



RONDEBOSCH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

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Established 1897

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Dear Parents

GOVERNING BODY NEWSLETTER : SEPTEMBER 2011

The 2011 year has shown itself to be one of change and new challenges. The boys have in every respect grasped the opportunities available to them and this has shown in the excellent academic results achieved internally, the outstanding presentations and performances within the cultural departments of the school and quite superb sporting performances and achievements.

During the course of the year the Governing Body has been involved in a number of projects, the most notable being that of the recruitment of Mr Shaun Simpson as our new Headmaster with effect from 1 January 2012.

The processes around approval for our Hockey Astro-turf have moved forward, and the application for land usage approval in respect of the Lower Desert site has reached the point of advertising for objections. Thus far the objections received have been of a fairly routine nature and will be dealt with accordingly. We would hope to achieve council approval shortly after resolution of the objections received. We will then be in a position to make a final decision around proceeding with the project, of course always subject to the necessary funds being available for the development. Needless to say, the substantial capital investment of approximately R8 million remains the greatest challenge. However, there is a real need to hasten this project along due to the fact that an ever increasing number of hockey players are coming up from the Prep School, and at present there is insufficient astro time available for all of our existing hockey boys at the astro pitch shared with WPCC, let alone catering for the growth in the sport. Whilst it seems unlikely that we may be able to enter into a further partnership with WPCC on a second astro positioned at the club (which would require a substantially lower capital contribution from the school), this possibility has not yet been fully discounted, and communication with the club continues.

The Estates Sub-Committee of the Governing Body has made significant strides in focusing on upgrades to the campus in terms of beautifying and upgrading/improving existing infrastructure. It has been the focus of this committee to avoid any significant capital projects in the 2011 year and deal with maintenance and small issues around the campus, many of which I am sure you would have noticed. In addition, five classrooms have been refurbished as a part of the ongoing refurbishment process, and a major refurbishment of another science laboratory was completed with the assistance of the Carleton Lloyd Education Trust. Whilst all this has been happening, the committee has been working in conjunction with Mr Bruce Burmeister, a professional architect and Old Boy, in developing a broad campus development plan, which will assist all stakeholders in

understanding the developmental direction of the campus in the future, and help to identify the investment needed to achieve this plan. It is anticipated that this plan will be ready for final Governing Body interrogation by mid-fourth term of this year, whereafter it will be made available for parents to comment on.

The financial performance of the school continues to be most encouraging, with the budgeted income being steadily met. What is more, the voluntary levy contributions have risen significantly from prior years. This remains the clearest indication to the Governing Body of the extent of the commitment of you as parents. Thank you most sincerely for the seriousness with which you have viewed this commitment. Expenditure remains within budget and by all accounts we will achieve our overall budget for the 2011 financial year. A special thank you needs to go to Mr Coutts and his outstanding administration team who have diligently pursued their responsibilities throughout the year, thereby making this favourable financial scenario possible. The financial challenges of the new year are already presenting themselves as we become aware of the rapidly increasing costs of maintenance and utility services, and much thinking is already taking place in this area. The preliminary budgeting processes for formulation of the 2012 financial budget have already been underway for some six weeks and will be finalised for presentation to parents on the evening of Wednesday, 9 November 2011.

Due to fact that the sons of two parent members of the Governing Body complete Grade 12 at the end of this year, we will be compelled to hold a Governing Body by-election. This will take place on the same evening as the budget presentation. In terms of The SA Schools' Act, all governing body tenures are limited to a prescribed period at which point the body must be dissolved and all members re-elected. The information currently available indicates that this will happen in March 2012. At this point, a new Governing Body will need to be elected. It is hoped that in the interests of continuity, a number of present governors will be agreeable to stand for re-election at that point.

As we begin to approach the latter part of the academic year, the members of the Governing Body extend their very best wishes to all learners for every success in their final examinations. This is most especially so for the Grade 12 learners, who have already begun with their prelim exams, and are in the "final straight" in terms of preparation for the finals in November.



Dale Smith
Chairman : School Governing Body