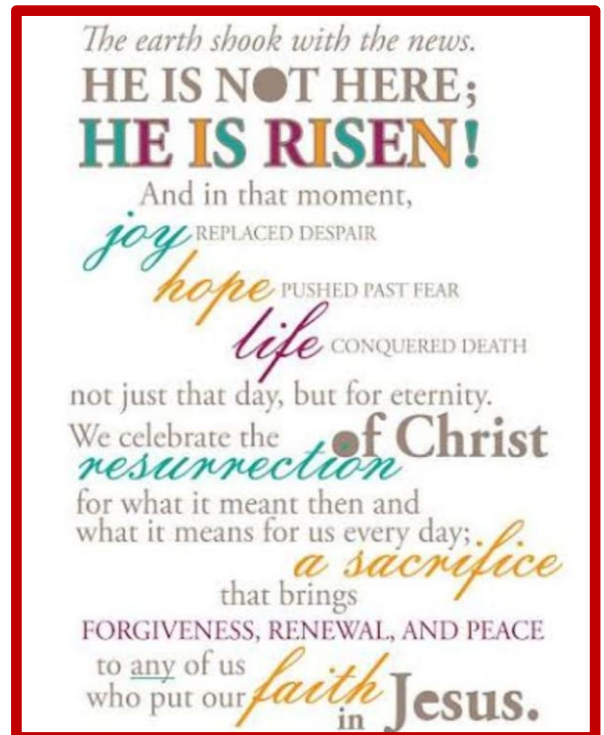
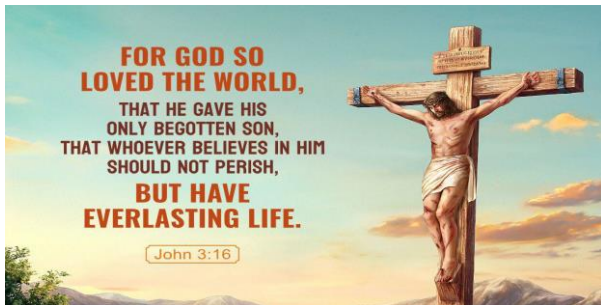


Happy Easter to you and your family! I am rejuvenated by the period of rest and feel excited about the prospects the term ahead offers.

Easter has become a terribly commercialised holiday, but I trust that, during the celebrations and traditions you enjoy, you were able to take a moment to reflect upon the meaning and the message of this holiday.



I thank you Jesus for your sacrifice which demonstrates incomparable mercy (us not being awarded the punishment that we deserve) and unparalleled grace (a provision of forgiveness and kindness that we do not deserve). Our response should be nothing but gratitude, faith and obedience to an omnipotent and omniscient God of Love.



I am sad to announce the untimely passing of **Mogale Sepuru**, a Grade 4 pupil in Polokwane. He was diagnosed with cancer late in 2022. With the support and strength of his parents and family, this little boy has fought hard over the last few months. He succumbed to the disease on the 5th of April. I ask that you pray for the family – that they receive God’s comfort and peace-giving presence during this devastating time. May he rest in peace.

The **2024 Applications are open**. You will find our Admissions Policy, Parent Enrolment Contract and the application procedures and processes outlined on the PEPPS website www.pepps.co.za. Please encourage families that you know to apply early.



The Polokwane Prep School will be performing the production of **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat** for four nights from 18 - 21 April in the Tladi Hall on the Polokwane Campus. Our pupils have been working tirelessly for 6 months, under the leadership and direction of dedicated and passionate teachers, towards a successful string of performances. Please share the information with family and friends so we can enjoy a lovely time together celebrating the talent in our pupils. We look forward to seeing you there!

There are numerous **Inter PEPPS** events in the term ahead. Please pay close attention to your school newsletters for dates and times and join us on those days.

OISESA SCHOOL EVALUATION -The 8 PEPPS schools across the 3 campuses have each compiled a Self-Study report for the OISESA Evaluation Process which will culminate in the site-visits from the 18th-19th April (Mokopane and Polokwane) and 20th-21st April (Ga Ledwaba). We have analysed Staff, Parent and Pupil survey results, along with a host of school policies, practices and procedures; with the intention of identifying areas of improvement towards the fulfilment of our mission and serving our stakeholders as best we can.

I am pleased to report that overwhelmingly, all stakeholders are pleased with the different aspects of the PEPPS offering and answered positively in the surveys. The results did, however, also serve to identify certain areas where we can improve. These areas will be tackled over the next few months. The comments left by participants were insightful and my only frustration is that they are anonymous. It is always easier to **address issues as soon as they occur and directly**.

I appreciate the parents who participated in the survey process but feel that we can and should do more as a school to improve **PARENT-INVOLVEMENT**. Across the schools, an average of **only 35% parents** completed the surveys. The school partners with parents to mould our pupils into responsible citizens of the future. Parents and teachers must take hands to enable the best possible education for pupils.



No school can work well for children if parents and teachers do not act in partnership on behalf of the children's best interests
— Dorothy H Cohen —

Productive collaborations between family and school, therefore, will demand that parents and teachers recognize the critical importance of each other's participation in the life of the child.
----- Sara Lawrence Lightfoot
Harvard University

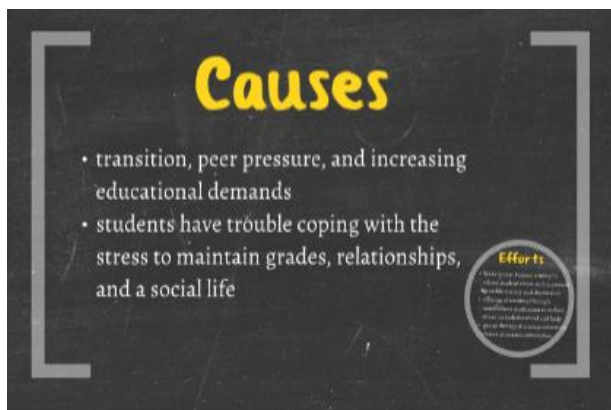


How to get involved: I urge parents across all 3 campuses and 8 schools to put their names forward to be part of the **Parent Forum**. We need one parent per class per school. This is a group of parents who represent the VOICE of parents to the school through quarterly meetings with the Head. Contact your school's office for more details. The next meeting will take place on **Monday 29th May**.

We embark on a term that promises to be very busy, culminating in Grade 4-12 exams. As we prepare for this race, I urge parents to coach their children to approach it as a short **marathon, rather than a sprint**. It is critical that, when they need to perform at their best, they are mentally, emotionally and physically strong enough and ready to shine.

In an article entitled **13 Ways to Help Children Cope with Back-to-School Anxiety** (Nextstep.doctor. 2020) the past decade has seen an increase of 17% cases related to child anxiety. Anxiety in children (and their parents) has intensified as a result of the Covid Pandemic. Childhood anxiety can be remedied but unfortunately up to 80% of children don't get the treatment they need and, as a result, suffer and underperform scholastically. Children in school (aged 4-18) are susceptible to anxiety. The symptoms

can take a variety of forms and there can be just as many causes which include but are not limited to family or situational change, peer pressure, friends, and the pressure to achieve.



The article reminds us that our anxious brains trigger the fight or flight reflex in order to cope/survive the stress. There is therefore no reasoning with an anxious child by using phrases like: "don't worry" or "just relax" or "calm down". The brain also prioritises an attempt at self-regulation in preference to the cognitive activities as those practiced in the classroom. Therefore, learning is not likely.

13 Ways to mitigate anxiety:

1. Practice deep/abdominal breathing. Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQJ2O4b5TM&t=70s>
2. Spend time in nature meditating with all your senses.
3. Talk about what anxiety is – it is not all bad but sometimes necessary.
4. Incorporate physical fitness into your schedule.
5. A walk around the block not only removes the child from the situation but releases "happy" endorphins.
6. Think positive by introducing a gratitude journal.
7. Prioritise good nutrition.
8. Read a story – there are plenty of books about child anxiety.
9. Create a safe space.
10. Ask for individual accommodations at school. Speak to your child's teachers.
11. Help your child to practice good sleep habits.
12. Speak through new changes.
13. Find a child-centred mental health care practitioner.

For the full article visit: <https://www.nextstep.doctor/13-ways-to-help-children-cope-with-back-to-school-anxiety/>

I am pleased to finally officially welcome **Mrs Sue Altenroxel** to our PEPPS family. She joins us as the new Head of the **PEPPS Preparatory School in Polokwane** from April. We pray that God blesses her journey and time with PEPPS.



If you have spent any time on social media recently, you would have seen the onslaught of warped messages and ideas to which your child is being exposed. Join us in partnering towards nurturing pupils who can think critically and independently, pupils who are creative and capable of being creators of their own messages of hope to a world that needs it.

Yours in excellent education.



Amanda Korff
PEPPS Executive Head