



NEWSLETTER

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Membership fees for 2024:

Each School's or Individual's Annual Membership expired on 31 December 2023.

Subscription fees and Webinar rates for 2024.

School Annual Membership fee:

R2000.00 and entitles 6 teachers to join the webinars and seminar at the member rate.

Individual Annual Membership

fee: R300.00 and entitles you to join all events at the member rate. Webinar fees for non-members: R285.00 per webinar

5% of all bookings will be donated to Kingsway Christian School.

Schools/individuals who are in need, please reach out to SAALED and we will do our best to accommodate you.

If you were a member of SAALED last year, you will have received an invoice for next year's subscriptions. Please liaise with your school and make payment as soon as possible.

BANK DETAILS:

S A ASSOC FOR LEARNING

First National Bank

Account No: 62046846020

Branch code: 250655

Please ensure that your name/school's name appears on any deposit notification.

Dear SAALED Members and Friends,

We are thrilled to present to you the seventh edition of our newsletter for 2024. Our commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all, continues to drive our efforts and inspire our initiatives.

Please see the details of our exciting next Professional Development opportunity! This is part of a series of engaging webinars in our Creative Therapy Series, designed to enhance therapeutic practices and professional growth.

MUSIC
AS A THERAPEUTIC TOOL
IN EDUCATION

a music therapist's perspective

This exciting Webinar focuses on psycho-social, socio-cultural and educational aspects of music, as a therapeutic tool, within a South African context. Join us as Liza shares practical examples and ideas on how to use music as a therapeutic tool in the classroom.

TUESDAY
10 SEPTEMBER 2024
18H00

R200 FOR SAALED MEMBERS
R285 FOR NON-MEMBERS

LIZA SMIT
MUSIC THERAPIST

saaled.org.za

In this webinar, Liza Smit will discuss the therapeutic uses of music and sound. Learn how these elements can be harnessed to support emotional and psychological well-being in various settings.

Booking Information: Bookings for all events can be made on the SAALED website- <https://www.saaled.org.za/> We encourage you to reserve your spot early to ensure you don't miss out on these valuable learning opportunities.

In this edition of our newsletter, we are proud to introduce you to the remarkable individuals who serve on our Board. Their diverse expertise, unwavering dedication, and shared passion for educational equity form the backbone of our association. Each member brings a unique perspective and a wealth of experience, guiding SAALED towards achieving its goals and making a meaningful impact in the lives of people with educational differences.

We are deeply grateful for the dedication and hard work of our board members, whose efforts ensure that SAALED remains a beacon of support and advocacy for a community that experiences educational differences. In this newsletter, you will find profiles of each board member, highlighting their contributions, aspirations, and the unique qualities they bring to our association.

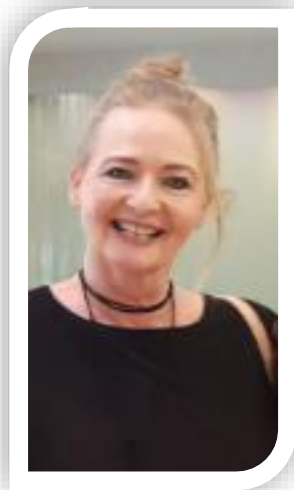
As we aim to grow and strive towards our mission, I asked our board members to reflect on the following questions:

1. **What inspired you to join our association, and what do you hope to achieve as a member?**
2. **Can you share a personal experience or story that illustrates your passion for our mission and its impact on your life or others?**
3. **What unique skills, talents, or perspectives do you bring to our community, and how do you see yourself contributing to our collective efforts?**

These insights and personal reflections are invaluable as we work together to make a meaningful impact. We are grateful for your dedication and commitment.

Meet our Board Members

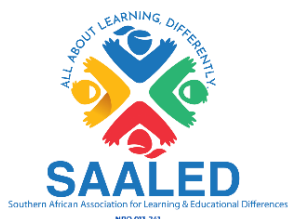
Ms. Jennifer Cosslett - Treasurer



I attended many SAALED workshops and was always inspired by the quality of the speakers, in awe of how much I learnt, and blown away by the energy of the people who organized the workshops. I want to inspire as many teachers as possible to learn everything that they can related to our wonderful profession.

I call on the experience of present and past board members whenever I have a query about a student or child in my care. I love sound boarding with them as they have such expertise. They know who to contact for the exact assistance one requires, have links to many incredible associations and people, and share their knowledge with kindness and grace.

I believe in a Humanistic approach to education and love seeing how we can connect our webinar speakers to making a difference in every classroom in our country. My second Hons. Degree was a specialization in Psycho-Education Support - inspired by all I had learnt over the years at SAALED.





Mrs. Michelle Decker- Secretary

I have loved being part of SAALED for the last two years. It is an association that has always focused on the needs of students with learning differences. This inclusivity aligns with my personal and professional philosophy and was the focus of my Masters.

In my role as an academic support teacher, I am continuously exploring pedagogies and approaches that strive to meet the needs of a diverse classroom. It is by embracing and supporting this diversity, that all students are able to participate in their learning. SAALED makes a difference not only through the various training opportunities available but also through the outreach work in which it is involved.

I have been encouraged by the positivity with which our webinars and seminars have been received and have seen firsthand the impact of our contributions on schools in need. It is this ability to reach out into the community, in order to effect change and growth, that inspires me.



Mr. Ruan Fourie- Communication and Advertising

I am a Foundation Phase teacher, currently teaching at Dainfern College, with a passion for Literacy acquisition. I co-own The House of Reading, a venture aiming to create training opportunities for teachers in the field known as the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy. I also have a background in music education and enjoy teaching beginner piano to young students.

I was invited to join the SAALED board in 2022 after being introduced to the association through a colleague. It was inspiring to see the excellent opportunities that SAALED were creating for teachers through professional development. I joined the board as graphic designer.

I feel that with the changing needs of young learners, SAALED's work as an association, to provide professional development for teachers in topics rooted in diversity, is becoming more important than ever.



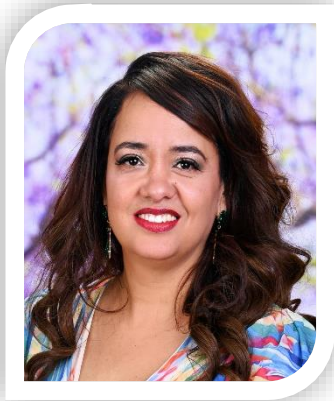
Mrs. Shirley Gray- Deputy Chairperson

I have been involved in SAALED for many years and have served as a Board Member for the past 10 years. I held the position of secretary for 6 years and then I took over the role as Chairperson. I steadied a very fragile ship and put a huge amount of effort and energy keeping it afloat, often under challenging circumstances. I currently hold the position of Deputy Chairperson as a consultant to support and advise the new chairperson.

My life-long passion has always been in educating all children in the community and working hands-on through many outreach programmes. My vision is to do something about the inequality that exists in our immediate educational environment and making sure that all children

are seen and heard. Promoting the value of education within our society and being in the field, sharing and caring through education for three quarters of my life, bears testament to my commitment to SAALED.

My unique skills include vast experience as a dedicated leader. This includes my special talent for engaging and motivating people to collaborate and work as a powerful team. I see SAALED as an innovative association that can make a meaningful difference in the society in which we live and the educational community that we love.



Mrs. Shannon Jacobs - Database and Website Management

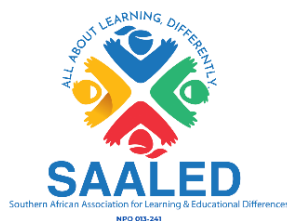
One of the SAALED board members inspired me to join the association because she knew of my commitment to promoting inclusive education. I have been in education for 24 years and have worked in an inclusive remedial school for 18 years. I have a deep passion for multi-level teaching and differentiation in the classroom. I believe all students learn and develop differently; therefore, all students must be treated fairly and get equal opportunities. Student's diversity and uniqueness should be celebrated without discrimination.

As someone who is passionate about creating a more inclusive learning environment, I hope to achieve a deeper understanding of best practices for special educational needs and contribute my experiences to the community. I hope to help educators build their capacity to support students with disabilities, learn from others, and gain access to resources to help me become a better educator.

As a remedial classroom teacher for 18 years, I have been exposed to students with diverse learning styles and barriers to learning. I gained extensive experience teaching students with different learning abilities. To assist them in overcoming their challenges, I implemented different teaching styles and adapted materials to address their needs specifically.

I'll never forget a student in my class who struggled with dyslexia. With the right support and accommodations, this student thrived and exceeded expectations. This experience showed me the importance of inclusive education and its impact on a student's life. Since then, I've prioritized incorporating accommodations and modifications into my lessons to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed, regardless of their abilities. Experiences like these drive my passion for ensuring that all students have access to quality education, irrespective of their abilities. I'm excited to be part of SAALED's community and learn from others who share this passion.

With my experience in remedial and special educational needs, I bring a unique understanding of the challenges and opportunities of creating inclusive classrooms. I'm excited to share my knowledge and experiences with the SAALED community and learn from others. I see myself contributing to the community by sharing resources and best practices, participating in discussions and forums, and collaborating on projects that support the association's mission.



Ms. Pearl Makhene- Outreach Initiatives



Accessibility to quality education is every child's right, and it is our responsibility as teachers to ensure that children are not denied this right. That being said, we as teachers don't always know where to go or have time for research to empower ourselves to deliver lessons that are accessible to every kind of learner in our class. Being part of an association, such as SAALED, that seeks to equip teachers with skills and knowledge to effectively serve our children is an honour.

SAALED's mission is further practised through their sponsored membership to an under-resourced school every year. This initiative speaks to my heart because it seeks to ensure that no child is left behind by the training of their teachers and knowledge/skills sharing. My desire is to serve this community by helping us reach more under resourced schools through my line of work.



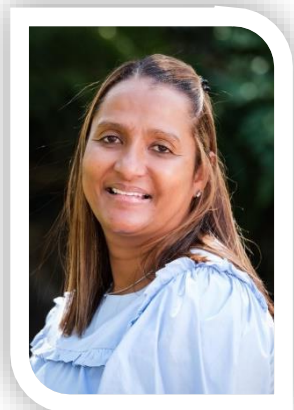
Mr. Joe Pillay- SAALED Chairperson

I was inspired to join our association by Mrs. Shirley Gray and Ms. Zelda Wolfson in 2019. My vision and deep-rooted love and passion for working with children aligns closely with SAALED's mission of empowering all to address educational differences within the classroom.

My parents, who were successful teachers for over twenty years, instilled in me a love for teaching and the importance of education from an early age. My father, who was the Head of Department at a school for the blind and the Deputy Principal at a school for the deaf in KwaZulu Natal, profoundly influenced my understanding of inclusive education and the unique needs of each child. Growing up, I witnessed the impact that my parents had on their students' lives, not just academically but also in shaping their character and future. My father's work with blind and deaf students, demonstrated the transformative power of education and the importance of inclusivity. This experience cemented my belief in the power of education and the importance of providing every child with the opportunity to succeed.

With a Bachelor's degree in Education and an Honour's Degree in Educational Management, I have dedicated my career to making a difference in children's lives. I have been in the teaching profession for 17 years. In my current position as the Deputy Principal of Academics at Crawford International Sandton Preparatory School in Benmore, I hope to contribute to creating a supportive and inclusive environment where every child can thrive and realize their full potential.

I endeavour to bring a unique combination of enthusiasm and commitment to our community. I value experiences and strive to create an environment that fosters responsible living and future-focused learning. Inspired by the great teachers who have come before me, I am always open to learning new things and adapting to the evolving needs of students. With my background and passion, I see myself advocating for meaningful community building and ensuring that every child we reach feels valued and supported. My goal is to help shape a future, where all children have the encouragement needed to succeed.

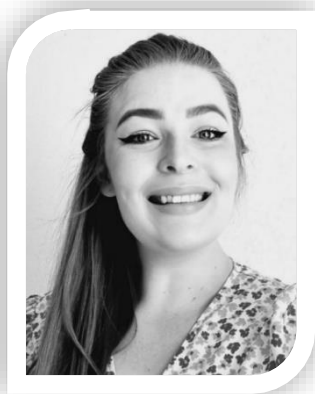


Mrs. Lucinda Pinto - Communication

I was first introduced to SAALED when I joined Crawford International Sandton in 2009 by Zelda Wolfsohn. The fact that the association was established to provide ongoing professional development for teachers and the wider educational community is what intrigued me the most. As part of my time at Wits University, professional development for pre-service as well as in-service teachers, was a core focus of my job description. As a member, I would like to assist in growing the number of schools throughout South Africa who belong to SAALED. I am especially interested in getting more public and disadvantaged schools to be a part of the association.

My niece had the privilege of attending Vuleka St. John's School. The mission of Vuleka Schools is to provide quality private education at affordable fees to some of the most vulnerable communities in South Africa. There was a teacher there who belonged to SAALED and used all the knowledge that she gained, as well as her connection to teachers in other schools, that she met through SAALED, to uplift the teaching and learning in her Vuleka School. If it was not for SAALED supporting the school as well as the teacher, I do not believe that the incredible educational offering would have been the same.

I have experience in professional development in education, not only as a previous lecturer for Wits University, but also having done numerous workshops for NAPTOA and other educational institutions. I have my Master's degree in Education and as part of my dissertation, I focused on methodological practices for the teaching and learning of Mathematics in the Foundation Phase. My passion is in pedagogy and in assisting to develop teachers throughout South Africa, in various contexts, to practice pedagogy that will allow South African children to be global competitors.



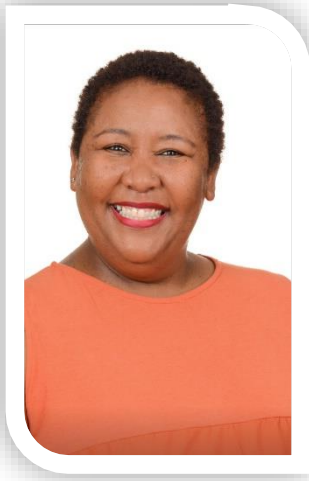
Mrs. Storm Pollard - Memberships

My mentor inspired me to join SAALED after sharing incredible stories about their impactful work. Being part of this well-established association with over 35 years of expertise in addressing special needs is rewarding. I have benefited greatly from their invaluable webinars and seminars, which focus on a variety of topics, including the commitment to dignity and rights, and the emphasis on prevention and early intervention. Additionally, SAALED fosters collaboration between home, school and community, ensuring comprehensive support for learners.

I am passionate about making a difference not only in the classroom and school environment but also in my community. I aim to educate, support, and raise awareness across these different systems, believing that collaboration can drive real change. Being involved with multi-talented individuals and having the opportunity to network has opened my eyes and many doors. It is truly heartwarming to work alongside such knowledgeable, kind, and generous people. It's a place where everyone feels heard.

I hold a Higher Certificate Diploma in 3D Animation and a Bachelor's Degree in Foundation Phase Education, graduating top of my class in both. I am eager to leverage my creativity and expertise from these qualifications to make a positive impact. I believe that through collective efforts and a diverse pool of knowledge, we can truly make a difference as a team.

I recently encountered a quote by Robert John Meehan: "A key to growing as an educator is to keep company mainly with teachers who uplift you, whose presence inspires you, and whose dedication drives you." This quote perfectly encapsulates the work of SAALED, its members, and the speakers at its webinars and seminars. I am truly blessed to be part of this journey.



Ms. Lerato Shuping- Social Media and Marketing

I was inspired to join SAALED because of my deep commitment to inclusivity and my passion for integrating technology into education. As an EdTech specialist or 'TechMagineer', I see immense potential in using technology to empower students, particularly girls and those who learn differently. By joining SAALED, I hope to bring my expertise in technology to this platform, advocating for greater representation and support for these students. I aim to get more "TECHIES" involved in this space, seeing themselves make a difference and having a voice in associations like SAALED. Additionally, I look forward to learning from my peers and contributing to the collective efforts of this inspiring community.

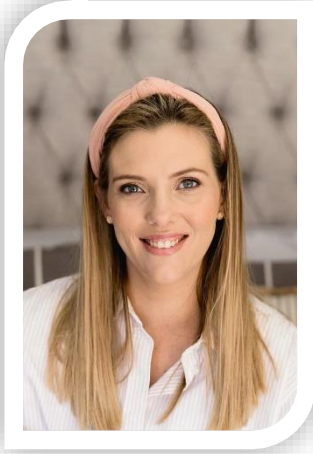
My passion for inclusivity and technology is deeply personal and professional. As a mother of an 11-year-old daughter who thinks and learns differently, I understand the importance of creating spaces where every child can learn and thrive. This personal experience drives my commitment to advocating for inclusive education.

In my role as an EdTech teacher, I've seen firsthand how technology can transform lives. For instance, in my robotics classes, students often find their voice and passion through gaming and coding. These experiences have reinforced my belief in the power of technology to engage and inspire students, especially those who might feel marginalized.

I bring a unique blend of skills and perspectives to SAALED. My expertise in educational technology allows me to integrate innovative tech solutions into our inclusive education initiatives. And, of course, my enthusiasm and energy—or "spunk," as I like to call it—help me share and spread this platform with others in my field. I love encouraging more educators to embrace the power of technology in creating inclusive learning environments.

My favorite motto is 'There's an App for That,'- and I believe there truly is an app for every learner. I'm here to show it or find the right one to meet each student's unique needs. By being a part of SAALED, I hope to contribute to our mission by sharing my knowledge and experiences, advocating for inclusivity, and inspiring others in the tech space to join our efforts. Together, we can make a significant impact on the lives of students and create a more inclusive and equitable education system. Let's tech it up and make a difference!





Dr. Chaland van Zyl- SACE Applications Coordinator

My personal life motto is ‘Be the person you needed as a child’. What SAALED strives to do in educating and equipping parents and teachers who support children who learn differently speaks to my desire and hope to make a change in children's lives. I hope that as a member of the association I can make a valuable contribution to those who support learners who learn differently.

Research has shown that one of the biggest contributing factors related to how a child with barriers to learning “turns out” is often just ONE person. One person who listened, one person who never gave up, and one person who believed in them. I believe that SAALED is aiding that ONE person in acquiring the skills and knowledge to support these learners.

I am a registered Educational Psychologist with a doctoral degree in Educational Psychology. Within my role as an Educational Psychologist, I support parents, staff, and learners in academic challenges and well-being by offering case management, psycho-education, therapeutic interventions, and psycho-educational assessments. I have a particular interest in the field of psycho-educational assessments and particularly enjoy working with adolescents. I believe that my skillset and deeper understanding of barriers to learning will assist me in offering SAALED knowledge and input that will translate to the association offering the best possible training and content to its members.

Embracing Inclusivity: Celebrating our Dedicated Board Members

Our commitment to inclusivity is at the heart of everything we do at the South African Association for Learning and Educational Differences.

We are fortunate to have such dedicated and passionate board members with unwavering dedication to making a difference in the lives of learners with educational differences, which is truly inspiring. Together, we are building a future where every child matters and has the opportunity to succeed.

As we move forward, let us continue to foster an inclusive environment that values and celebrates the unique contributions of each individual. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to our cause. Together, we can achieve remarkable things.

Yours in Education,

Joe Pillay
SAALED Chairperson
joe.pillay@saaled.org.za

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