provoking sessions and practical engagement, this programme encourages school leaders to adopt a mindset of experimentation, problem-solving, and forward thinking, while also fostering these qualities within their educator teams. The track aims to build schools that are agile, future-focused, and empowered to thrive.

#### **EdTech**

POWERED BY



The EdTech track explores how digital tools and innovation can be harnessed to close the digital divide, enhance teaching, and improve learning outcomes across diverse school contexts. As technology becomes increasingly embedded in everyday life, school leaders must be equipped to integrate it meaningfully and strategically into the classroom, regardless of infrastructure or resource constraints. This programme unpacks current trends, practical tools, and implementation strategies to support inclusive, future–focused education. It also highlights both the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation in schools, empowering principals to lead with confidence in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

#### **Resources and Infrastructure**

POWERED BY





This track tackles one of the most pressing realities for many school leaders: the ongoing struggle with limited resources and inadequate infrastructure. From basic services like water and electricity to learning materials, sports facilities, and digital access, the gaps are wide—but so are the possibilities for creative problem-solving. Designed to shift the narrative from scarcity to opportunity, this programme empowers principals to think beyond traditional constraints, explore collaborative solutions, and mobilise support from a range of stakeholders. With a strong focus on fundraising, resource optimisation, and strategic planning, the track provides practical tools, expert insights, and peer learning to help leaders unlock value, build resilient systems, and create enabling environments for teaching and learning.



## Programme Overview

#### THURS 11 SEPT

#### FRI 12 SEPT

#### SAT 13 SEPT

07:30 - 14:00

Pre-Conference Tours

10:00 - 15:00 Registration

14:30 - 16:00

Refreshments and Networking

16:00 - 18:00 Opening Plenary

18:00 - 20:00

Welcome Cocktail and Opening of Exhibition

07:30 - 08:30

Refreshments, Networking & Exhibition

08:30 - 10:30 Plenary 2

10:30 - 11:30

Refreshment Break & Exhibition

11:30 - 12:30

**Parallel Sessions** 

12:30 - 13:30

Networking Lunch & Exhibition

13:30 - 14:30

**Parallel Sessions** 

14:30 - 15:30

Refreshment Break & Exhibition

15:30 - 16:30

Parallel Sessions

17h00 - 18h00

SAPA Annual General Meeting

19:00 - 23:00

Gala Awards Dinner

07:30 - 08:30

Refreshments, Networking & Exhibition

08:30 - 10:00

Workshops

10:00 - 11:00

Refreshment Break & Exhibition

11:00 - 13:00

Plenary 3

13:00 - 14:00

Networking Lunch & Exhibition

14:00 - 16:00

**Closing Plenary** 





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# **DAY 1**11 SEPT 2025

07:30 -14:00	PRE-CONFERENCE TOURS  If you've booked and paid for a tour, please keep an eye out for further communication with your tour details. Tour queries can be directed to <a href="mailto:sapa@idna.co.za">sapa@idna.co.za</a> .
10:00	REGISTRATION  MAIN FOYER - ALCOVE ASSEMBLY AREA
14:30 - 16:00	REFRESHMENTS & NETWORKING  Exhibition Hall - Lower Level
16:00 - 18:00	OPENING PLENARY Tsitsikamma ABC  Mr Simphiwe Lukasi Eastern Cape President, South African Principals Association (SAPA) Provincial President's Welcome Address  Mr Grant Butler National President, South African Principals Association (SAPA) National President's Welcome Address  MEC Mr Lubabalo Oscar Mabuyane Premier of the Eastern Cape Province Eastern Cape Welcome Address  Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka Former Deputy President of South Africa Keynote Address: Lead the Change  Mr Hubert Mathanzima Mweli Director-General, Department of Basic Education Keynote Address
18:00 - 20:00	WELCOME COCKTAIL Exhibition Hall - Lower Level







## **DAY 2** 12 SEPT 2025



#### **SACE Accreditation**

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) upholds professional standards for educators and has accredited the SAPA National Conference programme. Delegates will earn 15 Type 1 Continuing Professional Development (CPTD) points, fulfilling growth requirements while gaining insights to elevate their leadership and practice. <a href="https://www.sace.org.za">www.sace.org.za</a>



11:30 - 12:30	PARALLEL SESSIONS I
Session 1A (11:30 - 12:30)	RESOURCE & INFRASTRUCTURE Building Better Schools: Infrastructure, Resources & Human Capacity
Tsitsikamma A Powered by	Many South African schools, especially in under-resourced and rural areas, face critical infrastructure and resource challenges such as poor sanitation, unreliable utilities, limited ICT access, and a lack of libraries, sports facilities, and learning materials—hindering both teaching and learning. This session explores sustainable approaches to school development, highlighting community partnerships, capacity building, and the role of leadership in driving transformation. Drawing on Kagiso Trust's Beyers Naudé Schools Development Programme, it will show how leadership support, community involvement, and systems thinking can enable meaningful improvements, offering insights into how resource equity and collaboration create thriving learning environments.
	Ms Sizakele Mphatsoe, Education & Civil Society Head, Kagiso Trust
KAGISO TRUST	Ms Angelinah Mdakane, Education Programme Manager, Kagiso Trust
KST Partnering for Excellence In Education	Mr Katiso Sekhonyana, Infrastructure Project Manager, KST
Session 1B (11:30 - 12:30)	EDTECH Future-Ready Schools: Using Technology to Inspire Learning
- Tsitsikamma B	Technology can either facilitate or hinder learning. To prepare our students for a fast-paced, technology-driven world and to prevent them from falling behind due to the digital divide, school leaders must expand their understanding of the essential role technology plays in education. They need to learn how to leverage new digital innovations to improve learning outcomes and create inclusive, innovative classrooms that spark curiosity. This session will help participants explore current technology trends in education and their implications for both students and educators. It will introduce various practical and user-friendly tools suitable for a wide range of schools. We will also discuss the challenges and opportunities that arise, along with relevant support resources to ensure that what is learned can be implemented immediately.
	Ms Silke van Velden Managing Director, Thuma Mina Teaching Enabling Educators with the Mindset and Toolset to Embrace Tech
	Mr Zakhele Selby Xulu Principal, Nkwambazi Primary School Transforming the Education Landscape with Inclusive Digital Innovation
Powered by	Mr Dolan Govender Managing Director, EduTech Institute Creating Equitable, Personalised and Innovative Learning Environments
EdShed Phonics and Spelling	Mr James Masiri Ph.D. Candidate, University of Johannesburg Creating Equitable, Personalised and Innovative Learning Environments



## 30 Years of Leading Together – Join the Legacy, Shape the Future

Session IC (11:30 - 12:30)	LEADERSHIP & ENTREPRENEURSHIP Beyond Management: The Art of Transformational Leadership
- Tsitsikamma C	Leadership in education is a multifaceted concept, with principals playing a pivotal role in shaping school culture, driving academic success, and supporting the well-being and productivity of educators who guide the next generation. Effective, holistic, and empowering leadership is essential to ensure that school initiatives are sustainable and impactful. This session delves into transformational leadership, exploring how it manifests in individual practices, communication, and decision-making, and highlights strategies that enable principals to lead with purpose and inspire excellence. Participants will leave equipped with practical tools, insights, and resources to apply transformational leadership in their own school environments, fostering a culture where both educators and learners thrive.  Ms Angela Schaerer Portfolio Manager Learning and Development, Curro What is Needed from School Leadership in Today's Context?  Dr Coetzee Bester Chief Executive Officer, AVAVA CPTD-Online
	Encouraging Leadership Excellence in School Educators
	<b>Ms Shilpa Naidoo</b> Principal, Fordsburg High School It Starts with Me: Principal-to-Principal Talk on Leadership Values
Powered by	
Standard Bank	Mr Craig Strauss Principal, Greenside High Transformational Leadership in Practice
Session 1D (11:30 - 12:30)	SAFETY & WELLNESS From Surviving to Thriving: Resilient Leadership for Schools
The Wood Room	Educators face immense pressure from multiple stakeholders to achieve results, often within environments challenged by social issues, limited resources, and inadequate infrastructure. With high demands and low support, coupled with personal and societal pressures, educators and school leaders are at risk of stress, depression, and burnout. This session offers an interactive approach for school principals, providing tools and strategies to strengthen their own resilience and well-being while equipping them to foster the mental and emotional wellness of their educators, learners, and broader school community.  Ms Njabulo Sithole Chief Executive Officer, The Resilience Institute Empowering Myself to Empower Others: Wellness Starts with Self
12:30 - 13:30	NETWORKING LUNCH & EXHIBITION



Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world

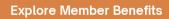
Exhibition Hall - Lower Level

13:30 - 14:30	PARALLEL SESSIONS 2
Session 2A (13:30 - 14:30)	RESOURCE & INFRASTRUCTURE Managing What You Have: Practical Strategies for School Leaders
Tsitsikamma A  Powered by	The management of resources and infrastructure is often a very singular responsibility of the principal. But what if this task could be approached differently and with more support? With innovation and a sense of collective responsibility, numerous opportunities exist to manage and develop resources in new and interesting ways. This session aims to revive a topic that is often fraught with challenges and a sense of hopelessness and will delve into how school leaders can explore different ideas to manage scarce or limited resources and infrastructural challenges in innovative ways.
KST Processor for Executives in Education	Mr Craig Paxton Co-Founder, Axium Education Building Purpose, Agency and Collective Ownership in Resource Management
Session 2B (13:30 - 14:30)	EDTECH Making Tech Work in Real Schools
- Tsitsikamma B	In many schools, the idea of technology usage is exciting but not feasible. There are several challenges to technology integration in teaching and learning - the lack of digital literacy among teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and resistance to change are a few among them. This session provides an opportunity to interrogate and learn from real cases of change that demonstrate innovative solutions being undertaken on the local level. The discussion will assist school leaders to bridge the opportunities that technology presents and the practical implementation of it in the educational environment.
	Mr Brian Mushongera Country Manager, Edshed A Practical View of Digital Inclusion
Powered by	Ms Mathapelo Thipe Operations Officer, Schoolnet South Africa What Does a Connected School Look Like?
EdShed Phonics and Spelling	Ms Lutho Kota, Director: E-Teaching and Learning, Department of Education, Eastern Cape Government Creating Community Collaborations for Safety & Security

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No Matter Where You Lead, SAPA Leads With You.





Session 2C (13:30 - 14:30)

#### LEADERSHIP & ENTREPRENEURSHIP Strategic and Entrepreneurial Thinking for School Leaders

Tsitsikamma C

The management of resources and infrastructure is often a very singular responsibility of the principal. But what if this task could be approached differently and with more support? With innovation and a sense of collective responsibility, numerous opportunities exist to manage and develop resources in new and interesting ways. This session aims to revive a topic that is often fraught with challenges and a sense of hopelessness and will delve into how school leaders can explore different ideas to manage scarce or limited resources and infrastructural challenges in innovative ways.

**Dr Shadrack Mvula** Former DDG-Deputy Director General- North West Department of Education

Leadership for Change

Powered by

Mr Sizwe Zwane Principal, Empangeni High School A Leadership Case Study: Empangeni High School



**Ms Nkazimulo Zitha** Head of School Achievement, SPARK Schools Building a Leadership Strategy Towards Excellence

Session 2D (13:30 - 14:30)

#### **SAFETY & WELLNESS**

#### Safe Schools, Strong Communities: Leadership for Security and Well-Being

The Wood Room

Educators in South Africa face numerous challenges, with safety being among the most pressing. Issues such as gangsterism, drug abuse, violence, bullying, and harassment significantly impact their ability to provide high-quality education. These circumstances place immense strain on educators and school leaders, who often lack the necessary tools, infrastructure, resources, or support to address these concerns effectively. This session aims to interactively engage with the concerns and priorities of participants to develop practical and relevant strategies for both preventing and managing the stresses related to individual and school safety. The goal is to empower leaders to prioritise the safety and security of themselves, their educators, scholars and environment.

**Ms Ona Matshaya** Head: Eastern Cape region, Equal Education The Four Pillars of School Safety

**Mr Sifiso Ngobese** Director: School Safety - Department of Basic Education Creating Community Collaborations for Safety & Security

Mr Matsetsebale Tleane Managing Director - Agape Youth Movement Youth are Part of the Solution: Creating Inter-Generational Dialogues for Change

14:30 - 15:30

#### REFRESHMENT BREAK & EXHIBITION

Exhibition Hall - Lower Level



A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way



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Session 3C	SAFETY & WELLNESS
(15:30 - 16:30)	Conflict Resolution for School Leaders: Practical Tools and Strategies
Tsitsikamma C	Conflict is an inevitable part of leading any organisation—especially a public school community facing diverse pressures, needs, and expectations. Whether it's disagreements among staff, tension with parents, learner conflicts, or broader community disputes, school leaders must be prepared to manage these challenges effectively and fairly. This interactive workshop will equip principals and senior educators with the knowledge, practical tools, and confidence to address conflict constructively. Participants will explore the roots of common conflicts in school settings, learn proven frameworks for resolution, and develop skills for managing difficult conversations with empathy and authority.  Ms Vanessa Botha
	Client Relations, Learning & Development and Employment Relations Specialist, Conflict Dynamics Workshop Facilitator
Session 3D (15:30 - 16:30)	LEADERSHIP & ENTREPRENEURSHIP Leading for Change: Entrepreneurial Skills for Today's Schools
The Wood Room	The future belongs to those who can think creatively, solve problems, and identify new opportunities. Entrepreneurial thinking is recognised as a crucial skill for individuals of all ages and across various sectors and situations. This is particularly relevant for school leaders who face numerous challenges and need to develop innovative solutions to help their schools achieve their goals. This interactive session is designed to enhance understanding of what constitutes an entrepreneurial mindset. Participants will engage in a fun activity that offers practical insights into different aspects of this type of thinking. Additionally, they will learn how to share these insights with their educators to foster a more entrepreneurial team.
	Ms Mahlatse Tolamo Entrepreneurial Programme Officer, Allan Gray Orbis Foundation Developing an Entrepreneurial Leadership Mindset
Powered by	Mr Paballo Figlan Intern Officer & Ms Aretha Mahlangu, Project Coordinator
	Allan Gray Entrepreneurship Challenge
Standard Bank	Interactive Session: The Allan Gray Entrepreneurship Challenge
16:30 - 19:00	DELEGATES AT LEISURE
17:00 - 18:00	SAPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING The Wood Room
19:00 - 23:00	GALA AWARDS DINNER Tsitsikamma ABC
	R750 (incl. VAT) per ticket   <u>Buy Tickets</u> Dress Code: Formal (Traditional Formal or Black Tie)







## **DAY 3** 13 SEPT 2025



07:30 - 08:30	MORNING REFRESHMENTS & EXHIBITION  Exhibition Hall - Lower Level
08:30 - 10:00	WORKSHOPS
Workshop 1 (08:30 - 10:00)	How to Raise More for Your School – The GivetoGrow Way  Fundraising is one of the toughest challenges schools face, yet it remains essential for
Tsitsikamma A	uniforms, resources, facilities, and the extras that bring learning to life. In this session, Standard Bank introduces GiveToGrow, a new crowdfunding platform that helps schools and educators raise funds more effectively by connecting them with parents, alumni, and
Powered by	community supporters. You'll explore real examples of successful campaigns, see how the platform ensures transparency and accountability, and discover just how simple it is to get started—unlocking safe, easy, and impactful fundraising with the backing of Standard Bank.
Give to Grow Standard Bank Group	Mr Willem Du Plessis Head: Sector Sales, Business & Commercial Banking South Africa at Standard Bank
Workshop 2 (08:30 - 10:00)	How to Go Digital – and Turn It into Funding, Learning, and Innovation
- Tsitsikamma B	Part 1: Building the Backbone – Digital Infrastructure for Your School Connectivity is the foundation of modern learning. This session explores how principals can future-proof their schools with scalable, secure, and cost-effective networks. With practical steps, real-world examples, and easy frameworks, participants will see how digital backbones enable e-learning, admin automation, hybrid classrooms, and safer campuses.
	Part 2: Activating Potential – 3D Printing, STEM, and Entrepreneurship With strong digital foundations in place, schools can unlock innovation through 3D printing. Hosted by Creality, this session shows how additive manufacturing enhances STEM learning, sparks entrepreneurship, and fosters problem-solving. Participants will explore practical classroom applications, from learner-made products to income-generating school enterprises.
Powered by	Mr Dale Dermick B2B Sales Specialist, TP-Link
SMD TECHNOLOGIES	Mr Mike Labuschagne Product Manager, Southern Africa, Creality







Workshop 3 (08:30 - 10:00) - Tsitsikamma C	The Principal's Al Playbook Ready to cut through the buzz around Al? This session offers a practical guide to integrating Al into school administration, teaching, and learning—showing how it can save time, reduce admin burdens, and create engaging learning experiences. Beyond the tools, we'll focus on leadership: building the right policies, frameworks, and cultural shifts to ensure safe, ethical, and effective Al use in schools. From data protection to responsible implementation, principals will leave with a clear blueprint for weaving Al into their school's DNA and the confidence to lead their communities into the future with vision.  Ms Louise Nivison IT Integrator, Rondebosch Boys' High School  Mr Niall McNulty Product Lead, Cambridge University Press & Assessment
Workshop 4 (08:30 - 10:00) - The Wood Room  Powered by  Canva Education	How to Use Canva for Education  Discover how Canva for Education can transform teaching and learning across your school community. This session explores its powerful features, showcasing practical ways schools are using Canva to boost creativity, collaboration, and education outcomes.  Ms Adwoa Mhango Canva Learning Consultant, Canva UK  Unlock Potential and Spark Creativity with Canva for Education
10:00 - 11:00	NETWORKING LUNCH & EXHIBITION  Exhibition Hall - Lower Level
11:00 - 13:00	PLENARY 3 Tsitsikamma ABC  Mr Darren August Dazz Consulting & Inspired Publishing A Teacher Changed my Life  Ms Nozipho Tshabalala CEO, The Conversation Strategists Leading with Courage: Building Competence for Critical Conversations in Education  Ms Tersia Mdunge Corporate Social Investment Manager, Santam Disaster Risk Assessment Within Special Schools  Mr Kennedy Sefadi Fire Protection Projects Divisional Manager, Fire Protection Association of Southern Africa Fire Safety in Schools  Dr Mzamo Masito Africa Lead, Canva Introducing Canva  Mr Nyimpini Mabunda Best Selling Author Take Charge: Lead Forward

NETWORKING LUNCH & EXHIBITION  Exhibition Hall - Lower Level
CLOSING PLENARY Tsitsikamma ABC
Mr Hatim Eltayeb Chief Executive Officer, African Leadership Academy Investing in South Africa's Entrepreneurial Future
Mr James Ndlebe Chief Director for Planning and Implementation Support, Department of Basic Education Keynote Address
Mr Ronald Abvajee Founder & CEO, Healthy Living Consulting Mental Wellness: It's a Thing
Mr Grant Butler National President, South African Principals Association (SAPA) Closing Remarks
Mr Simphiwe Lukasi Eastern Cape President, South African Principals Association(SAPA) Closing Remarks and Handover to Limpopo
Dr Mashudu Richard Ramulumo Limpopo President, South African Principals Association (SAPA) Launch of SAPA 2026

#### **END OF CONFERENCE**



#### **Get in touch**

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