



# Collegiate Girls' High School

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Dear CGHS Community

## OPEN LETTER TO THE COLLEGIATE COMMUNITY

In this time of heightened awareness worldwide of systemic racism, we as the Leadership and the School Governing Body of Collegiate Girls' High School, are renewing our commitment to a transformation process of intentional change in our school so that all discrimination towards any learner or staff member on the basis of race, gender or religion is eradicated.

Reflecting on the three years that have passed since the Transformation Task Team, formed on 12 October 2016, presented its findings to the SGB on 16 October 2017, some real change has been accomplished. However, we acknowledge that we are still far from being able to state that we have dismantled the systemic and structural racism imbedded in the foundation of our school during the time of colonialism. Thus the School and its Governing Body are continuing to work at transformation and expanding diversity in the school at all levels.

From the Transformation Task Team came the "Comfortable in Our Skins Policy" with the objective:

*to create and maintain an integrated and harmonious learning environment in which difference is embraced and all members of the school community (learners, educators, management, parents and visitors) feel physically and emotionally safe; are protected from demeaning and disrespectful behaviour and expressions; are treated with due care and sensitivity, and are adequately counselled and equipped to communicate and thrive in a diverse and multi-cultural society.<sup>1</sup>*

It is towards the achievement of this objective that the SGB adopted at the end of 2017, the majority of recommendations made by the Transformation Task Team and has worked, together with the leadership of the School, on implementing these recommendations. The full list of what has been implemented in the past three years can be found on the School's website.

As part of further pursuing this objective, we acknowledge that for over 110 years, there were many girls that could not attend our school due to the discriminatory laws of the country, and that to this

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<sup>1</sup> *Comfortable in Our Skins Policy*, adopted by the School Governing Body, 2017

day many girls remain unable to attend Collegiate due to the inherited structure of our society in which white privilege and inequity remains. We further acknowledge that in recent times there have been learners who have experienced racial discrimination in various forms and spaces. We realise that transformation and change need to be intentional and driven by dialogue, reflection and courageous action. We thus undertake to do the following:

- expand the current Transformation Sub-committee of the SGB to include a learner governor(s) and additional parents;
- enlist diversity experts to work with the Transformation Sub-committee and School members;
- redesign the “Let’s Talk” sessions to include diversity of learners;
- openly engage with and act on the list of requests (<https://bit.ly/2WTV2cw>) submitted to the SGB by the Prefect Body of 2020;
- engage with the alumnae;
- and to have open and regular communication with the CGHS learners, educators, parents and alumnae.

May we work together with our girls of the College to create a school that embraces and celebrates diversity for the benefit of the broader South Africa in which we live.



**MR M OLIVIER**  
**SGB CHAIR**



**MRS L ERASMUS**  
**ACTING-PRINCIPAL**



**MRS C XUNDU-BULA**  
**TRANSFORMATION SC CHAIR**