



# What's on @ PHS

Volume 9: 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians

At the outset let me thank all those parents/guardians and students who have helped make this year as successful as it has been. I have been delighted by so many things that have happened this year; and these are only made possible by a supportive community.



*One of the highlights of 2009 - "District Six"*

At the Budget meeting recently, I presented a brief overview of the year, highlighting the successes and indicating the areas which I felt needed work. The areas in which we did well this year included:

- 100% pass rate in the first NSC exam
- Significant funding for the Maths programmes through the Epoch and Optima Trust and BoE
- Baseline testing in English and Maths took place across all grades
- The classroom upgrade programme started
- Staff turnover was low with only one member of staff leaving in 2009
- Our replacement teachers fitted in very well
- Drama has been added to the curriculum for 2010
- The Academic Lecture Series began
- This was one of the finest years for cultural activities including drama and musical performances
- Most sports codes were successful
- A successful SGB election was held
- Applications for Grade 8 in 2010 are higher than ever
- Additional parking space was donated to the school and security systems were upgraded
- A new student leadership model was introduced
- PHS had a clean financial audit

There were areas where I feel we still have work to do and these will be included in our focal areas for 2010. These include:

- Maintaining academic focus
- Improving IT infrastructures and support for junior grades
- Getting all parents to support the disciplinary system
- Improving reading and formal language skills
- Individual support for students "at risk"
- Improving the state of the buildings
- Tightening up the sports programme
- Cutting down on late coming
- Improving the public image of students (uniform)
- Improving the collection of fees.

There is still much to do in the years ahead as we strive endlessly towards excellence and I thank the staff of the school in particular for their tireless efforts.

## Staff News

As mentioned, we have one member of staff leaving us this year. Mr Sean Wilson will be going to the International School in Hout Bay where he returns to teaching the IB curriculum. We thank him for his contribution to PHS in his quiet and thoughtful manner and wish him and his family well for the move.

New staff for 2010 will be:

- Mr Craig Paxton returns to head the Physical Sciences Department.
- Mr Andrew Vergotine joins our Afrikaans Department in the place of Mrs Reiche.
- Mr Matthew Draper returns to the English Department in an additional post created to alleviate the pressure on the English teachers and improve the overall standard of language.
- Ms Claire Watling starts the Drama Department at the school.

We wish all our staff a restful holiday and all the very best for 2010.

## Harvest of Hope

Please see the attached promotion regarding this wonderful project. We urge you to support the local gardeners in their efforts.

## Subject Changes in 2010

The WCED has clarified the process regarding subject changes for Grades 10 - 12. The full policy can be found on the WCED website [www.wced.wcape.gov.za](http://www.wced.wcape.gov.za) searching for Assessment Management Minute 18/2009. A brief summary is that Grade 10s can change a maximum of two subjects, Grade 11s can change one and Grade 12s should not change, but can change one in extreme circumstances.

Parents need to apply for their child to change a subject, in writing, by 30 July (Grade 10 and 11) and 31 January (Grade 12).

A subject change request will only be entertained by the school if it is felt it will be in the best interests of the student and if there is space in the subject to which the student wishes to go.

## Personal Thoughts

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of the two Oude Molen matriculants who so tragically lost their lives during the examinations.

This is a sobering call for us all, particularly those who have children who are driving vehicles, to do so cautiously and with regard for the rules of the road. So many of our young people think they are invincible and it takes, unfortunately, an incident such as this one, to remind us that we are not and that tragedy can strike any of us at any time.

My best wishes go to all our students and their parents/guardians as they enjoy a well-deserved break at the end of the year.

I would like to remind parents that school starts on Wednesday 13 January 2010 at 08:00 for all students. Particular attention needs to be given to your child's appearance as we will not accept inappropriate hairstyles, jewellery or uniform and your child will be sent home if they do not conform to the school Code. Please note that boys will NOT be allowed to wear the "Grasshopper" style shoe. These shoes are not standard school shoes as per our Uniform Code and, as such, will be banned. Those boys who have been wearing them this year will have to replace their shoes for the start of the new year.

New students to PHS (in all Grades) need to report to the Kent Hall, in uniform, the day before (Tuesday 12 January) at 14:00 for their welcome to the school.

By now most members of the Pinelands High community will have heard that I will be leaving at the end of June next year to take up the Headmaster's position at Pretoria Boys' High School. This has not been an easy decision to make as my family and I have fitted in so easily to the PHS

## Congratulations



Our warm congratulations go to Mr Jade Hearne, our Sports Administrator, for his selection as the assistant coach for the SA U17 Girls' Hockey team.

community and have really loved our time here. That said, the opportunity came up for me to take on a bigger school in a different environment with different challenges. I am one of those people who thrives on change and on different situations and felt that this new position came at the right time in my career. I leave Pinelands High with sadness but also with thanks. So many experiences I have had here have enriched my personal and professional life and I will forever be grateful to the people at Pinelands High for teaching me so much.

I am aware that some people do not like change and that there may be concerns about the process to find the new Principal. All I ask is that we have faith in the process and in the people entrusted with that process – our Governing Body. They will not compromise on quality in any way and will do all they can to ensure that the very best person is found for the job. I am convinced that they will find the perfect person to lead our very special school into the future.

There will be other times when I can express my thanks to the Pinelands High community in greater depth but, for now, I thank you for seven wonderful years and assure you I will continue to sing the praises of Pinelands High forever.

Regards

Tony Reeler  
9 December 2009

## PHS CRAFT FAIR 8 - 18 DECEMBER 2010

We are very excited to announce that the St Stephens Craft Fair, which has been running successfully for a number of years, will be moving to Pinelands High next year. Would anyone interested in helping in any capacity please contact Pauline & Mick Davies on 021 531 8637 or 083-4562629, or via e-mail on [pjscraft@pjh.org.za](mailto:pjscraft@pjh.org.za). Over 100 volunteers will be needed. It promises to be a challenging but rewarding project to benefit our school.