

Dear Parents, Staff and Children

I pray that this newsletter finds you all well and in good spirit irrespective of your challenges, all the sacrifices you had to make and all the difficult aspects you endure. May I humbly add that in spite of it all I can testify to the great example of positive living by many parents, teachers and learners during this pandemic.

I understand and respect the urge and urgency for schools to open as I also understand and respect the fear of parents, staff and learners. Within all of this I can assure you that my team has worked extremely hard under new, time-consuming and challenging educational pressure. Irrespective of opinions they have served children and I am happy to say that the vast majority of parents understood and supported them. Many things happen in the background and as Principal I have consulted and met through "Zoom" with various stakeholders. Many letters were written, questions were raised and many more aspects were part of the past 5 weeks' work.

I also must add that the odd e-mail threatening us that we would be held responsible if children contracted COVID-19 at school is not supportive and surely the authors did not follow newsletters nor understood the announcement of the Minister of Education and the regulations which we would be required to apply.

One thing I can say with the utmost certainty is that we will open - the exact date, time and how is however not known yet. That will still require long hours of hard work and planning. As management we will consult with the SGB as we have done throughout this pandemic.

At this stage we await the regulations and guidelines to be able to comply and submit our action plan on how to deal with the re-opening while we still serve with the work we provide in support to all. I can humbly report how our work is shared with two schools in desperate need and how this is appreciated and welcomed in their time of need. The pandemic surely does not mind who or what you are and I had to deal with parents, staff and children in distress. Thank you to those parents who could support so that the Sunridge family could make a difference.

We will inform parents when we are ready with all aspects on the re-opening and I can only confirm that, as announced, schools might open for grade 7's on 1st June 2020. This is not a given and again we also wait for new curriculum instructions and all other guidelines for us to be able to evaluate our position and plan properly for the rest of 2020. We have many plans for all grades and measures that we can put into place, it's however a given that we must comply with what we will be required to do.

I can say one thing with certainty, Sunridge will only open if we can comply with all approved regulations and only then will we communicate the way forward. The return of staff is now the main priority and again it will only be done if we can comply with all approved regulations. This will however help us to take our support to a next level within our school environment with many more resources available.

Please note that it's not only approved regulations which dictate to us but also the availability of resources of which SGB staff members are a very important part. As supported by the Minister of Education, paying of school fees is essential. Should you encounter challenges, you must communicate it with the school and you must submit supportive documents.

I again want to make it very clear, it's your current teachers, grade heads, subject heads and heads of department who know what is best for your child and what we must do for your child to ensure that your child can complete 2020 successfully. It's vital that they keep on providing work which your child can do as best they can and for you to communicate with the class teacher while focusing on the future. It's also vital to ensure that all staff can return to school and that we support them for the task ahead of us.

The current way teachers work is not only new, it's time consuming and stressful. I know that staff will return not as if they had a nice holiday. It's for that reason that I request all to be tolerant, supportive and positive as we will need them.

I want to thank each and every parent who support and work with us under these extreme circumstances which are out of our control.

Please stay safe and only act and pay attention on the return to school when we provide you with relevant, authentic and confirmed details applicable to us.

Isaiah 33:2 "Lord, be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress."

Mr de Vries
PRINCIPAL