

Dear Grade 10 Parents

Hopefully this will be the final correspondence that I will be sending out before Epic 2021. Andrea Rutter will contact you with more specific details around transport on Tuesday, from the ECC (Epic Control Centre).

Your sons are nearing the end of their grade 10 final exams and next week they will have a week of Epic Training to prepare them further. Please find the programme attached for this busy week.

In summary, the boys will rotate through activities in their Epic Groups, so they can get to know each other a little better and so they can prepare effectively for the adventure that lies ahead for them. They may wear civvies (takkies are essential). All activities are designed to be of practical benefit to them on Epic and so attendance is compulsory.

On Monday and Tuesday they will receive their group equipment, practice their cycling one last time, do a session on camp craft, learn how to pack, adjust and wear their packs effectively, among several other things. For this last session to be effective, boys are expected to arrive at school on Monday/ Tuesday (whichever is relevant – see programme) with their fully packed backpacks, including food for their Staff Hike. They must store their packs in the Woodlands pavilion for the day. Their first session starts at 8.15am as per the programme.

On Wednesday they will do a practice hike, starting bright and early from Bishops at 7.15am, with their backpacks. They will receive correspondence about this separately. **It is important to remember that you should not pack extra food into your sons' bags after the hike – your son's pack must not be too heavy.**

On Thursday and Friday, boys will do a First Aid Course, learn how to use their Satellite Phones and attend a Fire Prevention talk. Boys will also get back their exam papers for checking on Thursday morning.

Finally, The Blessing of the Boots ceremony, which we could not hold last year, will take place on Friday at 12.30pm. You are invited to attend, if you would like. This is a ceremony where you metaphorically send your sons off into the Wilderness, from where their dad's/ father figures will fetch them and return home safely on 8 December. We look forward to you joining us for this.

Meetings can be arranged for parents with the Wildmedix around serious medical concerns. These meetings will take place on Thursday 18 November from 3.15pm. Please let me know if you would like to take them up on this opportunity. I will also attend.

Remember Hiking and Solo boxes can still be collected from Mr Court's classroom, but need to be returned to him by Thursday 18 November, at the very latest.

It has been recommended to us by our Covid advisers that boys going on Epic should isolate between 1pm on Friday and 6am on Tuesday morning, in an attempt to lower the Covid risk for all.

The decision has also been made, with the support of the doctors we consult, that all boys going on Epic should have a Rapid Covid-19 Antigen Test within 72 hours of the departure of the buses on Tuesday 23 November. By 1pm on MONDAY 22 November, each boy/ parent will need to have sent a negative covid test printout to grobertson@bishops.org.za. Earlier this term we had a situation where it appeared that one boy being covid-positive on a rowing tour resulted in 11 other boys testing positive in the following week. We would hate the same thing to happen on Epic.

Boys will NOT be permitted to go on Epic on 23 November if they have not had a negative Covid test. Failure to be tested will create a real problem wrt transport to the Epic and so I must encourage you to do this test and submit it timorously.

A reminder about boys with dietary requirements, whose parents will be sending meals for them to Epic, need to meet with me on Sunday at 9.30am (outside the chapel) before I depart for the Cederberg. If you email me the till slips for your purchases, I will ensure that you are reimbursed.

A reminder that Father's Letters are also due by Friday 12 November - this Friday! These letters should be dropped off at Admin or at the BSU by then, please.

The same rules apply to our boys in the Cederberg as they do at school. Boys who transgress school rules, will be sent home to face the consequences. Also, please do not expect 'proof of life' during your son's 16 day stay on Epic. Some staff upload photos to Social Media, but that is their prerogative and is not on behalf of Bishops.

Transport arrangements for Tuesday 23 November are as follows:

- Boys should arrive at 5.30am at the Woodlands Astro turf.
- Boys will be screened at the buses.
- Boys will then ensure that they pack their bags into the correct bus or trailer and embark, wearing their masks properly and with their hiking boots on.
- It would be a good idea to pack your son some breakfast, as the buses will take about 2 hours to get to Sonop Motors, where they will have a short break, before they will continue on to their respective bases/ hikes.
- Optional pocket money for a drink/ snack to be purchased at Sonop Motors, can be provided.

- All boys will need to hike into their base camp, carrying their packs, so boys need to be in the correct gear to do this.
- Buses will roll out at 6am sharp and you will then enjoy 16 days of peace and quiet...arranged by Bishops, just for you!

As previously mentioned, Andrea Rutter will be the Epic Control Officer for parents at Bishops; she will send you an email about this, with comprehensive details about further departure details.

Kind regards
Graeme Klerck
(Epic Director)