

FRIENDS
OF PEB

SEPTEMBER 2026

Newsletter

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*A letter from Cheryl***Dear Friends,**

Before I ever became involved in education in Pakistan, I spent nearly twenty years teaching elementary school in the Atlanta area. Later, during my years working in Pakistan, I oversaw freshman orientation for fifteen years. Between those jobs and my own first days, I realize I have been part of the “first day of school” in one way or another for more than fifty years.

In all of that time, in classrooms on several continents, the one thing that has been consistent everywhere was the mix of excitement and nervousness that students feel on that first day. It doesn't matter if they are five or eighteen. It doesn't matter if the school is in Georgia or in Pakistan. There is always that blend of hope and uncertainty. There are questions about teachers, new friends, what will be learned, and a thousand other things.

Over the next couple of months, you'll read many stories in our newsletters and emails and see posts on our social media about first days in PEB schools and how our donors have helped to make them

happen. These stories matter. They remind us of what is possible when children have safe places to learn with teachers who care about them and their learning. However, the children in PEB schools are among the fortunate few in Pakistan. Millions of Pakistani children are not in school at all and most of those will never be able to go. For them, the “first day of school” is not something they even hope to see. They come from families who are not educated and who have no resources to change that for their children. Many come from areas where there are, simply, no schools close enough to attend. Even where there are schools, they are often already at capacity (or more). In places like Kinnaird Academy, where every classroom is full and every seat is taken, we are forced to turn away or waitlist children who are eager to learn simply because there is no space left.

Pakistan needs more places for children to learn. What they have is simply not enough. Many of the places that do exist are of such poor quality that students are not able to pass the most basic annual exams. This need is not just something we talk about; it is obvious as you drive in cities and villages and see the number of children begging, working in the fields and in brick kilns, and just wandering around during the school day. Their parents would love to have an easier life and a better future for their children, and we wish we could provide that for all of them. Every time I write something asking for help building a building, these kids are in my mind. My rational self knows we are doing what we can as fast as we can but my heart hurts for the ones we can't get to.

As we begin another school year, I hope you will read our stories with both joy and awareness. Joy for the students who are thriving in PEB schools and awareness of the many who are still waiting for their first day to begin. PEB's commitment continues because the need continues to be there. We believe every child deserves a place to learn, and we thank you for being people who share that belief and who step up to make that happen...one child, one family, and one community at a time.

With hope for the future,

Cheryl Burke

Friends of PEB Executive Director

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678-697-6454

GIVE NOW





Friends of PEB also welcomes planned gifts, donor-advised funds, IRA distributions, or gifts in other forms. If you have questions about your gift, please contact Cheryl at cheryl@friendsofpeb.org or 678-697-6454. If you've recently added Friends of PEB to your will, please reach out to let us know!



Kinnaird Academy Expansion

Every child deserves a first day of school, and at Kinnaird Academy we're working to make room for 200 more first days.

Kinnaird Academy is already full, with more than 200 students on the waiting list. The good news is that the first phase of the expansion is now complete: **the new administrative building is finished!** This move gives the school much-needed office space and frees up classrooms in the existing building.

Now, we're looking ahead to the next phase: **a new academic building with nine classrooms**, creating space for more than 200 additional students to join the Kinnaird community. Our goal is to raise **\$300,000 by December 31** so construction can get started.

Because a first day of school is about more than walking through a classroom door. It's the beginning of new opportunities, new dreams, and a future that might not otherwise be possible. For 200 more children, a first day at Kinnaird is the first step toward a life changed through education.

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News from Pakistan

After a summer break, PEB schools across Pakistan welcomed students back to campus on August 24. Classrooms are once again filled with learning and friendship, and students wasted no time getting involved.

Just a few weeks after returning, students from all 14 PEB high schools came together for the 2026 Inter-School English Debate Competition on September 11. Two students from each high school participated, with one speaking in favor of the topic and one speaking against it. This year's thought-provoking topic was: "Human Intelligence is Superior to Artificial Intelligence."

Students did an incredible job presenting their arguments, demonstrating strong public speaking skills, critical thinking, preparation, and confidence. The competition was especially impressive, with judges from Forman Christian College University, LUMS University, and the Government of Punjab commenting on the high standard of the students' performances.

Congratulations to all the students, teachers, and schools who participated! We're grateful for opportunities like this that encourage PEB students to speak with confidence, think critically, and use their voices.

School Positions

- 1st: Christian Boys' High School, Martinpur
- 2nd: Christian Girls' High School, Sangla Hill
- 3rd: Christian Girls' High School, Sargodha
- Consolation: Christian Girls' High School, Martinpur

Individual Positions

- 1st: Minahil Farooq (Christian Girls' High School, Sangla Hill)
- 2nd: Yashab Mussa (Christian Boys' High School, Martinpur)
- 3rd: Ayan Mall (Christian Boys' High School, Martinpur)
- Consolation: Fareeha Fakher (CGHS, Pasrur) and Muhammad Arshman Junaid (CTI, Sialkot)



Available Student to Sponsor

Day Student | \$35 per month

"My name is Hamna. I'm in Class 5 at Christian Girls' High School Sargodha, and I dream of becoming a scientist."

Hamna's father is a laborer and her mother is a housewife. Hamna's family cannot afford school fees on their own. She is waiting for a sponsor to help her continue her education long-term. Would you consider helping her family with tuition costs?



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Friends of PEB

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