



10 September 2021

Dear Durban Girls' College Community

#### ANNOUNCEMENT EXECUTIVE HEAD

The Durban Girls' College Board of Governors together, with our specialist recruitment agency, CN&Co, embarked on a six-month comprehensive national and international search for our new Executive Head. We are honoured to have received 82 applications from a high calibre of diverse and dynamic South African educational leaders.

It is our great pleasure and privilege to introduce you to Mrs Heidi Rea our new Executive Head of Durban Girls' College with effect from 1 January 2022.

Mrs Heidi Rea is currently the Head of Uplands College. Her 28 years of educational experience include HOD of Mathematics, Boarding Mistress and co-curricular Deputy Head. As Head of Uplands College, she has been engaged in designing and driving the school's strategic plan for 2028, whilst managing a school through an educational landscape that is forever changing. Mrs Heidi Rea qualified from the University of the Witwatersrand with a BSc Mathematics Major and continued to broaden her scope by completing her Honours Degree in Psychology.

Heidi is married to Greg, and is the mother of four children – three of whom have completed their schooling. Her youngest son, who is currently in Grade 6, is excited to be moving to KwaZulu-Natal. Heidi is a keen mountain biker who enjoys reading a vast range of novels. Her passions are the bush and the ocean.

At the beginning of the recruitment process the Board of Governors clearly set out the characteristics and skills we were looking for in an Executive Head - a visionary and a strategist, a transformative leader who is empathetic, courageous, innovative, authentic and passionate about education. An energetic, high-performance leader with the experience and expertise in primary and high school education, boarding, academic, cultural and sporting excellence. A leader with the cognitive ability to deal with the challenges, opportunities and benefits of managing both history, diversity and innovation. A leader with the skills and acumen to be a chief executive but the heart and values that are the ethos of our school – commitment, confidence, courage, empathy and integrity.

It is an honour to introduce you to our chosen leader, who does not compromise on any of the above skills and characteristics, who is courageously taking on the role of leading our community and building our integrated strategy. Heidi, the Board of Governors warmly welcomes you and your family to the Durban Girls' College Community.

*Founded in 1877*

It is the greatest task that faces a Board and its Chairman to select a chief executive. The role of Executive Head is one that is more complex than any other due to the multiple stakeholders being led and the challenging expectations of each, in a world that has entered a period of accelerated change. I would like to thank our entire Board of Governors and our election committee including our Vice-Chair, Governor of Education, Chair of Finance and Chair of our PA, for their expertise and support through our process.

Please join the Board of Governors in celebrating the appointment of our new Executive Head, Heidi Rea, marking a new chapter for Durban Girls' College in our 145<sup>th</sup> year as we continue to embrace positive change through a pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit that is the legacy of the DGC Founders.

Karen Jones  
Chairman  
Board of Governors



## **HEIDI REA**

Born the daughter of a diplomat, I began my education in America, continued it in England and completed it in South Africa. Over my primary school years, I attended a variety of schools and thus had the benefit of experiencing many different education systems. Qualifying from Wits University with a BSc Mathematics Major, teaching found me. In the beginning, I taught Mathematics and General Science at a primary school. In January 2000, I moved into high school education, continuing with Mathematics, but broadened my scope by completing my Honours Degree in Psychology. That way, I felt I would understand the way children can learn better – a necessary soft skill.

In my 28 years of educational experience, I have worn many leadership caps including academic as HOD Mathematics, Boarding Mistress and co-curricular Deputy Head. All of which I believe will inform this new adventure.

As Head of Uplands College, over the past years, I have been engaged in designing and driving the school's strategic plan, an always exciting process. Equally so, managing a school through the pandemic has necessitated an adaptability and resilience that none of us saw coming. The educational landscape has changed, and I believe we have learnt rich lessons and should never go back completely to the way we have educated before.

Additionally, the richness in our country's diversity, which I believe to be unparalleled anywhere else in the world, provides us with the rich, unique, learning experiences afforded to very few other countries in the world. As a result, I see and appreciate every individual and his or her unique contribution to our community.

Married to my husband Greg, I am a mother to four children; my eldest son is qualified as an Electrical Engineer and is currently pursuing his Masters in robotics. My middle son has qualified as a Chemical Engineer and is pursuing his Masters in Mechanical Engineering, and my daughter is currently enrolled in 5<sup>th</sup> year medicine at Stellenbosch University. I am very proud of them as products of excellent South African schooling. My youngest son is currently in Grade 6 and is excited about the move to KwaZulu-Natal – particularly for the sport, not necessarily the classroom!

Outside of work, I am a keen mountain biker (some would say competitive) and find that getting on my bike clears my head and puts things into perspective. I also love to read and my taste in novels varies from academic to fiction, just for fun. My two passions are the bush and the ocean and as I leave one behind, I am thrilled to be moving nearer to the other.