



WATERFORD KAMHLABA

United World College of Southern Africa

1st June 2007

Letter 14/2007

Dear Parents

Community Service

This Tuesday I had the privilege of joining the students and facilitator of the Vision and Hearing Community Service project when they handed over 40 pairs of prescription glasses to children that they had identified through testing at four primary schools in Mbabane. The Mbabane Government Hospital is unable to provide free glasses, but we were fortunate to receive financial support from the HBD Memorial Fund that allowed for the purchase of the lenses. St Joseph's generously prepared the glasses and donated the frames. A further 60 pairs of glasses are being prepared for students in other primary schools.

The Form 4 girls left this morning on their community service outing to Shewula, where they will be engaged in a variety of activities over two days, especially in support of the approximately 600 orphans and vulnerable children in that community. The Form 4 boys will follow next Friday and Saturday.

Students have been encouraged to sign up for Wattle Sunday which starts at 10am this Sunday.

Visitors from Universities

Over the last two weeks we have received visits from the international admissions officers of Amherst, Williams and Colby, amongst the most highly ranked 'Liberal Arts (and Sciences)' Colleges in the USA. These visitors addressed IB students on the nature of higher education in the USA, informed them about these specific colleges and also interviewed over 40 students.

Science Fair

The Inter-house Science Fair is scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday 7th June, in the science laboratories. Parents are invited to attend. Exhibitions should be in place by 3.30pm.

Music

Late yesterday afternoon I was drawn to the new music room by the sound of a jazz-style band, and was delighted to find students exalting in the joy of making their own music on piano, electric guitar, trumpet, alto and tenor saxophone, double bass and drums. The purchase of the new instruments was made possible through a generous donation from Michael Holland, husband of the late Jane Holland in whose memory the Centre for Creative Learning was built.

Revised Bus Routes and Schedules

The extension of the bus service to Ezulwini and the top of Pine Valley has proved to be manageable within WK's bus and driver resources. I thank students (and their parents) who catch busses on all the routes for their cooperation as we had to juggle changing patterns of demand. Today all day students (excluding Form 4 girls) have been provided with the new full morning and afternoon schedule. Further copies are available for reception. Now that we know which vehicles are to be used

on the Ezulwini route and the number of students who wish to use this service, the further charge for this route will be considered by the Finance Sub-committee at its meeting on Tuesday evening.

HIV and AIDS policy development and implementation

HIV and AIDS are sad and hugely present realities in Southern Africa. The Governing Council has approved twelve principles in WK's approach to being a secondary school located in the country with the highest HIV infection rate in the world, principles that try to satisfy (sometimes apparently contradictory) educational (and employer) responsibilities, the college's disciplinary code and the reality of the infection rate in these parts. On Wednesday afternoon, members of the academic staff together with student representatives met to 'put flesh' on these principles. Further meetings will follow and our recommendations put to the PSA and Governing Council. For your interest the twelve principles are as follows:

- Sexual relationships between students are in breach of the major rules and unsafe sexual practices put people at risk from sexually transmitted diseases which affect many people in the region.
- WK will educate all members of its community about HIV & AIDS in a balanced manner appropriate to their age and understanding.
- There will be a mechanism for students to seek help with problems or concerns related to sexual behaviour in confidence and without automatic disciplinary action.
- Condoms will be made available to the Waterford community and possession of condoms will not be a disciplinary offence.
- WK will encourage all members of its community to know their HIV status and will facilitate access to medical advice and voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) for students and employees of the College.
- WK will advise the involvement of parents/guardians of students in all stages of decision making regarding VCT but will not make parental consent a precondition for students to access medical advice whether through a doctor or a VCT clinic.
- WK will seek to support all members of its community who know they are infected with the HIV virus until such point as they are no longer able to function within the school environment.
- WK aims to expand access to counselling and medical services as necessary to meet needs.
- WK will not discriminate against any person on the basis of their HIV status. HIV status will not be a factor in admission of students, continuation of studies, employment or contract renewal.
- WK will protect the confidentiality of HIV status information whether oral, written or electronic.
- WK will actively counter discrimination on the basis of HIV status through education and/or disciplinary action.
- Hygiene and first aid practices and procedures at WK will be conducted with the awareness of the possibility of transfer of HIV through blood and body fluids and precautions will be taken to eliminate this risk.

Yours sincerely

Laurence Nodder
Principal