

Dear Grade 10 Epic Parents

If your son is not yet mentally and physically ready for the Epic, there is still six weeks to get ready. The Devil's Peak hike would have given him a good sense of where he is physically and so I encourage him to ensure that he continue to ready himself for Epic and not simply stick his head in the sand, if he has been doing so up until this point.

In week 2, of this term, there will be an Epic Hiking Food talk, when boys will also be given their 24-hour solo boxes and 3-day solo-hike boxes, to be filled. More details about when to return these boxes will go out then, but boxes need to be handed in by **Thursday 16 November**, and no later.

In week 4 (30 October), the grade 10 exams will begin and will run for 2 weeks and a day. Thereafter, the Epic Training Week will take place, from **Tuesday 14 November – 17 November**, followed by the start of Epic on Tuesday 21 November. One small change to the programme will be the 'Blessing of the Boots' service in the Memorial Chapel, which has been moved to **7.45am on Friday 17 November**, to make the time more convenient for parents.

And now for the final night and Epic Letter.

We believe Epic to be a significant Rite of Passage in the lives of our Grade 10 Bishops boys. For many, it is a life-changing moment as they experience this time away from home in the company of other young men on their journey to adulthood and manhood in particular. We believe that your son will leave for Epic as a young boy and return, after his experiences, as someone further along the path to becoming a good young man. We believe that boys often look to men for examples of how to be a man. This does not diminish in any way the influence that women have on their journey. We believe that good people, both men and women, guide, nurture, protect and advise our young men with equal significance. It is just in this specific instance that we have found that a male role model plays an important part. With this in mind, we invite a significant male figure (a father, uncle, grandfather, brother, godfather, close friend) to be part of the last night of Epic and to share in this experience with him. Usually, that significant figure is the father, but not exclusively, as several of our boys, sadly, will not have a father to play this role. Hence, we ask that any male role model take on this responsibility to welcome your son back from his experience. The evening will take place on **Tuesday 5 December** and if one leaves Cape Town at 12:00 that day, one can be back in town by 12:00 the following day.

HERE are the details: <https://college.bishops.org.za/epic/Documents/2021/DetailsforLastnight.pdf>

During the Epic your son/ charge will spend 24 hours alone on a solo experience. For the same reasons above, we ask that this significant male figure either write or help write a letter to your son/ charge for him to read during his 24-hour solo, which we will give to him during this time. Being away from home will give your son/ charge the chance to think about all sorts of things, including his home, family and his relationship with you. The same will apply to you: having your son/ charge away for this length of time will also give you the chance to think about him and all that he means to you and your family. The contents of the letter are entirely up to you, but in keeping with the concept of modelling goodness to boys, we ask that you reflect on what being a Good Man is about and how you can advise and help him in his life. We have found that this 'letter' is an extremely meaningful interaction for both the significant male figure and the boy. It is entirely up to you what you want to include in the letter. One colleague gave the following advice to someone who asked

him what to write – ***“It is hoped the father/ father figure will say things in it which he would want to say to his son about their past, their present and the future. About what that son means to the father/ father figure and his hopes for him. About what it means to be a man in a tough world, a good husband, a good father, a man of faith etc. In short, we are looking for a personal letter from father/ father figure to his son. Only the boy sees it. It is sealed. For many boys (and dads) this has been a hugely significant experience.”*** We are also very happy for other family members to contribute to this letter. The letter needs to be dropped off at the admin office before the end of school on **Friday 10 November**. Please do note the following:

- No parcels – just a letter! Remember he needs to carry it once read and we only allocate a plastic sleeve per group for all the letters.
- Put your son’s name and group on the envelope – you can find this info on your son’s pupil profile.
- Please contact Nikki Lewis on nlewis@bishops.org.za (at the BSU) if you need to make an alternative arrangement.
- The idea is that the letter is a ‘surprise’, so please don’t ask your son/ charge to drop it off – we want him to see what it looks like only when he is on his solo.

After Graham Robertson gives the Hiking Food talk next week, we will make available all the details about food requirements for the 24-hour solo and solo hiking boxes.

Kind regards
Graeme Klerck
(Epic Director)