



Star for Life
– empowering young people

Eqakwini High School

Schools programme

A partner report for Star for Life Norway

Name of Principal: **Mrs N.Y Mbhele**

Name of Area Manager: **Mrs S Ngubane**

Name of the Coach: **Mr S.N Mangele**

Total Enrolment: **632**

Reporting period: **January – December 2025**

Introduction

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Star for Life programme at Eqakiwini High School for the period January-December 2025. The coach is proud to report that the school performed exceptionally in the 2025 matric examination with a pass rate of 100%. This performance contributed to the national pass rate which was 88% and to KwaZulu Natal becoming number one province in the country with a pass rate of 90.6%.

Learner-Centred Activities

Learner Workshops

A total of 623 learners from grades 8-12 participated in learner workshops conducted as an introduction to the school programme. Below are the topics that were discussed during the workshops.

Grade	Theme of the workshop	Month	Learners reached	Total per grade
Grade 8	LW1: Dreams can be fulfilled	February	130	130
Grade 9	LW2: The power is within me	February	135	138
Grade 10	LW3: Knowledge is power	February	158	162
Grade 11	LW4: Stress management	February	115	117
Grade 12	LW5: Shine On	February	85	85





Classroom sessions

After the learner workshops the Coach facilitated 66 sessions for grades 8-12. This provided learners with a greater opportunity to engage directly with the Coach and ask questions. The sessions addressed a variety of key topics, including My Personal Shield, My Dreams, Self-Management, Career Choices, Responsible Decision-Making, prevention and treatment of HIV, STIs and unintended pregnancy, and sexual risk behaviours. In smaller groups learners are more willing to share their experiences, thoughts, and perspectives related to the topics discussed. These themes aimed to equip learners with knowledge, life skills, and confidence to make informed and responsible choices. For grade 12, the sessions focused on Reading Comprehension, Mind Mapping, and Study Skills in preparation for the final exams.

Individual Consultations

Individual Consultations provide learners with a safe and confidential space to receive

psychosocial support. Where appropriate, and with the learner's consent, parents are involved, and cases referred to external services for further assistance. In 2025 the Coach conducted 97 consultations addressing a range of concerns, including domestic challenges, sexual assault cases, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, trauma debriefing, self-esteem issues, bullying, unhealthy relationships, learning difficulties, misconduct, fighting, suicidal behaviour, and career guidance. Through consultations the coach ensured that vulnerable learners received the necessary support to help them navigate challenges and thrive in their personal and academic lives.

An example of individual consultation

An 18-year-old Grade 12 learner began struggling academically after the passing of his father. The learner was frequently absent, withdrawn and showed a noticeable decline in performance. Teachers reported that he appeared tired, demotivated, and disengaged in class. During consultation the learner



disclosed that he was experiencing grief and increased pressure at home, as he felt responsible for supporting his mother and younger siblings. This emotional burden was affecting his concentration and preparation for final examinations. The Coach provided support, creating a safe space for the learner to process his emotions. Sessions focused on coping strategies, time management, emotional support, and goal setting. The Coach also worked closely with the learner to develop a structured study plan to help him catch up on his schoolwork. Over time, the learner's attendance improved, and he gradually regained focus and motivation. He successfully passed Grade 12 examinations in 2025. The success of this case demonstrates the important role that the coach plays in the learners' life.

Additional Activities

Awareness campaigns

Awareness campaigns are useful in helping learners address social challenges. During 2025 The Coach coordinated such a campaign with a focus on sexual and reproductive health, consent, substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV prevention, and unintended pregnancy. Separate sessions for girls and boys provided a safe and confidential environment where learners could discuss these sensitive issues. This enabled them to identify challenges, reflect on their choices, and make informed decisions about their health and well-being. Various stakeholders such as the South African Police Service and the Departments of Health, Education, and Social Development participated in the campaign and addressed the learners.

Teachers' workshop

A Teacher Development Workshop titled "Conflict Management" was conducted by Star for Life Area Manager and the Coach. The workshop focused on equipping educators with practical skills and strategies to effectively manage and resolve conflict within the school environment. 26 teachers participated, demonstrating commitment to professional development.

Challenges

Eqakwini High School is a rural, under-resourced school located in a community facing high levels of poverty and unemployment. Many learners come from disadvantaged households where access to basic needs is limited and social challenges impact their academic performance and emotional well-being. Besides these adversities, Star for Life has contributed meaningfully to building a commitment to teaching and learning. The excellent performance of Grade 12 learners is an indication of resilience, which the programme works towards achieving.

Star for Life would like to sincerely thank Star for Life Norway and their sponsors, for the continued sponsorship. Without you, the work at the school would not be possible.



Signed by Coach: Siyabonga Manqele

I have a bachelors in social work and been a Life Skills Coach with Star for Life since August 2022. What inspires me in this role is the opportunity to walk alongside young people during critical and challenging years of their lives. I am deeply committed to helping learners overcome social barriers, take charge of their education, and believe in their future.