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Landboueskool
Farm Eensgewonden



Vryheid
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DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND WATER

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

MOTIVATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FORESTRY @ LANDBOU HIGH SCHOOL

Dear sir / madam

1. INTRODUCTION:

Landbou High School, the place where we literally and figuratively grow tall trees, wants to BUILD the LAND. The school is an AGRICULTURAL school – ONE of only FOUR such schools in the province. The place is 872 hectares big and consists of THREE sections

1. a farm with enormous potential
2. a hostel which is a home to our learners and
3. a school with quality education.

The total number of staff is 48 people!

1.1 BACKGROUND

The school was built 30 years ago by fathers in an advantaged community for their sons to become farmers. What was once a school filled with previously advantaged children being supported by the local farm community, CHANGED into a school filled with previously disadvantaged learners. Consequently the outside of the place looks very much the same BUT on the inside the faces and the background of its learners changed and consequently its support base. The local farm community, who were previously very involved in the school, removed their children and their support from the school leaving the school with enormous responsibilities and challenges!

1.2 THE SCHOOL, HOSTEL AND FARM AT PRESENT

Rising up to the challenges the school does the best with what it has:

1. SCHOOL
 - Leadership development at the school is one of our priorities.
 - We offer a rich curriculum

- We have a dedicated academic staff of 14 of which 50% is paid by the SGB.
- We specialise in THREE Agricultural subjects and practical activities on the farm.
- We holistically develop learners to apply intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional intelligence through what is offered at the school.

PRIORITY: BECOMING A CENTRE OF ACADEMIC SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCIES!!!

2. FARM

- On the farm the learners are exposed to several farm activities
- The purpose of this is to answer to curriculum needs and to give them a thorough background of practical experience of farming and to develop young farmers.

The farm practices are as follows:

- Agricultural Technology
 - Vegetable garden
 - Lay hens and broilers
 - Piggery
 - Livestock
 - Short courses

* *At this stage no crop planting can be done by the school due to the fact that the school don't have the necessary implements.*

* *No forestry can be done because of lack of funding and expertise.*

PRIORITY: FULLY FUNCTIONAL EXPERIENTIAL FARM

3. HOSTEL

The hostel provides a home for our learners where they sleep safe, eat well, study well, wash well and have the opportunity to learn how to live in a bigger community.

PRIORITY: THE UPGRADING AND ENLARGEMENT OF THE FACILITY TO ACCOMMODATE ALL LEARNERS IN THE SCHOOL

The school is all in all testing and breaking boundaries, challenging the learners and staff to use their gifts, qualifications, skills and abilities in exceptional ways. The school has become a very special place to be.

1.3 POTENTIAL

The heritage of the current community at this school has become very different!! Land reform and land restitution part of their heritage. Putting scientists and agricultural specialists back into the community has become an urgent issue to make land reform and food security a success. We need to answer to what comes AFTER land reform!

THEREFORE schools like this needs to be approach differently because...

1. The potential of this school is to become a CENTRE of SCIENTIFIC, AGRICULTURAL and LEADERSHIP development and training.

2. The school has the potential to become a leader in the provision of quality, integrated, secondary education bringing the classroom to the LAND and the LAND into the classroom.
3. The school has the potential to answer to the need of young and upcoming farmers to build the land that is given back to them.
4. This school has the potential to build an awareness of land issues also to the learners who are not going to follow a pure agricultural career. In itself the communities which are going to be served by these individuals are going to benefit a lot by their background.

The difference in our country will be made in AGRI SCHOOLS!

1.4 THE DREAM

Landbou has the potential to become a leading focused school of excellence and to provide intellectual and scientific expertise and quality skills in the field of leadership and agriculture. The school has also the potential to broaden its current focus to accommodate agricultural activities like forestry to enrich the knowledge and skills of the learner who has the opportunity to be at Landbou.

The dream will only be reached if the current situation is fully functional and can be duplicated in terms of expertise and infra-structure. If the present reality is not of an excellent quality more problems will be duplicated.

The school and its environment provide a very special learning experience and we would not like to lose the character of the school. The following characteristics can not be lost in the future:

1. The school is built in a tranquil, rural environment and is part of a farm. The atmosphere is peaceful and wholesome and everybody at Landbou gains by this atmosphere. The fact that the whole community is surrounded by beautiful nature, has the opportunity to work on the farm, stay in the hostel, play and live in safe surroundings where proper care is taken for the well-being of everybody can not be lost.
2. The school has a unique quality in terms of the individual care everybody receives. Smaller numbers and classes make this possible.
3. The school needs to be a staying-in school because of the practical activities on the farm but also because we see to it that our learners eat well, sleep well, study well, participate in sport and other activities. They are busy and happy. Our day scholars battle with transport and cannot really participate in all the activities of the school.
4. Discipline is good and consequently strong leadership is developed.

The future vision in short could have the following:

1. The current facility: school, hostel and farm are upgraded and fully functional.
2. A Sciences Centre including an Agriculture Resource Centre on the farm which are accessible and available to the local community for short courses and to give our learners the opportunity to be exposed to scientific agricultural farm activities.
3. Forestry as a fundamental subject because of the area the school is situated in.

1.5 CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

The enormous potential of schools like LANDBOU still needs to be discovered.

1.5.1 DIFFERENT APPROACH – A NEW VISION

1. The school must be seen in the context of its background, not of its history.
2. The school needs to be seen as a partner in land reform.

3. The school must be approached holistically: the school and farm must be seen as a unit.
4. The farm is an extension of the school and is therefore an educational farm, not a commercial farm and must be treated as part of an educational institution.
5. The school cannot be treated as a 'normal' school. Its demands are very different from 'normal' schools.

1.5.2 NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL (REFERS TO SCHOOL, FARM AND HOSTEL)

1. More involvement from the Departments and other stakeholders.
2. Staff provision
3. Financial support.
4. The general maintenance of all the buildings is an enormous burden to the school:
15 houses, farm buildings, hostel and school buildings
5. WATER

1.5.2.1 SCHOOL (only)

1. Staff provision: must be determined by need not numbers! Specialists!
2. Upgrading of facilities.
3. Modern technology
4. Financial support: Norms and standards are determined by numbers and not needs!
5. Partnership and support: SCIENCES RESOURCE CENTRE!

1.5.2.2 FARM (only)

1. WATER
2. Agricultural Science Centre.
3. Farm needs to be fully functional with modern, scientific farm activities and equipments to be able to educate learners and community.
4. Financial support. (A yearly request must be submitted to the Department of Education which is sometimes granted and sometimes not – no long term planning can be done.)
5. Planting can't be done by school - equipment to old...
6. New activities like forestry, which is a huge agricultural activity in this area, needs to be implemented.
7. General upgrading
8. Staff provision – ONE manager, no foreman and 9 farm aids.

2. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 VISION:

Growing tall trees @ LANDBOU

Landbou's vision is to be a fully functional Agricultural school of excellence providing a total learning experience to learners by providing an environment which helps them to discover and reach their FULL potential to develop strong leadership of moral and intellectual greatness rooted in sound values, stretching out to opportunities for development and growth, and providing LIFE to communities by their expertise.

@ LANDBOU we want to build the land!

2.2 MISSION:

Landbou's mission is to build our land by efficiently addressing the challenges of a new South Africa and a modern world by enabling and equipping individuals and developing moral leadership through a whole learning experience in a focused secondary school of excellence in an agricultural environment.

2.3 FOUNDATION:

Respect for God, the environment, people and animals.

Living with integrity and authenticity.

Belief in the potential of every individual.

Giving everyone the chance and the opportunity to grow in greatness.

Treating everyone with dignity because they are made in the image of God.

Being a source and a support base to their own community and the bigger community.

Adding value to everything and everyone.

Doing the best with what we have.

Never be satisfied with anything less than greatness.

2.4 OBJECTIVES:

- Building a focused school of excellence where all learners are staying in
- Focusing on what is truly valuable and important to become whole people
- Forming the lives of our children
- Giving everyone the opportunity to grow and develop to become the best they can be
- Providing a unique experience where we value people for their lives and not their achievement.
- Cultivating and taking care of our people to be well
- Building character to become strong and courageous.
- Being a HOSTEL school – providing a home and proper care for learners
- Having transparent and sound governance and management
- Holistically develop the school and its people
- Having parents who are co-partners in the building of the land
- GROWING TALL TREES @ LANDBOU

2.5 ENROLMENT:

The MEC mentioned a number of at least 700 learners.

The Agriculture focus of the school limits the number of the learners in the school because the farm can only have so many feet on it. If the farm becomes fully functional and provides a broader variety of Agricultural practices it will be able to carry 400 learners.

2.6 CURRICULUM: A well-defined and enriched curriculum

The curriculum that we offer at this stage is the following:

SUBJECTS OFFERED GRADE 10-12 FET phase	
1.	ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE
2.	AFRIKAANS FIRST ADDITIONAL
3.	ZULU SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
4.	MATHEMATICS
5.	MATHEMATICAL LITERACY
6.	LIFE ORIENTATION

7.	PHYSICAL SCIENCE
8.	LIFE SCIENCE
9.	*AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE
10.	*AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT
11.	*AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
12.	ACCOUNTING
13.	BUSINESS ECONOMICS
14.	COMPUTER APPLICATION TECHNOLOGY
15.	GEOGRAPHY
*	AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES (... done on farm)

ONE AGRICULTURAL SUBJECT IS COMPULSORY!

All the subjects that we offer at the school are very important in a modern agricultural environment. The MEC also mentioned the introduction of subjects like hospitality and tourism which could be introduced in the later stages of development because many of the products on the farm can be used to develop skills in the food and hospitality industry.

2.6 RESOURCES FACILITY:

We are very excited about the possibility of hosting a SCIENCES RESOURCES CENTRE at our school.

The opportunity to have a modern SCIENCES RESOURCE CENTRE at the school consisting of an Agri-Science facility, as well as a Physical Science facility and a Computer Science facility would be a first and a very exciting project to work on! This facility will bring incredible enrichment and exposure to the schools of this area as well as the community at large.

2.7 FARM: The utilization of the farm infrastructure

2.7.1 INTER-RELATEDNESS: FARM AND SCHOOL

The curriculum of the school specialises in agriculture. The farm is therefore an extension of the curriculum taught in the classroom. The farm needs to provide the environment where young and upcoming agriculturalists get hand on practical experience of farming. The farm must therefore be more of an experiential farm than a commercial farm. This in itself has its own challenges because the farm must be a centre of training and agricultural expertise being able to provide what is necessary in the modern era. Challenges like job creation, addressing poverty and food production can be addressed if our learners get the necessary expertise and skills in the agricultural sector.

The following farm practices are being implemented at the moment:

1. Agricultural technology
2. Crops
3. Vegetable garden
4. Forestry
5. Beef production
6. Sheep
7. Dairy
8. Laying hens
9. Broilers
10. Piggery

The financial challenges which the farm faces are immense. Currently the financial performance of the farm runs into a loss every year. It is an almost impossible task to change the farm into the sort of environment necessary to train young and upcoming farmers without some financial assistance.

2.7.2 CRITICAL PROBLEMS

Even though we have enormous challenges on the farm we will not share or the detail about that with you. What is critical, though, and could maybe addressed by your Department is the following to matters.

2.7.2.1 WATER

ONE borehole provides water for the school, farm and hostel. There is no irrigation system in place. If the borehole dries up there will be no water available for all three sectors. We urgently need more water!

Discussions with the Department of Education and the municipality as well as the District Municipality has been going on to try to solve our water crisis. Up to now we haven't come to any further solutions to something which can become a danger to the future of this school.

In our discussions with Mr. Mdluli from your Department we have realised that we had to speak to your Department first to try to solve the problem of water provision to the whole community of Landbou. It is needless to say that any future development is going to depend on the availability of water! It is also important to mention that being an educational facility we need to educate our learners and future farmers in water affairs!!!

So, we need the Department of Water Affairs to invest time and expertise at Landbou and the Department of Water Affairs need us to provide future water scientists!

2.7.2.2 FORESTRY

Forestry is one of the main agricultural activities in the area in which the school is situated. Up to now the school has never planted any forests. It just doesn't make any sense to be the only agricultural school in a big forestry area like Northern Natal and Mpumalanga and NOT having forestry as a subject and available scientific resources to train current and future foresters!

We think of planting a variety of tree species to be able to expose our learners and foresters to a variety of forests activities. In the long run it could also mean an income for the school which is desperately needed.

To be able to establish forestry at our school we need the Department of Forestry to get involved at our school because we need your approval for such activities.

So, we need the Department of Forestry to invest time and expertise at Landbou and the Department of Forestry need us to provide future scientist in forestry!

3. CONCLUSION

Growing tall trees at Landbou is a lifetime investment which will have enormous constructive consequences our province our country. We want to be the change our country so desperately need BUT we need any partner who will be willing to invest whichever is necessary to create the possibility of delivering experts to South Africa.

Annatjie van Niekerk

ACTING PRICIPAL