



UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA

Office of the Vice-Chancellor and Rector
Kantoor van die Visekanselier en Rektor

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

WEBSITE OFFERING FREE TEACHING AND LEARNING AIDS FOR MATHS AND SCIENCE TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

It gives me pleasure to support and endorse the following innovative idea – which would address some of the serious Maths and Science challenges faced in our country today.

The National Matric Maths average in 2011 was 34%, while the Science average was 36%! These dismal figures, 18 years after the end of Apartheid, are caused by a shortage of adequately trained teachers, a lack of equipped laboratories as well as a lack of textbooks and other suitable teaching and learning materials in Maths and Science.

A new, different approach is now required!

John Bransby is an experienced, creative Science teacher who has been the Principal of a top academic Private school and has also been the National Matric Physics Examiner for South Africa. He has written, edited and published Maths & Science teaching and learning aids and materials for many years. His current teaching CDs (with exciting, interactive simulations and video clips) are used in 350 top Maths and Science schools throughout SA. However it is the teaching and learning in the other 6000 High and 20 000 Primary schools that are of major concern to John and many other people.

Research indicates that 85% of all SA cell phone users (including learners) will have smart phones able to download materials and content from the Internet within the next 2 – 3 years. Many will also have access to computers and/or tablets as well.

John's vision is to produce a website that can provide all Maths and Science teachers and learners, their parents and schools with all the necessary teaching and learning content and worksheet requirements in Maths & Science (that satisfy the new CAPS documents) for Grades 10 – 12 in these crucial subjects, for FREE. These materials would be easily downloadable (in the form of modules) to cell phones, tablets, laptops and desktop computers – from the website, at no cost to the learner or teacher – other than the cost of downloading the materials to their respective hardware.

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Every teacher & learner would thus have FREE access to the very best materials that would enable them to do well in both the classroom and at home! Teachers will also be instructed – via workshops, on how to best access and use the materials in the classrooms at their respective schools. In due course, this could be expanded to incorporate Maths materials for Grades 1 – 9 (where there are also major problems).

I met with John in 2009 and was very impressed with his materials, methodology and his understanding of the complexities of Maths and Science Education in SA. Since then, by including numerous simulations and video clips into his materials, he has taken his work to the next level. The website he envisages will enable every Maths and Science learner and teacher in SA, to easily access (via their digital media) these materials – put together by Maths and Science teacher specialists – all experts in their fields.

This exciting project will require funding to bring it to a successful fruition over a couple of years.

I do certainly believe that this project and concept has the potential to help meet some of the serious Maths and Science challenges faced in our country today and I support and endorse John's innovative endeavour to address this matter. I believe it is truly worthy of our support.

There will certainly be major benefits for the learners, parents, schools, and tertiary institutions as the crucial National Matric Maths and Science marks improve. A funder, (via their branding on some of the materials and the website) would gain financially in the longer term and both SA commerce and industry would also benefit – as more students excel and progress through tertiary institutions, while successfully taking these important subjects at both school and tertiary levels.

Sincerely yours

PROF JONATHAN D JANSEN
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND RECTOR
5 SEPTEMBER 2012