



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **EDUCATION LABOUR RELATIONS COUNCIL (ELRC) – KWAZULU-NATAL**

11-06-2025

Feedback: KZN ELRC Labour Management Partnership Workshop – Redefining the Future Together – 3 June 2025

The PSA attended the KZN ELRC Labour Management Partnership Workshop presented to management and organised labour on 3 June 2025. In the meeting, stakeholders discussed the following:

Redefining the future together – A personal reflection on labour-management collaboration in South African Education

The main theme of *Redefining the Future Together* aimed at stakeholders working together in collaboration and no longer operating in silos. This initiative is meant to bring unions, educators, school leaders, and departmental officials together to form District Leadership Teams (DLTs) that drive meaningful changes at every level of the education system.

Labour-Management Partnerships (LMP)

The Labour-Management Partnership (LMP) is not the usual “us versus them” model that characterizes traditional labour relations. Instead, it promotes partnership and, more importantly, collaboration - something deeper, more honest, and lasting. Structures are being set up that allow for open dialogue, joint problem-solving, and shared accountability.

System maintenance and system improvement

An important conversation revolved around the difference between system maintenance and system improvement. Maintenance is about fixing what is broken. Real improvement is about changing the way things are done. It is about rethinking how to support teachers, how parents are involved, how data is used, and how learners are developed into responsible citizens. Many of the districts involved are already seeing the impact. They have started re-aligning budgets to prioritize teaching and learning. They have implemented mentorship programs for struggling learners and created feedback loops to improve lesson planning. Some schools are using technology more effectively, and learners are responding positively.

Addressing discipline, learner absenteeism, school violence, and other crucial topics

The workshop also addressed tough issues, discipline, learner absenteeism, school violence, and the sensitive yet crucial topics of inclusion and gender equity. These are not side projects but part of the main agenda. The fact both unions and management are tackling these together is something worth celebrating.

Reflections on Phase 2 of workshop: Redefining the Future Together

Attending Phase 2 of the Facilitator Training for the Labour-Management Collaboration Framework was a powerful experience both professionally and personally. The theme, “*Redefining the Future Together*,” captured what the week was about. Delegates were not just being trained, they were being invited into a new way of thinking about leadership, teamwork, and change in schools.

The facilitators started by reflecting on Phase 1, which gave them a chance to revisit some of the tools and concepts that attendees learned previously. Attendees were reminded how important their roles are, not just as teachers or leaders but as *facilitators* of collaboration. The recap of District Leadership Teams (DLTs) and School Leadership Teams (SLTs) made attendees think deeply about how these structures can bring real change if used intentionally. Attendees especially enjoyed the “Desert Survival” activity as a fun but meaningful way to look at how attendees work together under pressure, and how decision-making in groups can be both messy and powerful.

Another highlight was exploring different decision-making styles. The LMP looked at everything from collaboration and compromise to competition and avoidance. Attendees saw themselves in some of those patterns, especially when time is short or tensions are high. Participants were encouraged to move toward *shared decision-making*, which is not always the fastest route, but often the most sustainable and empowering. Seeing decision-making as a *continuum* not just “top-down” or “democratic”, broadened the thinking.

Finally, stakeholders worked on identifying *improvement areas* in their schools. Using a structured process, they were guided to dig into the root causes of issues and develop action plans. This made everything come together. It was one thing to talk about collaboration and facilitation, but another to apply those skills to design a solution that can make a difference in a school community.

In conclusion, this training was not just about adding new tools to a facilitator toolkit. It was about reshaping how the participants see themselves as leaders. Participants were not just decision-makers, they were bridge builders. They are not just problem-solvers; they are co-creators of the future. And if they want to redefine that future, they truly must do it together.

Members are encouraged to submit inputs concerning the *Redefining the Future Together* theme to Nandi Dladla at nandi.dladla@psa.co.za and to Mr SB Gcabashe, PSA shop steward, at sicelo.gcabashe@icloud.com.

Employees who want to join the PSA can reach Zweli Msane (Organising/Marketing Officer) on 082 880 8944 / Zweli.Msane@psa.co.za and Zinhle Manyoni on 063 400 1036 / Zinhle.Manyoni@psa.co.za.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER