



# Pinelands High School

## Newsletter: Vol 3: 2009

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Dear Parents/Guardians

We are almost at the end of the first term of the year and I am sure your child is looking forward to a break. I would like to remind parents that next term is the first exam term of the year. For all the learners this will be a critical period of assessment. Again I make the plea to parents to ensure that their child is working regularly at home.

### **Attendance at school**

There has been a significant improvement in attendance at school in comparison with last year and I thank those who have responded so well to this focus area.

I remind parents that attendance at school is a legislated requirement for children and that removing your child for non-educational activities such as film shoots is not permissible. All reputable film companies take this into consideration and schedule shoots that involve teenagers over weekends and school holidays. If a student misses an assessment as a result of a film shoot they will receive zero for that assessment.

### **Roll Call in the morning**

The feedback we have received from parents about our system for sending an sms to parents if their child is absent from school has been largely positive. The only time it seems to break down is if the child does not ensure that they have been marked present for the day. It is the STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to ensure that their Tutor has ticked their name off each morning.

The school gates will be locked at 08:00 every morning and the only

access after that time will be through the front entrance where the child will then report to Reception.

### **Theft at school**

It is quite clear from the instances of theft over the past few weeks that we have someone coming onto the campus to steal items left lying around. This appears to be happening during the times that the gates are open for functions or to let students go home.

I have spoken to the students about being far more careful when it comes to their possessions and asked them to report any suspicious activity immediately.

We are in the process of upgrading the security cameras at the school and are also going to investigate permanent security guards as a further means of protecting our students' belongings. In the meantime, we ask parents to assist us by reinforcing the message I shared with the students about looking after their belongings and also to be on the lookout for strangers who are on our campus.

### **Science Fair**

Our congratulations go to the Grade 9 and Grade 11 Science students for their efforts with the Science Fair. There were some remarkable projects on display reflecting an enormous amount of work. Those who undertook this project properly have learned a tremendous amount in terms of research procedure. The top five in each section are as follows:

Grade 11:

- 1<sup>st</sup> *Anna-Marie du Plooy and Steven Rybicki* (Teacher vs Computer)  
2<sup>nd</sup> *Johnathan Fitzgerald* (Colour

- Blindness)  
3<sup>rd</sup> *Gemma Alexander* (Fabric Features)  
3<sup>rd</sup> *Rita Griebenow and Matt Pike* (How alcohol affects you)  
5<sup>th</sup> *Wameequah Adams* (The effects of vermicompost on tomato plant growth)

Grade 9:

- 1<sup>st</sup> *Nicole Jacobs, Ruby Cornell and Roshana Impey* (How energy drinks affect your blood sugar)  
2<sup>nd</sup> *Shannon Valstar and Lerisha Nair* (The effects of pool chemicals on human hair)  
3<sup>rd</sup> *Carlo Gordon, James Yegan, Lee Honigwachs and Gareth Steyn* (Peanut Power)  
3<sup>rd</sup> *Rebekah Senior and Jessica Ward* (Fingerprints)  
5<sup>th</sup> *Chloe Kiernan, Jodi-Ann Middlekop and Shannon O'Brien* (Does the friction of a bracket on braces affect how long you have the braces on for?)

Our grateful thanks go to the Science Fair team, headed by *Mrs Masureik*, for their significant efforts in putting this exercise together.

### **Academic news**

The classroom upgrade project has started and we are in the process of installing 23 data projectors in various classrooms as well as tablet computers. This is a truly exciting moment for our teachers as they will have the latest technology available to them to enhance their

teaching.

The Grade 9s wrote a series of Provincial benchmarking tests, run by the WCED, in Mathematics and Languages. These results will be used by the WCED to ascertain levels of ability across the province and will be released to schools later in the year.

#### ***Estates news***

The grounds have taken strain over the past few weeks with the scorching heat and with other factors that have caused problems such as the breakdown of the watering system and the swimming pool pump system. Both of these have been repaired and we are happy with the state of the grounds at the moment.

We are in the process of appointing a new Estates Manager and will keep parents informed of the appointment once it has been made.

#### ***Cultural news***

The first Sunset Concert of the year was very successful indeed and the quad was filled to capacity with people enjoying a wonderful musical experience. Our compliments and thanks go to the Music Department for their work in this regard.

The Cabaret show is almost upon us and the snippets we have heard thus far have been quite superb. The show promises to be yet another successful one and I urge those who have not got tickets yet to do so.

#### ***From the Bookshop/School Shop***

Please check with your child that they have collected all outstanding textbooks (including those specially ordered) from the bookshop. No refunds will be made for uncollected books.

If any students would like to order the official school winter jacket they can do so by placing an order with *Mrs Dawes*. The cost of the jacket is R305.

#### ***Admissions for 2010***

The admissions process for new

learners to our school next year opened with a very good information evening which was well attended. Over 400 people came to the school to hear what is on offer and left very well-informed and with a good impression of our school.

The annual Open Day was also held and was equally well attended. The feedback I have received has been very positive indeed and I was delighted with the vibe in the school that day. To see so many students here, with obvious pride in their school, was quite simply wonderful. My compliments go to all the staff and students for their efforts but to *Mrs Deborah Torrington* in particular for co-ordinating the event so well.

Parents are reminded that the closing date for applications for new students is 17 April 2009.

#### ***SGB news***

The by-election was held recently and a quorum was not reached which resulted in *Mr Richard Leach* being co-opted to the Governing Body for a further three months. Our thanks go to *Mr Leach* for being willing to take up this position.

I am concerned that so few parents attended the meeting and remind all parents that they are expected to attend the next election on 2 June when the term of office of this SGB comes to an end.

#### ***Achievements of students***

Our congratulations go to the following students:

*Johnathan Fitzgerald* who is the top 100m freestyle swimmer in the WP and who will be competing at the National Championships.

*Joshua Bedford* who came first in the WP Bouldering League competition.

*Moegammad Isaac* who was selected for the WP Karate team.

*Lauren Sobotker* came 5<sup>th</sup> in the WP Womens' Golf Strokeplay B division (she is only in Grade 8!)

#### ***Upcoming Events***

I remind parents of the Main Events list

in the school diary. We will also be sending out the updated 2<sup>nd</sup> term Calendar with the reports at the end of this term.

NB: Meetings early next term:

**Grade 8 PTL (Thur 16 April)**  
**Grade 12 PTL (Mon 20 April)**

I wish all parents a restful holiday at the end of this term. To those celebrating Easter, may this time be most special for you and your family.

Regards

Tony Reeler  
Principal  
23 March 2009

***The second term starts at 07:55 on Wednesday 15 April Please make sure your child arrives at school correctly dressed and on time.***

Please also use this time to kit your child out correctly for the upcoming winter sports season.