



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 5 - 2021

15 April 2021

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like to commend all our staff, students, and parents for a job well done this term. Despite the instability of society in general, we have managed to have a smooth and, fortunately, uneventful term. This is all due to the combined efforts of all the stakeholders in the PCS family. Thank you all!

While this term is drawing to close, we have some exciting projects and events coming up next term that we want to inform you of. With the relaxed lockdown Level 1 regulations, students will be able to compete in school sports matches. We will not be competing against other schools, however, students from different houses will be able to compete against each other in various sports. Outside service providers of extra-curricular activities, such as chess or Dance Mouse, will also be allowed to resume their classes. This is definitely something to look forward to.

Teachers and students spend copious amounts of time

together. It is inevitable that a close bond is formed between the two parties. Due to this, students often feel they can confide in teachers and seek guidance on matters of a personal nature. However, we have found that sometimes we are not suitably informed or qualified to be able to resolve the problems that students bring to our attention. As a result, we have decided to pursue the services of a certified psychologist to assist students for a few times a month.

This will commence in Term 2. It is not compulsory for all students to see the psychologist. Students can freely make an appointment and teachers will also be able to refer specific students. A letter with more details will follow prior to the beginning of next term.

As part of our new approach to enriched education, we have invested in a Robotics program which will commence in Term 2 for the College. It is a very promising activity, and the students are very excited to put their practical skills to work. It will be held in the afternoons, as a co-curricular activity, and priority will be given to the older students. The College will run the Beta program for the rest of the year with the goal to expand to the Junior Preparatory and the Senior Preparatory Phases in 2022. We are very excited to see the development of this program.

There have been a few incidents reported between motorists and pedestrians. I would just like to remind all drivers to exercise caution around the school zone to prevent any unfortunate incidents from occurring.

Next term promises to be quite cold – let's take care of our health and be prepared to keep warm. We will be wearing winter uniform. Please ensure that your children have all the necessary items needed to keep warm.

I trust that you will all have a restful holiday, and we can come back refreshed for term 2.

Kind regards,

Jennifer Neethling  
Director of Business & Administration



Dear Parents,

We have come to the end of a very busy first term. You will receive a report through email, detailing your child's efforts and hard work. As I have mentioned before, I want to urge you to look through these results, always keeping in mind that your children need encouragement to experience the world and all its possibilities, guiding them in its ways and taking pains to leave them careful but not fearful. Always love and respect your children for who they are and not who you want them to be. It is of the utmost importance that your child experiences **your acceptance**, regardless of what he or she has achieved, or not achieved. I can assure you that at this stage of development in their lives, they are eager to learn and are like little sponges, ready to absorb everything that is taught. Let us devote ourselves to encourage this enthusiasm and keep fanning the flame.

**What is our role as parents in the learning process?**

Research has shown that, although a parent's role in their children's learning evolves as their children grow, one thing remains constant: we are our children's learning models. Our attitudes about education can inspire theirs and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey.

**Be a role model for learning.**

In the early years, parents are their children's first teachers - exploring nature, reading together, cooking together, and counting together. When a young child begins formal school, the parent's job is to show them how school can extend the learning you began together at home, and how exciting and meaningful this learning can be. As pre-schoolers grow into school-age children, parents become their learning coaches. Through guidance and reminders, parents help their children

to organise their time and support their desires to learn new things in and out of school.

**Tune into how your child learns.**

Many children use a combination of modalities to study and learn. Some learn visually through making and seeing pictures, others through tactile experiences, like building block towers and working with clay. Still others are auditory learners who pay most attention to what they hear. And they may not learn the same way their siblings (or you) do. By paying attention to how your child learns, you may be able to pique their interest and explain tough topics by drawing pictures together, creating charts, building models, singing songs, and even making up rhymes.

And always remember: *"LEARNING IS NOT MOSTLY TAUGHT, IT'S MOSTLY CAUGHT".*

**Grade 3 News**

The class reader for Grade 3 is Charlotte's Web. This term, they made an outline of a web using wool. To describe Wilbur's character, they had to find letters in magazines to make words. To top it off, they had to create a 'Charlotte' (spider) with recycled materials. They were very pleased with their end results. Here are some examples of their work:



### 'Add on' Day

On Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of April, students are allowed to add an item to their school uniform to demonstrate their favourite story book, at a small fee of R5. This may be a hat, crown, socks, cape, or anything else representing their favourite character in the story book. This is organised by the Library Committee to raise funds for our new library.

### Parent Consultation Meetings

Parent Consultation Meetings will take place after the holidays, on 10 and 11 May, from 16:00 till 18:00. Please book an appointment at the office to meet with your child's teacher.

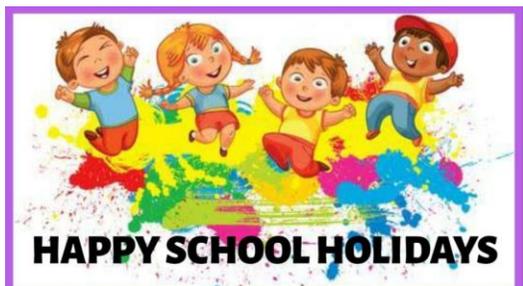
### *Unsupervised children*

*Please be reminded that we regard your children's safety as utmost importance. The Junior Prep teachers are accompanying the students at departure times to personally see to it that the children are safely handed over to their parents, or older siblings. Once handed over, the teachers are free to leave. Please do not allow your children to go back on the school grounds to play, as there will not be any supervision. We have received complaints from parents who have noticed children playing and running around without masks and unsupervised.*

I wish you all an enjoyable time with your family these holidays and, if you are travelling, may God's travelling mercies accompany you.

Kind regards

Riana Janse van Rensburg  
Deputy Principal: Junior Prep



Dear Parents,

### Mrs Du Preez

Standing in for Mrs Curwen is Mrs du Preez who also came in for the third term last year to take Miss Paulo's History position. This week Mrs Du Preez received a joyous reception from the children whom she taught last year, so I am very encouraged and assured that Mrs Curwen's lessons and register class are well looked after while she is away.

Mrs Curwen is back home, recovering well, and sends thanks to everyone for the prayers and messages that she has received.

### Developing 'Mentally Strong' Children

The information below comes exclusively from the website, 'Raising Teens Today', established by Nancy Reynolds. I have taken the liberty of shortening and paraphrasing certain sections. The link to the original article is provided at the end of the article. It is a fairly long read but I believe that it deals practically with a topic that is very pertinent for today's parents.

I hope it generates some thought and ideas or discussion to help parents navigate the incredibly difficult but life-changing influence they have on their children.

"Social media, friend drama, academic demands and the unrelenting pressure to be smart, beautiful, athletic or perfect can take its toll on even the most stable teenager.

The easy answer to protect your child from these life pressures is simply to 'iron out all the wrinkles' before them. To solve all of their challenges before they reach your child.

But what if you could build a protective shield around your kids to help them withstand hardship? What if you could empower them to rise above the pounding factors that rob them of their confidence and buoyancy in life?

What if you could make them mentally strong?

In the book, "13 Things Mentally Strong Parents Don't Do" by Amy Morin, she lists 13 things NOT to do for your children to help them grow up 'Mentally Strong.'

**1. Make Their Child the Centre of Their Universe**

As much as your kids very well may be the centre of your universe, continually sending that message to them will only cause them to grow up to be self-absorbed, entitled adults who feel life revolves around them. Rather than raising a child who feels the world owes them a living, encourage your kids to focus on what they can offer the world, not what they can take from it.

**2. Allowing Fear to Dictate Their Choices**

Placing a protective bubble around your kids may spare you some anxiety, but it won't do your kids any favours in the long run. By encouraging your kids to put themselves out there, take calculated risks, face their fears head-on and realize that failure is oftentimes part of success, you'll raise kids who aren't afraid to step out of their comfort zone.

**3. Taking Responsibility for Their Kids' Emotions**

As parents, there are some things we can control. Quite often, our kids' ever-changing, mood-swinging emotions isn't one of them. It is important that our kids gain emotional competence so they can learn to manage their own feelings.

**4. Allowing Their Kids to Avoid Responsibility**

It's tempting to give them a carefree childhood free from expectations and responsibility. But, according to Morin, "kids who perform age-appropriate duties aren't overburdened. They're gaining the mental strength they need to become responsible citizens."

**5. Condoning a Victim Mentality**

Teens experience many let-downs but raising mentally strong teenagers involves toughening our kids up and teaching them to refrain from wallowing in their hardship. Teach your kids that rejection, failure and unfairness are part of life. Reinforce the idea that regardless of what life throws at them, they are always in control of how they view the situation, how they handle it and what they can learn from it.

**6. Giving Their Kids Power Over Them**

Morin says, give your kids a voice in your home, but practice the family belief system that you are in control and you have the final say.

**7. Expecting Perfection**

Teach your kids to be the best they can be, but also instil the belief that failure is a necessary and normal part of life. Don't make your child's self-worth dependent upon how they measure up in your eyes or in the eyes of anyone else.

**8. Parenting Out of Guilt**

Every parent feels a sense of guilt from time to time – all good parents do. But, that doesn't mean we should cave in to our guilt by making hasty or unwise parenting decisions.

Kids need to know that they can't control our behaviour by trying to make us feel guilty about something we did or didn't do.

**9. Preventing Their Kids from Making Mistakes**

Kids making mistakes is an inevitable part of being a teenager and a human being. It's what they learn from those mistakes that will make all the difference in the world.

**10. Shielding Their Kids from Life's Hardships**

"Hurt feelings, sadness, and anxiety are part of life," says Morin. "Letting your kids experience those painful feelings and hardships offers them opportunities to practice tolerating discomfort."

But also understand that, although these challenges are difficult, these experiences will make them stronger in the end.

**11. Confusing Discipline with Punishment**

When our kids defy us or break our rules, our natural reaction is to punish them for their actions. But according to Morin, we need to focus on disciplining our kids, not punishing them. "Punishment involves making kids suffer for their wrongdoing. Discipline is about teaching them how to do better in the future," she says.

**12. Taking Shortcuts to Avoid Discomfort**

When our child starts begging to do something, go somewhere or complaining that they can't (or don't want to) help with chores, we cave in and say yes or let them off the hook. Rather than giving in to make life easier in the short term, be a strong role model for your kids by showing them your strength and toughness, even when it isn't convenient or easy.

**13. Losing Sight of Their Values**

Life gets busy. And, sometimes the values we hold dear, including quality family time, respecting one another or our religious beliefs, for example, get pushed aside in the wake of life's busyness. "Make sure your priorities accurately reflect the things you value most in life and you'll give your children the strength to benefit from a meaningful life," says Morin.

<https://raisingteenstoday.com/mentally-strong-teenagers-have-parents-who-refuse-to-do-these-things/>

A number of years ago I taught at a school that included the Duke of Edinburgh Awards for its high school students as part of their curriculum. I remember it being a wonderful addition to the students' education and what a meaningful effect it had on those students.

It emphasised the development of the traits that help to instil resilience, improve communication, and understanding and managing one's own feelings. Here in South Africa, we have a similar awards system called the President's Awards.



Last week our Support Staff Manager, Mr Jerry Ntuli welcomed back Philemon Mahlangu to PCS (both pictured above). It is so good to see Philemon again!

I wish you all a safe and happy time with your children at home for the holidays.

Remember to 'keep your guard up'!



*"I like to think of it (the DofE Awards) as a do-it-yourself growing up kit."*

-The Duke of Edinburgh, founder of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Kind regards,

P.J. Dickinson  
Deputy Principal: Senior Prep



Dear Parents,

We have come to the end of a very busy but productive term. Our students have had to adapt to new demands in a new grade, to new teachers, and also cope with a lingering pandemic which, at times, shows no sign of ending. I would like to congratulate everyone on their efforts and perseverance during this term. I am in awe of the resilience and determination shown by teachers and students alike. The marks on the reports are a testament to the exceptional learning and growth that has occurred.

There were also a lot of firsts this term. We introduced clubs, reading time, and community service. Not all of these were successful but that is the nature of trying new endeavours. Next term we will refine and change our clubs to make them even more effective and exciting. On that note, we recently received confirmation that our newly formed Stock Exchange Club is doing exceptionally well. We are currently in the fourth place in Gauteng and ninth nationally. Congratulations to all our budding business moguls!

All is not good news, however. There were students who, for various reasons, did not do as well as they could have. The holidays are an ideal time to reflect on where they can improve and to put a study programme together to revise. It is also imperative that the Matrics work consistently. The second term is extremely pressurised as projects and portfolio pieces all need to be completed. If a lot of this work can be completed in the holiday, it will certainly add to a more relaxed and less frantic term.

I hope that you all have some time to relax during the holidays and that you return refreshed and ready for the new term. If you are travelling, please do so safely.

I have included copies of two exceptional Grade 11 English speeches in the newsletter (see at the end). We are very proud of the standard that is being achieved and we wished to share it with you. I hope that this will become a regular feature in future newsletters. We have obtained permission to publish both the names of the students and their work.

Warm regards

Mary-Ann Pullinger  
Deputy Principal: College

# CHINESE News

Dear Parents,

## ISASA Magazine

As one of the ISASA member schools, we receive quarterly subscriptions of the magazine called "Independent Education" every year. We were given the opportunity to publish our first article in the 2012 winter edition of the ISASA magazine, and were given a second opportunity to appear in the 2015 spring edition. The school was approached by the editor of the ISASA magazine earlier this year to submit another article, and we put superb effort into writing an impressive and meaningful feature. A big thank you to Miss Jess Schorr for conveying our unique school culture in words, and to Mrs Nagelique van der Merwe, Ms Nicole Hsiao, Miss Bobbi Wang, and one of our former student James Yu for taking many beautiful photos. **The full article can be found on the d6 under the Resources link for your perusal.**



Our school was featured in the front cover of the ISASA magazine 2012 winter edition.



## The Pretoria Chinese School

BY JESS SCHORR

A school is not its building, nor its sports fields, nor its facilities.

No, a school is much more than that. It is a community made up of individuals from different cultures and backgrounds, sharing their experiences as they venture through teaching and learning together. All in all, a school is its culture; and its culture comes from its students, teachers and staff. While some may think a school's only pride should be in its material wealth or the number of distinctions it gets at the end of the academic year, we pride ourselves on the community we have created; a community where everyone is welcome and where we celebrate our differences instead of trying to hide them. Facilities and achievement are noble things to strive for, but a community culture is what makes a school great. At the Pretoria Chinese School our three philosophical pillars are discipline, respect, and humility, and our aim is to make sure our community and culture not only reflect these values, but weave them into the strands of our daily lives.

### What culture means to us

The word 'culture' has many meanings attached to it. On the one hand, culture can be defined in ethnic terms. In this regard, the Pretoria Chinese School certainly encompasses the idea of diversity. Among our students and staff we boast

over 40 different cultures. Heritage Day is a sight to behold as we display the traditional dress of all our cultures. Many of our students wear outfits that have been passed down through generations and some even make their own traditional outfits. We teach our students to not only respect other cultures, but also to celebrate them. In this way, we create a community of diverse people, all willing to humble themselves so as to respect and celebrate their fellow humans. This, in turn, leads to another aspect of culture, which is a school's culture. This encompasses a school's values and beliefs and the manner in which a school operates. At the Pretoria Chinese School we strive to create a culture wherein all students and staff feel included, no matter who they are. Students and staff of all races, genders, religions, sexual orientations, and abilities can feel comfortable in their own skin throughout the learning experience.



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One of the pages of our story in the latest ISASA magazine.

## Slipper Day



"Reach For A Dream" Foundation is an organisation that helps children who face life-threatening illnesses and turns their dreams into reality. They reach approximately 30,000 children per year across South Africa and give these children the hope to keep believing in their own dreams, the strength to face their illness, and the courage to keep on fighting. Slipper Day is a vital fundraising campaign for this Foundation and they will be launching their 10<sup>th</sup> annual Slipper Day on Friday 7 May. Our school has been invited to participate in this activity and we would like all our parents, students and staff to support this very worthy cause.

The Slipper Day stickers have been ordered, and each sticker contributes R20 to the Foundation. To purchase stickers, please send the exact amount in a marked envelope to your child's register teacher on either Thursday 6 May or Friday 7 May. The children may wear slippers to school on Friday 7 May once they have purchased a sticker, and parents may also redeem free coffee at any

Wimpy across the country. If you would like to support the Foundation further, you are welcome to purchase slippers or make donations directly. Please note that we will be taking photos of children wearing slippers on the day, but will ensure their faces are not shown. For more details, visit their website [www.reachfordream.org.za](http://www.reachfordream.org.za).

Kind regards

Angela Liu  
Deputy Principal: Chinese



**Chinese Department Apr 05, 2021**

**By Ms Cathy Lee**

In the year 2021, the Ox Year in the Chinese lunar calendar, we are inspired by the values of the Ox symbol which are conservation, sustainability, and perseverance. We are using these values to mobilise recycling for community service at school. The aim is to foster environmentally responsible citizens who love the Earth and environment.

We have 17 College students from Grade 8 to Grade 12 in training under the Recycling Ambassador Programme. The students work as Recycling Ambassadors in three teams supervised by Ms Hsiao to serve for the JP Phase, Mr Musonda for the SP Phase, and Mr. van Niekerk for College.

During the Term 1 Campaign, the three teams of the Recycling Ambassadors made demonstrative posters and presented in the assemblies raising recycling awareness by addressing responsible disposal of rubbish with trash classifications of what can or cannot be recycled. In compliance with the Covid protocols, they were equipped with biodegradable gloves and clamps before touching trash and sorting out waste from school dustbins.

In the "Turning Trash into Treasure" project, the teams found new uses for the recycled materials and made videos where they transformed them into new items. The items and videos made for this project will be presented in the three Phases' assemblies in Term 2 to continue the Campaign to promote the recycling ideas of reuse for a new purpose.

We thank the school ground staff team for providing us with big black dustbins and the venue for setting up a school recycling centre. We will establish an accessible and convenient sorting system of waste to make it an educational spot and

welcome everyone to participate in the recycling business.

In Term 2, we will also implement the recycling competition in each phase. Our Recycling Ambassadors will go into each class for recycling collections on Day 5 to record and track the recycling materials collected. By the end of Term 2, each Phase's classes with the most recycled materials records will win the Recycling Ambassador's Prize.

We will donate the money received from the selling of recyclables to the Pretoria Chinese Church who work with charity to meet the orphanages' needs in Tembisa.



The Recycling Ambassadors raised Recycling awareness in the assemblies of College (the left), JP Phase(the middle), and SP Phase (the right).



The teams worked together to sort out the recyclables from the school dustbins.



Orange yellow coded bins for types of Papers: Newspaper, magazines, brochures, mail, books, junk mails, office paper, till slips, cereal boxes, and corrugated cardboard.

Red coded bins for Metals: Cans that have been rinsed and cleaned.

Blue coded bins for Plastic: Plastic bottles, containers, cling wrap and take away food containers must be free of food residues, rinsed and cleaned.

Green coded bins for Glass: Glass jars, bottles that have been rinsed and cleaned.



Dear Parents,

During the holidays, it is tempting to throw your workouts by the wayside with the promise to start again after returning to school. Research shows that when regular exercise stops, de-training occurs within a few weeks. It is better to shift to maintenance workouts than to stop altogether and lose what you have worked so hard to gain. Even if you need to reduce the time of each session or cut back one or two workouts a week, maintaining the momentum of your regular exercise routine is much easier than stopping and trying to re-establish it again later.

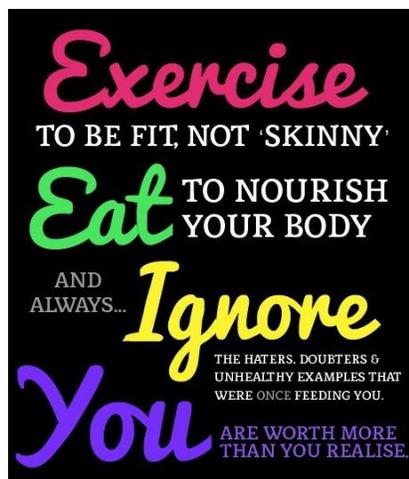
Exercise burns calories, and by maintaining muscle mass this sustains metabolic rate.

One of the main culprits associated with stress and depression is a reduction in structure within daily routines. Maintaining your exercise schedule provides structure to your day. The routine will help you stay on track with food intake, aid in maintenance of sleep schedules, and provide a framework so you can prioritize the demands of the holiday.

A short run or walk is a good start. If possible, one should look at doing 20-30 minutes of activity a few times a week. That can be walking, running, or exercises. Take the dog for a walk or ask your parents or guardians to go with you. If you would like some some programs for the holidays please come and see us in the Sports Office, we will happily draw something up for you.

Kind regards

Nicky Futter  
Head of Sport



**Winter Uniform for Grade 00 to 12**

Winter has arrived early this year. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of March it was announced that we are transitioning into winter uniform. From now until the end of Term 1, students are allowed to wear EITHER summer or winter uniform. From Term 2, students are required to wear winter uniform. Please see under Uniform Resources on the d6 for uniform requirements.

**PLEASE NOTE GRADE 1-12:**

The winter jacket may be worn with both the formal and PE uniforms. The long-sleeve jersey is only to be worn with the formal uniform. Long-sleeve jerseys **may not** be worn with the PE uniform. Long-sleeve jerseys may be worn **underneath** the tracksuit top but must be taken off if the tracksuit top is not worn.

NB: PE Footwear: The 2-year transition period for moving from wearing white sports socks and white takkies to black sports socks and black takkies ended on the 1 April 2021. Please ensure your child wears black sports socks and black takkies with their PE uniform.

For further information (checklists, pricelists, etc) on our uniforms please refer to the D6 Connect App under Resources, Uniforms.

Please use our booking app: Booksy to make your uniform fitting appointment. Download the Booksy app, click on this link:

<http://pcsuniformshop.booksy.com/>

and you will go directly to the PCS Uniform Shop bookings. Select the date you would like to come to our shop, then select the time, then click on the book button.

It is essential to bring your child in when fitting their winter uniforms.

**Uniform Shop Hours:**  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday  
7:00 – 8:00  
Wednesday  
7:00 – 8:00 & 13:30 – 14:30

Kind regards,  
Jacqui Donkin @ The PCS Uniform Shop

<b>Friday</b>	➤ Library Fundraising Day
16 April	<b>School closes normal time</b> – Full Academic Day -

happy holidays!

TERM 2

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Mark Your*  
**CALENDAR**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>School Holiday</b>
3 May	
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>TERM TWO BEGINS</b>
4 May	
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Normal School Day</b> (Begins @ 07:30 – Academic Day 5)
5 May	
<b>Thursday</b>	
6 May	
<b>Friday</b>	➤ Slipper Day
7 May	

<b>Monday</b>	➤ Parents Consultations
10 May	
<b>Tuesday</b>	➤ Parents Consultations ➤ Grade 7 Toastmasters 1
11 May	
<b>Wednesday</b>	
12 May	
<b>Thursday</b>	
13 May	
<b>Friday</b>	
14 May	



It is not about smart children, it is about

**HAPPY CHILDREN**

who have the confidence and courage to learn and pursue things dear to their heart.

ALEXANDRA EIDENS

# English *Grade 11 Speeches*

## Why the schooling system is outdated

By: Muhammad-Irfaan Amod

The basic schooling system as we know it has been around for more than 150 years. However, there have been very few substantial changes in this system. School plays a vital role in the development of a child. The rapidly changing world, however, makes this outdated and industrialised system become more and more inefficient.

Firstly, I agree that children should go to school. It is essential for them to be able to become independent and to think for themselves. However, the manner in which it is conducted, is inadequate for the modern world.

Yes, the curriculum has developed, and the overall system has changed but the essence of it has stayed relatively the same. Schools still follow the system of tightly controlling students during school hours. This creates a dangerous environment where children start to think that they are not in charge of their own lives and must always do what is laid down. This ultimately creates a lack of autonomy in children. As a school student, the lack of autonomy can make school excessively boring and demotivating. Especially when you have to do work you particularly do not enjoy.

To add to that, the school system is outdated because information is a commodity, and the system is mainly built on the memorisation of information. However, information can be accessed with the press of a button. This creates an environment of inauthentic learning which makes tests and exams scores the main element that schools value. From experience, this puts tons of pressure and expectations on a student. This, in turn, boasts a toxic environment where children are pressured to learn countless facts through the entire night, only to be forgotten a week later.

There are plenty of other factors that prove why the educational system should change. But how can we fix it? Creating better standards, more accountability, autonomous structure, and higher parent involvement and responsibility are just a few steps that I can think of.

In conclusion, the school system is outdated and needs to be updated. Its old and industrialised system is not fit for the modern world. Not just the school but parents should take more responsibility and care more about their child's happiness rather than the judgement of our contemporaries. Change is needed, and it is up to us to fix it.

## EXISTENTIALIST

By: Ethan Ohlson

Humanity deems itself as one of the most intelligent species to exist in the present day and with the use of cognitive thought we can recognise, analyse, and adapt to millions of situations within our 79-year average lifespan. Without it, the ink words written on these cue cards would mean nothing to me and your various interpretations of the introduction to my speech would be as foreign to you as they are to me at this very moment.

Our mind is what makes us the most humanely corrupted piece of matter on the planet. What makes us human is our happiness, our passions, our morality, our rationality, our conscience, our ability to sin, and the everlasting need to dwell on the whos and whys of our universe. No one lives to flaunt these characteristics; therefore, we are not born

with a characteristic important enough to define our existence. The appreciation of the life we live is a pathetic means to deny the inevitable and believe that the different encounters between you and every other being on the planet is meaningful, as opposed to a means to find answers, solitude, and deny such a loneliness in which no individual would ever be able to overcome in their lifetime.

Many individuals would argue that we're not alone. They would argue that the people we meet, love, and indulge in are the people we carry forth into greater feats in life, and when they die our love and appreciation for their existence can outweigh the incomprehensible pain we suffer as they rot into the earth. For thousands and thousands of years we have accepted the inevitable function of death by simultaneously provoking fear into the thought of living a life of regret and despair. This fear that drives us to improve the quality of our lives is the same trait that enables selfishly procured individuals to put down others for the sake of their own self actualisation in which they realise that the only way they can motivate themselves in life is by painting a facade in which they don't have to try as hard to be better than others.

Humans are pathetic and selfish creatures who fail to understand each other as they fear the acceptance of foreign perspectives which alter them from a preconceived belief of the necessary philosophical approach in life which they need to undertake. It is incomprehensible that the same organic matter that lies within our skull can build civilisations for thousands of years yet choose to build a society which can act upon immoral standards and immature values. Past generations have crafted a hell on earth in which the ability for the youth of today to rejoice in life shall be procured through pain and suffering.

Emotions are carried through our daily lives. We spend 12 years in an education system that won't tell you what you want or need to know but will teach you to accept the knowledge that mankind has deemed necessary for you to know because it's all we've ever known. Humanity prides itself on achievements in schooling years, where students that perform well are rewarded with a celebratory applause and a certificate for hours and hours of dedicated self-study to a cause many of them don't believe in. That cause, the cause that states that the countless hours spent in humanity's youth studying and cramming for tests is in preparation for a world one can never be prepared for. To what extent can our lives be explored with the impending fear of failure in systems of education, justice, and achievement that are crafted to suit individuals of a single-minded nature who wish to follow a rubric for life that no one can achieve a full grade in. And yet, all I can do is stand here complaining about facets of life that I have succumb to because, regardless of how passionate you are, the world is a Matric examination. The billions of people who can see and hear you, you are nothing but a number, a number that was first in your grade three times over, a number that fell within the bottom 30% of matriculated results, a number that currently sits listening to another complain through the means of a high school English speech.

For these speeches we were told to select a topic of significance or meaning to us. As simple as that sounds, let us not forget that stock or common topics should be avoided, it shall not be a mere collection of facts but rather present a point of view and be persuasive, facts should be clearly integrated within the fabric of the speech. I should rehearse my speech well, it should be clear and have logical structure, I should vary my pitch, speed, and volume, and use pauses between sections. I should make eye contact with the entire audience and practise standing in a relaxed manner. I should craft my character, my language, and my priorities to be the student that this world can give an A to, for the world listens to the fortunate and prestigious, and not the existentialist who gathers his rosebuds while he may and stands up to observe life for the embarrassing facade it is, all to result in my body rotting in the ground in years to come, having exerted myself to just be human.