



16 January 2013
 BY EMAIL

Dear Colleagues

I have been questioned on numerous occasions, in the last while, regarding the discrepancy between the IEB Mathematics Average and the Oakhill Average, as seen below. Firstly, I would like to explain why this is so and I would also like to map out the interventions we have made to rectify this going forward. These are the facts and although there are numerous opinions and theories being spouted forth, I would encourage you to make your own opinions based on these facts.

Subject averages and proportions of A/B/C Symbols (overall IEB Statistics in Brackets)

2011

Subject	Symbol Breakdown in Percentages			Average %
	Level 7 (A)	Level 6 (B)	Level 5 (C)	
Mathematics	14 (23)	14 (15)	10 (22)	51 (63)
Maths Literacy	67 (42)	33 (26.7)		82 (74.5)

2012

Subject	Symbol Breakdown in Percentages			Average %
	Level 7 (A)	Level 6 (B)	Level 5 (C)	
Mathematics	17 (24)	3 (19)	21 (19)	54 (64)
Maths Literacy	57 (42)	29 (30)	10 (19)	80 (75.4)

When I arrived at Oakhill in December of 2008 I did a similar analysis of the Matric Maths results and noticed two things.

Firstly, I noticed that there were as many candidates doing Maths Literacy as there were doing Mathematics, which in my mind was problematic. Our average that year was 53% for Maths – with only 50% of the group doing Mathematics. The following year (2009) we had an average (77%) that was totally skewed by the simple fact that only 7 candidates did Maths. This approach looks good for the school but does nothing for learning and thinking amongst our student body. Furthermore, one cannot compare this average with that of 2012, where 29 candidates did Maths.



	Maths core (no of pupils)	Maths Lit (no of pupils)	IEB average	Oakhill average
2008 Peter Bishop	13 (50%)	13 (50%)	63%	53%
2009 Peter Bishop	7 (29%)	17 (71%)	64%	77%
2010 Peter Vieyra	11 (38%)	18 (62%)	63%	65%
2011 Peter Vieyra	21 (70%)	9 (30%)	63%	51%
2012 Peter Vieyra	29 (58%)	21 (42%)	64%	54,3%

Secondly, I noticed that we had achieved only one 'A' in 2008, no 'B's and only three 'C's

	Number of 'A' symbols	'B' symbols	'C' symbols	Number of candidates
2008	1	0	3	13
2009	2	4	1	7
2010	4	1	2	11
2011	3	3	2	21
2012	5	1	6	29

Our strategy since then has been, **FIRSTLY** to ensure that we get more young men and women doing Mathematics. When I arrived we had a 50/50 split between Maths and Maths Lit. 2011 we had a 70/30 split with 70% of our pupils doing Maths. 2012 saw 58% of the class doing Mathematics. This is a positive turn around but not enough.

Lastly, if we took the average of our top 7 (all the pupils we had doing Maths in 2009) or 11 (all the pupils we had doing Maths in 2010) candidates in 2011 our average would be the following:

2011 Top 7: 78%
2011 Top11: 67%

2012 Top 7: 81%
2012 Top 11: 76%

I am afraid this reveals that, in the past (prior to 2010), we 'hid' the rot in our Mathematics department by encouraging all and sundry to do Mathematics Literacy instead of Mathematics and in the process we ignored a large portion of our students.

We cannot continue to do that and now that Peter Vieyra has brought stability to this department we are advertising for a new Head of Department to take us forward in the College in 2014.

I sincerely hope you follow the logic of my argument and that you see that our results at the top end ('A, B and C' symbols) are as good as always but that our average in 2011 and 2012 is more realistic due to the fact that we are encouraging more students to take the Mathematics option.

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Lastly, I would like to remind you that we have appointed Marina Kok as the Head of Department Maths in the Prep school to lift standards. This is already making a difference.

Maths teaching needs to ensure a strong foundation. We have insisted on that in the last two years and I believe that our Maths results will continue to improve as we encourage more pupils to take it and also ensure that our bright students continue to achieve their potential.

My sincere thanks to our Mathematics Department, led by Peter Vieyra, for helping us to achieve excellence as we progress into the future, well prepared to face the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shane".

Shane Kidwell
HEADMASTER