



WATERFORD KAMHLABA

United World College of Southern Africa

2nd November 2007

Letter 28/2007

Dear Parents

As a movement, United World Colleges has gained momentum with the opening of two new Colleges last year (Bosnia and Costa Rica) and with a number of other colleges in various stages of consideration and planning (including Kenya, Netherlands, New Zealand and an agricultural college in Tanzania, none of which has received final approval). As we look forward, two major debates have emerged at the UWC International Board level. The first concerns the nature of the country and society in which we might wish to locate a new college, the second as to whether an expansion in the number of colleges (and with this the possibility of more students benefiting from a college UWC experience) might lead to an unhealthy dilution of resources, especially financial resources at a time when several of the older colleges find it increasingly difficult to fund their bursary and scholarship aspirations.

To expand on the first debate: should UWC consider agreeing to a college being located in an areas that might benefit from a UWC presence but where a 'western' concept of human rights and civil liberties is not present? China is a point in case: some members of the UWC International Board expressed a strong view that students (and teachers) at a college in mainland China would not have full liberty to discuss human rights issues and political issues (for instance around Tibet.) Other Board members were of the view that UWC should 'stretch the envelope' and 'be a witness' in its own (sometimes small) way in countries such as China and regions such as the Middle East.

The full list of agreed UWC values that should be promoted through the colleges (and other UWC initiatives) are as follows: international and intercultural understanding, celebration of difference, personal responsibility and integrity, mutual responsibility and respect, compassion and service, respect for the environment, a sense of idealism, personal challenge and action and personal example. Given that UWC's foundation lies in Western Europe and North America, should a 'western' interpretation of how these values can be promoted at a college be a necessary interpretation for a college located in a different part of the world, a different context? My view is each college needs to interpret the UWC Mission and Values into its own social and political context. Having said that, Waterford Kamhlaba's foundation came about because of apartheid education policies in South Africa that made it impossible for people of different racial backgrounds to study in the same school in that country, so I am aware that there are some contexts in which it would be impossible to operate a United World College with any sense of integrity.

The IB1 students finished their internal examination on Wednesday afternoon. On Thursday morning they met with representatives in the fields of law, the arts, government and the Country Representative of the World Food Programme as a means of exploring their vision for the future. Yesterday afternoon and this morning was spent in discussion about students' experiences, positive and negative, about their time so far at WK, concluding in a meeting with members of the Central Management Group where a diversity of views was expressed. It is clear that the students represent a wide range of opinions about schools and society, about United World Colleges, about the relationship between students and between students, teachers and management. I am pleased that

PO Box 52
Mbabane
Kingdom of Swaziland
Web www.waterford.sz

Tel +268 4220866/7/8
Fax +268 4220088
Cell +268 6021566
Email principal@waterford.sz


UNITED WORLD
COLLEGES

the SRC organized these two days so constructively and hope that collectively we can use this as a growth opportunity. WK is neither a perfect community nor a perfect UWC. We need to respond positively and creatively to opportunities to explore ideas and to improve people's experiences at the school.

PSA Golf Day

Thank you to everyone who supported this event last Sunday through your presence, sponsorship or organizing assistance. The PSA is to be commended on a magnificent event which has raised the profile of Waterford Kamhlaba in Swaziland as well as raising over E50000 for PSA projects.

College activities

This is a relatively quiet period in the wider life of the school, with all but the Forms 1, 2 and 3 students having been involved in mock and/or final examinations.

Two weeks ago all Form 2 students were able to visit the Indlu Recycling Project and a Mercy Care Point as part of their exposure to community service. Indlu Recycling Project recycles paper and other materials and provides training for people in the arts and crafts, with a view to those people being able to earn a living through their skills. Part of this is focussed on creating markets overseas for their products. The Mercy Care Points care for orphans and vulnerable children and create access, where necessary, to treatment from the Baylor Clinic.

Last weekend a group of WK students and staff visited Mbalenhle Primary School to assist that community with the provision of building materials and then in building a school kitchen. This initiative was spearheaded by the Young Heroes group at WK.

The Junior Social is to be held this evening, starting at 7pm in L1 classroom. School transport will depart from the Cinelux area at 6.30pm. The social is planned to run to 10pm. Parents of day students are requested to fetch their children by 10.15pm from the Main Entrance. The reason WK does not provide transport back to town after evening is in case a student fails to be collected from that central point. In my view it is a safer arrangement for students to be met on campus.

A further session of SATs is being held this Saturday morning, this for students wishing to apply for admission to USA colleges and universities.

As part of their Lifeskills programme, Form 4 students have had planned a 'Survivor' at Malalotja Nature Reserve, departing at 8am on Friday 9th and returning on Saturday 10th. A separate letter to Form 4 parents has been sent.

Hindu students are preparing a special celebration for Diwali on Friday 9th November.

The Form 5 Leavers' Ceremony is scheduled to start at 5pm on Saturday 10th November in the Michael Stern Hall, to be followed by a dinner at House on Fire. Refreshments will be served from 4.15pm.

Yours sincerely

Laurence Nodder
Principal