

**1. As the year comes to an end, how would you describe 2024 in a single sentence?**

This year has tested our strength and resilience, but through every challenge, we've discovered a deeper sense of hope and the promise of brighter days ahead.

**2. What have been the most defining moments of the year for you as Principal?**

The most defining moments of the year have been witnessing our students' growth, not just academically but personally. From seeing them overcome challenges to celebrating their achievements, both big and small, I've been inspired by their determination and spirit. Another defining moment was watching our school community come together during difficult times, showing the strength of our bonds and the importance of supporting one another. These moments remind me daily of why we do what we do—shaping future leaders, instilling values, and creating a supportive, caring environment for every student and staff to thrive.

**3. What are some of the school's biggest achievements this year, both inside and outside the classroom?**

This year, our school has seen remarkable achievements both academically and beyond the classroom, reflecting our growth and commitment. A key milestone was conducting a pastoral audit to better understand and support student well-being. We also launched impactful student-led initiatives like the Young Women Empowerment Consortium, which sparked important conversations on gender equality and leadership. Our Inter-House Competitions fostered teamwork and school spirit, while Service Initiatives allowed students to give back to the community. These accomplishments showcase the strength and unity of our students, staff, and the entire school community, creating an environment where everyone can thrive and make a positive impact.

**4. Could you share any success stories from our students or alumni that made you especially proud?**

This year, our students have demonstrated extraordinary potential and resilience, achieving remarkable success across various fields. Some students, who arrived with no English, have now become proficient in just two years, showcasing their determination and the support of our teachers. In Judo, one student earned top honors at a regional competition, while in Robotics, students have built award-winning projects that highlight their creativity and innovation. The Brave Girl camp, which has officially become a UWC short course, continues to powerfully impact girls from our local community. Our students also excelled in the Math Olympiad, earning recognition for their intellectual strength. Beyond academics, many students led impactful service initiatives, including charity drives (breast cancer screening comes to mind) and environmental sustainability campaigns, while others turned personal challenges into opportunities, raising funds for scholarships and organizing art exhibitions. These success stories reflect the heart and soul of our school, emphasizing the limitless potential of our students and their ability to make a meaningful impact on the world.

**5. How has the academic program evolved this year, and what milestones have been achieved?**

Academics remain a main area of focus. It is important to state that both the OISESA and the pastoral audit reports have revealed a need to ensure student experience is more positive and equal across the teaching and learning space. This particular year has seen the ongoing investment in observations, community curated PDs, and a pilot on the 360 degrees feedback process with an aim to support teacher development. We have introduced smartboards in the science labs and will continue to upgrade other

classrooms with modern technological tools in the new year. The school is transitioning from Google Classroom and Adam to Toddle, a new learning management system aimed at fostering pedagogical practices to meet the needs of our community. Our organogram has also been streamlined to respond to the question of efficacy in the middle level leadership.

**6. Were there any particular community service projects that stood out to you in 2024?**

All our community service initiatives stand out. They are each unique and impactful in their own accords. Service is at the heart of what we do here, reminding us of what it means to be truly human.

**8. How have student leadership opportunities at Waterford contributed to the development of our young leaders?**

One only needs an invitation to the school, to witness our students' skills acquisition in diverse ways such as communication, problem-solving, and strategic thinking. Student leadership opportunities at WK have been pivotal in shaping our young leaders by empowering them to take initiative, make decisions, and influence change within the school community. Through multiple programs, students have learned the importance of responsibility, collaboration, and empathy. These experiences encourage them to develop useful life skills as they build confidence, learn to lead with integrity, and gain a deeper understanding of global issues, all of which prepare them to be impactful, compassionate leaders in the future.

**10. How has Waterford performed in sports this year? Were there any moments of triumph or lessons from the field?**

Waterford Kamhlaba has performed exceptionally well in sports this year and we have finished in podium positions for a majority of the competitions that we have entered. Worth mentioning is our back-to-back victories in the inter-school athletics meet where we had a team of over 120 students represent us as part of the WK team. We also had some students called up for the junior national teams and different disciplines.

**11. What do you think is the role of sports and extracurricular activities in building the school's ethos?**

Sports and extracurricular activities play a vital role in shaping our school's ethos by fostering teamwork, discipline, and leadership. They provide students with opportunities to develop essential life skills like resilience, time management, and communication, while also promoting a sense of belonging and camaraderie. Similarly, they provide a channel for reinforcing the lessons learned in the classroom, allowing students to apply academic skills in a real-world context and thus be considered part of a well-rounded education. Through these activities, students learn the value of hard work, creativity, and giving back to the community, all of which contribute to the strong, positive culture we strive to build at WK.

**12. What have been some of the biggest challenges the school faced this year, and how did the community overcome them?**

One of the most profound challenges we faced this year was the loss of two of our beloved members of the WK community. The grief and sense of loss affected us all deeply, but it also brought us together in ways we hadn't anticipated. Through this difficult time, we leaned on each other for support—students, staff, and families came together to offer comfort, share memories, and honor the legacy left behind. The experience taught us the power of unity, compassion, and resilience, reminding us that even in our darkest moments, the strength of community can help us heal and move forward.

**12. On the flip side, what moments brought you the greatest joy or gave you the most hope for the future?**

The moments that brought me the greatest joy this year were seeing the school come together during a common staff meeting, where morale and unity were at the forefront of our discourses, reminding us of the strength we share as a community. Personally, being in my TOK classroom, where students engaged in deep, thought-provoking discussions, filled me with hope for the future of critical thinking and inquiry. Additionally, witnessing the graduation of two amazing cohorts was a proud moment, as it signified both the growth of our students and the continued success of our school. Finally, the renovation of our science

laboratories was a significant step forward, providing a renewed space for innovation and exploration, symbolizing our commitment to academic progress and the bright future ahead.

**14. As we prepare for the new year, what are your hopes and aspirations for Waterford in 2025?**

As we look ahead to 2025, my hopes for Waterford are centered around deepening our commitment to the UWC mission, which emphasizes peace, sustainability, and the shared humanity of all. I envision a continued investment in teacher development, ensuring our educators have the resources and support they need to inspire, challenge, and nurture the diverse talents of our students. Equally important is our integrated focus on holistic wellbeing, where we prioritize not just academic growth, but the emotional, social, and mental health of our community, fostering a balanced and thriving school environment.

Building a stronger school culture remains at the core of our aspirations, one that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and respect, while also continuing to refine our communication channels to better connect and engage every member of the Waterford family. Another key focus is developing a culture of philanthropy, enabling us to extend our outreach and provide more opportunities for underrepresented students, ensuring that our diversity is reflected in every aspect of the school.

In terms of environmental sustainability, I hope to see the continued success of our solar plant project and other green initiatives that will position us as leaders in environmental responsibility within the educational space.

Ultimately, my aspiration is for Waterford to truly live the UWC mission—not just in the opportunities we provide for our students, but also in the positive impact we have on the world around us. That we can embrace humility, that we can be kinder, that we can be more caring and that we can hold space for each other and for our students.

**15. Are there any exciting projects, programs, or initiatives we can look forward to in the coming year?**

Absolutely! In the coming year, we're excited to roll out several initiatives that will further strengthen our community and enhance the student experience. One major project is the continued expansion of our sustainability efforts, including the growth of our solar plant, which will play a significant role in reducing our carbon footprint. We're also embedding collaborative programs focused on wellbeing, where staff and students will engage in conversations, training and workshops designed to promote mental health, emotional resilience, safeguarding and a supportive school environment. These initiatives will foster open dialogue, equip everyone with practical tools for self-care, and create a culture of understanding and support throughout the school community.

In terms of student engagement, we will continue to drive our strategic plan initiatives so that student agency manifests through service learning and social impact, allowing students to take even greater ownership of projects that go beyond community service. Additionally, we're enhancing our tutor programs to provide deeper connections and personalized guidance to help students thrive both academically and personally.

We're also investing in upgrading our technology and learning spaces to ensure that our classrooms are equipped to support better teaching and learning methods, making sure our students are set up to succeed. It's going to be an exciting year full of opportunities to grow, innovate, and live our mission in meaningful ways!

**16. If you could share one message with the Waterford community—students, staff, parents, and alumni—what would it be?**

Together, in 2025, let's embrace new opportunities, overcome challenges, and continue building a community defined by strength, compassion, and progress. The UWC 2030 Strategy outlines four areas of priorities with Seek, Educate, Connect and Amplify at the core. At WK, we are ambitious in our own strategic imperatives; both strategies drive our vision - We can do anything we set our minds to - as long as we commit to our mission - The future is ours to shape.

**17. What do you believe makes Waterford Kamhlaba truly unique, and how has this been reflected in 2024?**

Waterford Kamhlaba is truly unique because of its deep commitment to diversity, global citizenship, and holistic education. This year, we've seen these values reflected in how our students and staff have embraced not only academic excellence but also personal growth, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship. Whether through student-led initiatives like the Young Women Empowerment Consortium, our continued focus on service, or the celebration of diverse voices and cultures within the school, Waterford has created an environment where every individual feels empowered. In 2024, this spirit of inclusion, resilience, and leadership has shaped our community, making us a place where students thrive and prepare to make a meaningful impact in the world. We are not perfect; no place is; however we can use our imperfections as springboard for growth, turning them into catalysts that propel us toward greater self-awareness, resilience, and success.