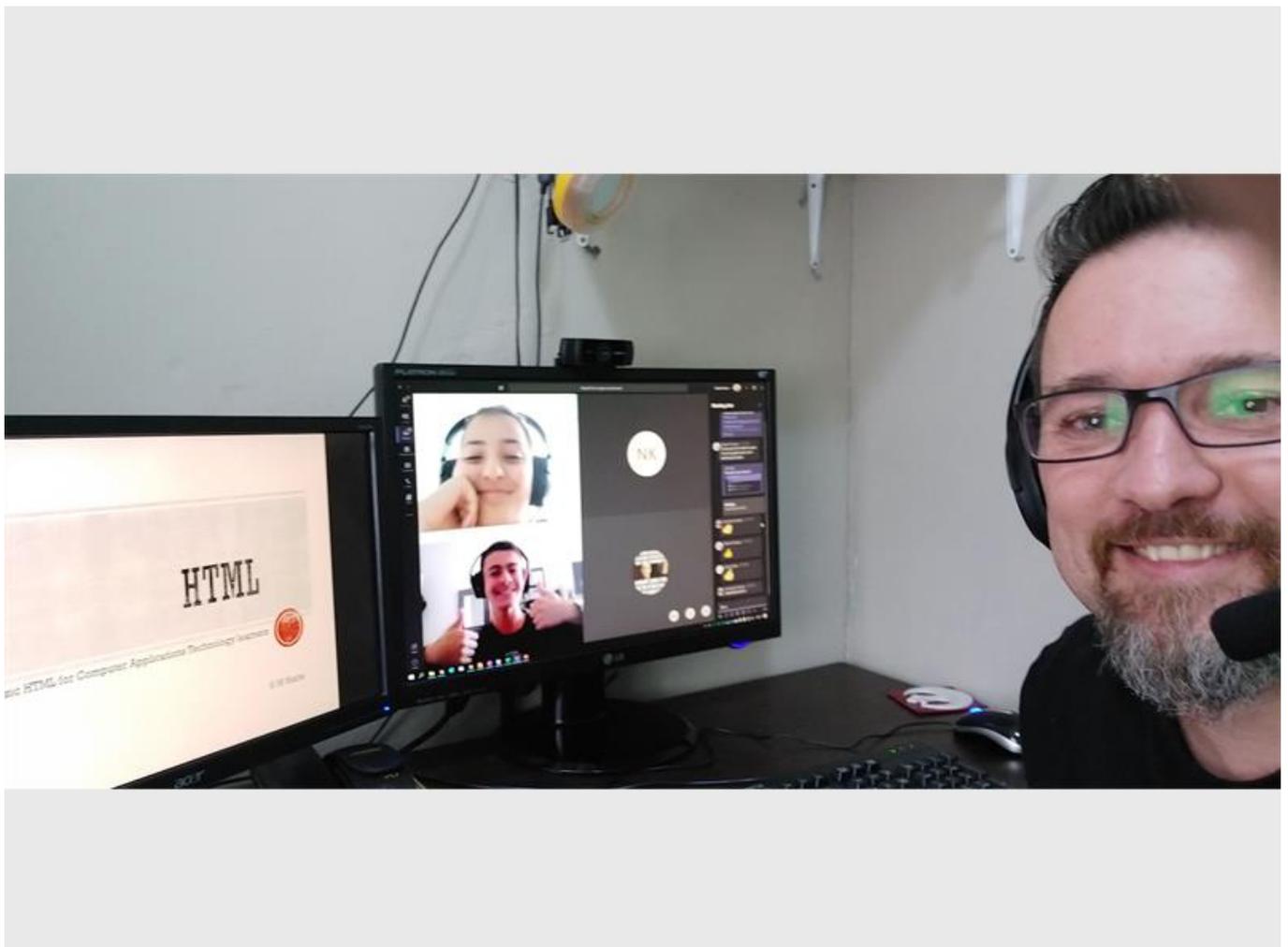


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## 'I am always driven to find ways to solve problems using technology, it's who I am' – Hains

Saheti School closed on April 3 until the second term starts on April 28.

April 11, 2020



Saheti Grade 11s give the thumbs up to their teacher, Matthew Hains, during an online computer applications technology lesson on HTML - a coding language used to design web pages.



Saheti School has continued with its teaching programme remotely since March 18, with teacher Matthew Hains blazing the trail for the rest of the school.

Teachers and learners at Saheti School have risen to the challenge, considering how quickly the school switched to an online platform.

Matthew Hains is one of the teachers who gladly took up the challenge.

He is head of department for computer applications technology and development officer information technology (ICT) at Saheti.

He teaches computer applications technology to Grades 10 to 12 learners and ICT to Grades Eight and Nine learners.

Matthew believes Saheti so far has been equipped for online teaching.

"Our school had already been using Microsoft Teams for quite some time and so we didn't have too many issues working with it.

"Our learners were quite used to accessing the interface and working digitally.

"We have a very proficient IT support team who are ready at any time to fix issues and offer user support as well," said Matthew.

Saheti has been using Microsoft Teams for a few years, but never had to revert to complete online tuition, as per Matthew.

"That being said, our staff were prepared and eager to teach online, as the jump to using the technology was not too far," said Matthew.

He agrees being a teacher of computer applications technology has made online teaching easier at the school.

"The skills I have obtained being a computer applications technology teacher stood me in good stead and provided a platform for me to support the other teachers in the school," said Matthew.

According to Matthew, Saheti is an academically focused school and maintains it is essential to continue teaching for the sake of continuity and the academic support of learners.

Not everything was smooth sailing, as Matthew ran into a few hurdles.

"The only main difficulty we experienced was we had particular learners who had connectivity issues and were unable to join live classes."

The teachers also battled with service degradation at particular times, but this was due to an increased demand of users globally.

"Teaching my subject, the whole experience seeing what we teach being used in real life made the subject so much more real for my learners and my colleagues," said Matthew.

The differences teaching online than in a classroom for Matthew is the lack of face-to-face contact, the dynamics of a classroom environment, such as the "noise" of school, which is missing and a lot of screen time which is not necessarily a good thing.

Learners have also adapted along with the staff to online teaching at Saheti, but not without



toil.

It has been a challenge for our learners.

"Their initial experience was one of being overwhelmed by the perceived amount of work being given to them by their teachers.

"Learning to adapt and manage their own time, becoming responsible in part for their own learning was the biggest challenge at the start.

"Although, in totality, they have adapted very well," said Matthew.

Teaching online is a very different environment to classroom teaching he revealed, as teachers have had to adapt their teaching style and learn to engage the learners in different ways.

"Teaching is our job at Saheti, it's what we do. I am always driven to find ways to solve problems using technology. It's who I am," said Matthew.

Matthew maintains technology allows for continuous learning, regardless of school being closed.

"We are always learning. It is very important because it keeps learners active intellectually and academically," said Matthew.

Matthew advises teachers everywhere to teach online, if they are able to.

"Look at what you can do, as opposed to what you cannot do," said Matthew.

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