



Alexander Road High School

Private Bag X34377
Newton Park
6055
Gqeberha
South Africa

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Dear Alex Family Members

Tel: 041 365 1270
E-Mail: info@arhs.co.za
Web: arhs.co.za

A lunar eclipse and a transport crisis

A very interesting week ends and there are more interesting times ahead. Just when you think things are going your way, you get cloud cover and a poor location on earth for observing the lunar eclipse and a transport protest disrupts your plans. It is times like these when we need to steel ourselves and keep on doing what we know is good and sensible until things improve.

We could all see photos of the blood moon - taken from other parts of the world and we eagerly anticipate an end to the disruptions to our transport sector and our city. I apologise for the cancellation of afternoon activities this week. We place high value on these activities, but we felt it safer to curtail them with the rising threat to travellers in the city. As much as we need to have our children in class, we would never advocate risking life and limb to get here. If you assess the risk and determine that it is safer to keep your child at home, then we support your decision.

If you had booked tickets to our production of Into the Woods, you should have had the process started of getting your refunds. Thank you for your support. We are busy with taking all the set pieces and storing them carefully. We have everything ready for our 2022 production of the same show. A great deal of work has gone into the show and we will extract every ounce of that in the run-up to next year's show.

A reminder that the jerseys have arrived. Both Birch's and our school shop have now got stock, so please make plans to replace tracksuit tops with jerseys. We would prefer not to have any tracksuit tops worn with uniform from next week.

A very big thank you to everyone who has supported our blanket drive this week. We are humbled by your collective generosity. If you still have any old jerseys or blankets that you think could make someone's winter a little better, please could you send them to school for our collection.

Please remember the table of sharing. If you get the opportunity to venture out of your home to buy some groceries, please drop an extra item in for our table of sharing. This makes such a big difference to Alex Family members who are facing tough times.

We are continuing our focus on uniform and dress over the next two weeks. Please remind your children that they may not wear nose rings or earrings in the top part of their ears. The earrings that are mandated in the Code of Conduct are 3mm or less in diameter and may only be silver or gold studs. We don't allow for sparkles and dangles from the ears. Any jewellery that is not acceptable will be confiscated and left at reception for parents to fetch. Anyone with hair long enough to hang in the face, should have it clipped back and if it can touch the collar, it should be tied up. Boys who have taken the opportunity to grow out facial hair under their masks are required by the Code of Conduct to shave it off. Staff members will not be asking boys to remove their masks to check but if boys remove masks to eat or drink, or if the facial hair obviously protrudes from the mask, they will be sanctioned. We must work together to keep our children looking the part.

There is a rising threat from Covid in the city. We have seen the number of active cases steadily increase over the last week and there is not much chance of it stabilising in the short term. We have seen the devastation of the third wave on northern hemisphere countries like India and we need to be very careful to observe the non-pharmaceutical interventions that are known to be effective and are mandated. At all times, the wearing of masks to cover both nose and mouth with a tight seal on the face, is essential. Maintaining social distance as much as possible and avoiding situations where it is not practical to keep that distance is very important. We know of social occasions that have led to transmission of the virus, and more irritatingly, to lengthy quarantines. The temptation is to keep on doing what comes naturally, especially when the new infection rates are still low. Modifying your family behaviour is inconvenient but could prove to be life-saving.

If your child is displaying any symptoms at all, please keep them at home until the symptoms subside. We are sending pupils with symptoms home every day. I know that it is inconvenient for you to make arrangements to fetch them in the morning. Please don't take any chances.

After such a complex and stressful week, I hope that you get a chance to catch up with yourself and your loved ones. Please keep safe over the weekend. If there is a continued threat to your children from protest action, please be conservative and keep them home. We will be sending work out via WhatsApp or the arhs.vip site. Please feel free to contact any teacher via email from our teams page at www.arhs.co.za/teams.

Class test timetables are on the web site: [Grade 8](#), [Grade 9](#), [Grade 10](#), [Grade 11](#), [Grade 12](#)

Exam timetable to follow next week.

Regards



Matthew Ridgway
Principal