

## **HEADMASTER'S ADDRESS : SPEECH NIGHT 2010**

Governing Body Chairman, Guests, Staff, Parents and Pupils of RBHS. We extend a cordial and special welcome tonight to our Guests of Honour, Mr Donald Grant, MEC of Education in the Western Cape, and his wife, Mrs Cheryl Grant. This is our major academic occasion of the year and I would like to thank all who will play a part in it ; congratulations to all prizewinners too.

2010 has been characterised by unrest and protest in education. Many institutions have found it difficult to continue with their core business of teaching and learning. I hope that wisdom and sense will prevail on the part of the employer's side and restraint on the part of the educator body, so that a fair dispensation is applied. May all Grade 12 learners be able to give a fair account of themselves in the upcoming National Senior Certificate Examinations.

Rondebosch's Senior Certificate results in 2009 were excellent. Our learners achieved a 100% pass rate, with 93% of them gaining Degree Passes. No fewer than three hundred and nineteen Subject Distinctions were earned. The one disappointment was that none of our candidates achieved distinctions in Physical Sciences. This appears to have been a national trend which the National Department could not satisfactorily account for. Let it be said that RBHS obtained the highest number of passes in Physical Sciences of any school in the Western Cape. In terms of overall results in the Matric Examinations of 2009, our school was placed fourth out of all public schools in the province.

In last year's report I mentioned the school's acquisition of an additional Mathematics teacher through Anglo-American, as well as an extra teacher appointed by the WCED. I am pleased to report now that these additions to our staff have proved greatly beneficial to our curricula offering.

Boys have continued to excel in national competitions this year. The Maths team again earned second place for us in the prestigious UCT Competition in which 138 schools took part. Ashraf Moolla was chosen to represent South Africa in the International Olympiad. A number of boys did well in the CT Expo for Young Scientists. Two of them, Mogamad Ali Park and Travis Taylor, won gold medals and went forward to the National Finals.

2010 has seen full involvement by boys in the wide range of sports offered here. Pride in their teams and the school was evident on the part of the majority of our representatives. The major Winter sports, Hockey and Rugby, competed well at all levels and against all. All the A-teams in Hockey reached the finals of the knockout tournaments, with the U16's winning their tournament. In Rugby the most successful age-group were the U15's. The First XV achieved a high success rate of 70% in matches played in the Western Cape. The school's First Squash Team gained second place among all South African schools.

In the Summer sports, the Athletes again did very well in the annual Triangular Competition, in which they won seventeen events. The Swimming team again proved to be the Western Province champions.

The First Cricket team was one of two Rondebosch teams which toured England in July and excelled in their encounters there. The new season has started well for all our Cricket teams, with the First XI emerging unbeaten in the recent Cape Schools' Week. In Waterpolo our players have represented the school with great competence. The First Team won the Mazinter Cup in March and reached the last eight in the traditional SACS festival in September.

Cultural pursuits at Rondebosch remain popular. Two major Drama productions have been presented : a Grade 9 musical, "Zigger Zagger" attracted much interest ;

the senior production, “Of Mice and Men” showed the school’s depth in drama talent to good advantage.

Debating enjoyed a successful year, with a number of our learners achieving high levels of representation. The Junior Debating Team won the Rotary Interschools Competition.

It has been a year of top performances in Music. The Choral Event, in which we combined with RGHS and SACS, produced music of very good quality. Three Music pupils were chosen for the SA National Youth Band, directed by Mr T Scarr. The Gala Music Concert, in its second year in 2010, was a grand occasion. The concert served also to mark the retirement from RBHS of Mr Alan van der Merwe after forty-two years in our Music Department.

I acknowledge the contribution of the School and House Prefects, as also the members of the Learners’ Council. The school has a good record this year of outreach projects and I commend, in particular, the Interact members in this undertaking.

In terms of capital projects, we are pleased at the outcome of the Parking Area, next to the new pool. At present a trial system is being mooted to form part of an assessment of possible future entrance and exit plans for vehicles on our campus.

My thanks are due to all who have worked for or assisted us this year. Thank you to Mr Ryan and RBPS for support and co-operative effort. The Governing Body, chaired by Mr de Kock, has dealt efficiently with governance issues. The school’s staff have given ongoing and outstanding work and I thank them for their dedication and loyalty.

At a recent Strategic Meeting those present committed themselves to “maintaining the legacy of excellence”, referred to in the school’s Mission Statement. As we move now towards the second decade of the twenty-first century, I urge you to reflect on what Jim Collins expounds in the book “Good to Great” : “Let us comprehend what we can be the best at in the world.”

M BARKER

20 October 2010

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