

Southern Cross Schools

Nature Based Schooling Systems

8 November 2016

Dear Parents

Our lovely school certainly keeps us busy and out of trouble. It is hard to believe that we are already at that point in the year where Christmas decorations are going up in the shops. Before we wipe our eyes out we will be starting another year. Before that happens there is still quite a bit of this year left, so let's take a quick look at some important school related matters.

Staffing:

Since the end of last term we have received notice from a few more members of the SCS staff.

- In the College Mrs Sue de Boer, after more than 30 years in the classroom, has decided to start a new business venture in Hoedspruit. Mrs de Boer will leave at the end of the year after completing nine years at Southern Cross Schools. We are obviously sad to be bidding her farewell but we wish her every success as she embarks on this new adventure.
- We are also sad to report that Ms Elize de Meyer, from the College will be leaving us at the end of this year. Ms de Meyer is relocating to the Western Cape to be with her life partner who moved from Hoedspruit earlier this year. We wish Ms de Meyer success and happiness next year.
- In the Prep School Mrs Tania Cowden has informed us that she will be leaving at the end of the year. Mrs Cowden has decided to return to the tourism industry now that her children are all but done with their schooling. We wish Mrs Cowden every success and happiness as she embarks on this re-entry into the world of hospitality.
- Mr Steve Marsh has developed traveller's itch and so he has decided to go exploring the big wide world out there from the end of this year. Mr Marsh is intending to use his teaching skills to secure income in wild and wonderful places around the world. We wish Mr Marsh happy traveling and great adventures.

We are pleased to say that our efforts to replace the leaving staff have been quite fruitful already. The following appointments have been made so far:

- Mrs Letitia Kleynhans has accepted a full-time appointment in the Pre-school and will serve as the permanent Grade 00 teacher next year.
- Ms Kim Bristow, a young, passionate, energetic and experienced teacher will join our Foundation Phase team in the Prep School from January next year.
- Ms Mandlakazi Miti has been appointed in a permanent capacity after initially covering for Mrs Nel who was on maternity leave. Ms Miti has shown herself to be an enthusiastic and competent teacher and we look forward to her contributions going forward.
- Mrs Lindsey Dickerson, a BSc graduate with a passion for teaching and for the bush will be joining the College as the Life Sciences teacher from January 2017.

All the vacant positions in the school have been advertised and applicants are being shortlisted and interviewed. We are very confident that all the vacancies will be filled by the time we close for the December break.

School Fees - 2017:

The school tuition and boarding fees for 2017 were approved by the SCS Board of Governors at the fourth quarterly board meeting held on Friday 4 November 2016. The overall fee increases range between 7% and 10% depending on grade. The lowest fees in the school have been increased by 10% whereas the highest fees have been increased by 7%. This is to ensure that the gap between the

PO Box 116, Hoedspruit, 1380, South Africa
Phone: 015 793 0590/1
Fax: 086 530 5153



E-mail: raptor@sescschools.co.za
Website: www.southerncrossschools.co.za

highest fee and the lowest fee does not widen and of course to make allowance for the cost of living increases that are being experienced at the moment. The fee collection policy for 2017 is attached.

Fee Collection and Debtors:

It was pleasing to report to the SCS Board of Governors that the vast majority of parents pay their school fees diligently and on time. We would like to thank these parents for their commitment to the school. There are unfortunately those who do not pay their fees on time. In a small school, that offers what SCS does, this puts a lot of pressure on the school and cannot be tolerated. The SCS Board of Governors has approved the following strategy to be implemented by the SCS management.

As outlined in the SCS Fee Collection Policy school and boarding fees are payable in advance. To assist parents to make payments timeously school invoices will be sent out two weeks before payment is due. This should help parents make payment ahead of the first of the month and keep their fee accounts up-to-date.

It is also important to note that all 2016 fees and the first month's fees for 2017 must be paid by the time boarders return on the 10th of January 2017. No child will be permitted into class on the 11th of January 2017 if there are any 2016 fees outstanding and the first month's fees of 2017 are not paid.


SCS in 2017 and the Growth Mindset Approach:

Our SCS community was thoroughly energized by Gavin Keller's input on a Growth Mindset approach to teaching and learning a few of weeks ago. The Growth Mindset approach is in stark contrast to a Fixed Mindset approach. As a school we believe it is in the best interest of our learners to implement a Growth Mindset approach and so we will be working to make this happen over the next while.

A great deal of thought and discussion has already taken place at school in terms of implementing a Growth Mindset approach at SCS. This has been done in the context of where our school finds itself at present and what can be achieved with the resources that we have at our disposal. It is very clear to us that implementing a Growth Mindset approach is a process rather than an event and as such we will be making incremental changes rather than sweeping changes as we go along.

To assist us in making these changes we will be taking a delegation of SCS staff to the Western Cape to visit Gavin Keller's school early next year. The purpose of the visit is to see firsthand how the approach is being implemented. Clearly, the context of Gavin's school is very different to ours, but we are sure that we will be able to glean important information from our visit. As we follow this exciting path of further developing and improving Southern Cross' offering we will be engaging with parents to keep them informed of and involved in the process of implementing a Growth Mindset approach. Watch this space!

Kind regards



Ant de Boer
Headmaster