

Eersterust Christian Education Centre- Synopsis

The Eersterust community came about through the implementation of the Group Areas Act during the 1960s which required that different racial groups live in demarcated areas as decided by the powers that be. All the so-called Coloured families were forcefully removed and dumped in the township of Eersterust.

Not much socio-economic development has taken place there for the past fifty years. The place is still a disadvantaged area, even in the new South Africa. The largest part of the community still lives in abject poverty, riddled with social ills such as teenage pregnancies, high prevalent rate of HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and illiteracy challenges. Most of the families, who are staying in Extension 2, where the facility will be erected, are blue collar labourers who leave for work very early and come back very late due to the distances they travel to work places. Their children, who are not in school, are left mostly unattended.

The founder members of the ECEC, who consist mainly of educationists (presently and retired), envision contributing to the poverty alleviation of the community. The members harbour a strong commitment to plough back into the community. They saw the acquisition of quality education by especially the children as the only vehicle of getting out of the dire situation. They bought a piece of vacant land, through the Eersterust Lutheran Church, from the local municipality in 1990. The site is adjacent and adjoining the Jacaranda Primary school. Building classrooms and concomitant facilities on the acquired site will form a natural extension of the Primary School and will provide in the broader goal of the Department of Education which states "our medium-term goal (2010) is for all children entering grade 1 to have participate in an accredited Reception Year Programme." (Education White Paper 5 on Early Child Development - May 2001).

The ECEC was formally established in 2003 as a non-profitable organization. Its purpose is to uplift and support the development and advancement of the community. The organization was established not for any financial gain. Its constitution states clearly that all income generated by the organization shall be capitalized or reinvested to further the objectives and work of the organization. The organization was registered in 2005 with the department of Social Development as a NPO. Our target will be the Early Children Development of the community. Plans were approved by the local municipality for this purpose in 2007. Building started in 2008.

The management committee of ECEC will consist of the following members (most of them elders of the Eersterust Parish): Mr A Seckle (Chairperson - Former Educationist); Mr D Fillis (Vice Chairperson -Educationist); Mr P Hunter (Secondary School Teacher); Ms L Burger (ECD Teacher); Ms M Stanley (Sec. School Teacher); W Romaine (Sec. School Teacher); CWK Seckle (former School Principal); Mr O Margardie (School Principal – Jacaranda Primary School);L Cloete (Architect); Rev. J Bok (UNISA); J Hunter (Accountant); B Samuels (Secretary).