

Dear Oakhill School Family

This has been a quite remarkable week as much of the Garden Route faced a devastating storm that caused a great deal of damage and disruption across the region. We are aware that this event has taken its toll on many members of our community and we keep these people very much in mind as they deal with the aftermath of the storm.

We are grateful to emergency and support services that have toiled under very difficult conditions to try and restore essential services on which we greatly depend. I would also like to acknowledge our own Oakhill team who have stepped up following the storm to clean and clear our campus in preparation for our return to school. Our longstanding and much loved security guards, Moses Heshu, Roni Mtyutyu and Elvis Siko stood guard over our campus during the worst of the storm and provided invaluable support and information. Special thanks to our Business Manager, Joy Beggs for coordinating and managing much of the clean up and repair that was required in order for us to return to school. In addition to this we thank members of our grounds team, Zolani Jenteza and Thabiso Moeketsi for their invaluable assistance. The Oakhill Sports Campus also experienced some damage following the storm and is currently being attended to. Please note that the mountain bike route at the OSC is closed until further notice.

We are most grateful for the understanding and support of the Oakhill community during this challenge and are reminded of the resilience and care that has carried us through significant challenges in the past. We have already reached out to some members of our community to offer assistance and comfort in their time of need.

Last weekend saw the final whistle blown on the last of our three annual Oakhill Co-Ed Hockey Festivals which included for the first time the Oakhill Netball Festival run in conjunction with the hockey. We would like to congratulate all our Oakhill participants who

performed admirably and produced a high level of play across the two codes. To the hard working sports, marketing, support, grounds and events teams go our sincere thanks for their part in making these festivals the highly successful and memorable events they were.



*Action shots from the U18 Netball and Hockey Co-Ed Festivals*

On Wednesday, 22 April, Oakhill School's Belonging Day successfully focussed on a culture of inclusivity by engaging students from Little Oaks to Grade 11 in age-appropriate explorations of identity, acceptance, and emotional well-being. Through a diverse range of activities including the symbolic "Tree of Belonging," interactive games, sign language workshops, guest speakers, and deep reflections on the pressure to "fit in" versus the freedom to belong, the initiative sought to bridge cultural and social divides.





By moving beyond mere tolerance, the day achieved its core mission which was to teach the children that true belonging is rooted in being accepted exactly as one is, encouraging children to replace judgement with kindness and to demonstrate a genuine curiosity toward the unique stories of others. Our sincere thanks go to Board Member and BACT Chair, Kamantha Mannar and other members of the BACT team who with the support of many wonderful facilitators, some of whom are Oakhill parents, added so much to the experience. Should you wish to learn more about what the day entailed please [follow this link](#).

As part of our ongoing commitment to community outreach, the Interact Club partnered with Edge of Africa for a pop-up soup kitchen for the Rheenendal community. They used this opportunity to hand out blankets from a collection that took place in Term 1 ahead of the winter season. A few of our students offered up their time to assist with preparing the soup, and then assisting with handing out blankets and a warm bowl of soup to some of the most vulnerable residents of the Rheenendal community. This was a small gesture on our part, but it ensured that many residents received a wholesome meal, and a little extra warmth as the winter sets in. We would like to thank our Oakhill families for their ongoing support and generosity for all of our outreach initiatives.



*Members of the College Interact Club*

We are deeply grateful to our incredible community for donating nearly 1,000 books (950 to be exact!) for our recent World Book Day - Books for Bursaries book sale. It was a joy to see students, families, and friends

hunting through hundreds of high-quality titles from young, to older, to reference and cookbooks to find their next read. A special thank you to the PACT Committee (Parents Acting for Community Togetherness) for driving this fantastic initiative. We are proud to share that R30,000 was raised and all of these funds are dedicated to the Oakhill Foundation Trust, directly supporting future Oakhill bursary students.



*Prep Students enjoying looking through the books*

Our Prep School English Department has also benefited from the book sale by collating a small library of around eighty books that have been made available to pupils to continue their love of reading.

Thank you to everyone who brought their spirit and love of reading to the sale. You didn't just buy a book - you invested in a student's future. If you missed out... Keep a lookout for further opportunities to support before the end of the year!



Wishing you a wonderful weekend.

*James*

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Head of School: James Cross