



HILTON COLLEGE

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HEADMASTER: GJ HARRIS B.A. Hons (Wits)

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Dear Parents,

May I begin with an unreserved apology for the amount of change we are needing to deal with at the beginning of this year. Moreover, our communication from time to time is always aimed at our trying to keep you, our parents, in the know as we navigate these extraordinary times.

As we now know some things happen at pace, I remember when the ban on alcohol happened on the same night that the President spoke, back in March 2020; there was little warning that such a ban was on the way.

In the same way, the education sector is in significant flux as authorities attempt to make the best decisions for managing life in this pandemic. I, along with more than 500 Heads of independent schools, engaged in a lively debate around the matter of school reopening this evening.

We are hopefully due to hear an update from the Minister of Basic Education tomorrow morning, whereafter we should be in a better position to make a final decision about our plans for the start of this year.

At the moment we are dealing with a probability that schools may need to remain closed until a date in February in order to assist the country in flattening the curve of this second wave. We may be able to have some of our boys back temporarily, in which case we will prioritise Grade 8s and 12s again, but this will be confirmed tomorrow.

I know that our request for boys to be tested for Covid-19 has caused much consternation, however, I would like to emphasise that we received strong support for this from the vast majority of our parents. Again, with the fast unfolding events, I am sorry for the challenge this decision may have presented.

In conclusion, we will communicate our final position tomorrow (hopefully by early afternoon) on what we believe will be best for our boys in line with the regulations announced tomorrow morning.

We are aware that some of our international learners have arrived in South Africa from out of the country. If the authorities announce a delay in the opening of schools tomorrow, we will accommodate those boys in our boarding house and they can take part in online classes from our campus.

All these changes are inconvenient to parents, and many of you will have spent money on testing and travel arrangements that may not be recouped. We are very sorry about all of this.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support as we navigate our way through some very complex challenges. During these times, we would do well to heed some of Dr Seuss's advice:

*Just never forget to be dexterous and deft.
And never mix up your right foot with your left.
And will you succeed?
Yes! You will, indeed!
(98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed)*

Kind regards,

George Harris
Headmaster