



Headmaster / Skoolhoof: David Schenck

It Takes a Village

Dear parents and friends of PV

Parel Vallei has enjoyed a fantastic winter sports and drama season including brilliant Olympiad and Eisteddfod results. As usual, all these results are published weekly on the communicator and I encourage you to share in our successes. We have more children than ever before participating in a wide variety of events providing an ever increasing number of opportunities.

A very good example of this is the recent trip to Pearson!



It is not just the participation in events that is on the increase. We are also seeing a very pleasing increase in support being shown for school related activities. It is cool to support your school and more and more children are realising just how much fun it is. Active, happy kids have less time and inclination for shenanigans. Well done PV – let's make some NOISE! ☺

The academic year is building to a crescendo and for everyone (especially the matrics) the final exams are just around the corner. With this comes the traditional stress of exam pressure. In light of a recent event in the school, perhaps we must stop for a moment and check in on our loved ones. There is a song called 'Bright Eyes' (Art Garfunkel) written for a movie, 'Watership Down', (adapted from the book with the same name), that speaks about the light in your eyes. I have attached the hyperlink for you.

Please listen to the words: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGyQmH9NZcw>

Our children are the rabbits in the video – continuously surrounded by dangers that they do not always see or understand. We cannot allow the 'bright lights' in their eyes to fade before their time and I would like to charge us all with the collective responsibility of raising our children. There is an African saying "It takes a village to

raise a child” and to this effect we must see Parel Vallei and the children of the Helderberg Basin as part of our collective responsibility and at the very least, we must keep a vigilant eye open.

This term saw the first in a series of talks on relevant topics that will help us know what to look for. We started with a talk on drugs, focussing more on Dagga considering the news that there is a move to legalise it in the home – a move that I oppose completely. The next talk will be in the first term of 2018 and in all likelihood will focus on depression. Depression is largely misunderstood and is becoming a silent, unexpected killer. Depression is not limited to teens and can affect adults just as badly but there **is** help available.

More topics to be covered in the future include ADHD/ADD, the brain and raising boys/raising girls (living with the modern teenager). It is my hope that these sessions will provide both information and support for parents and children with perhaps even the possibility of initiating small cell groups where parents can meet and gain strength from each other. As children and adults, we **MUST** know that we are not alone in this nor are we the first to experience a problem.

A successful schooling system is the only hope for the future of our country as the building blocks are the children sitting in our classrooms. I attended an International Principals’ Conference at the CTICC over the long weekend and drew strength for what we are doing at PV from several presentations from a variety of countries. Left /right brain interaction stimulated through a variety of activities, allowing individuals to develop personalities and skills somewhere in the continuum from extreme left to extreme right **BUT** with an understanding of a whole brain approach is what gives us well-rounded individuals who are focused on their strengths. I call this **EXCELLENCE** and this is what PV stands for.

I want children who want to be part of PV. I want children who will self-correct and encourage others to do the same – an internal locus of discipline. I want an environment where staff expend their energies on the pursuit of excellence in every child in every activity. We don’t have time for disciplinary issues, laziness and apathy – these things suck-up energy, waste time and distort progress. To this end, please check your child’s appearance and understanding of the school rules regarding hair, uniform, sport, tests, exams etc. Please ask us if you are unsure so that we can work together as we continue to build this exceptional school.

Let me wish you all a good break. Please help your children plan for the exams – they happen soon after we return. I am off to the Breede River at Cape Infanta to catch Grunter and Kabeljou. Rumour has it that there is no cell phone reception there – should I be so blessed! I hope I catch another one like this. The fish below was tagged and released at De Hoop.



Travel safely.

Warm PV greetings

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "David", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

David