

This is summary of email in February 2008 of operations of FLKS in year 2007 and future plans. Prepared by Martin Green (who administers FLKS on the ground in RSA). Note Mike = Michael Dragner, the teacher we fund.

Frank Vipond  
9th April 2008

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### **FLKS 2007 Review**

Grade 11 - 33 pupils enrolled initially but only 12 stayed the course till year end. Grade 12 - 27 enrolled initially and 13 finished. All passed mathematics (2 off A's, 1 off B and some C's) and all passed matric. Two now students at Stellenbosch University, two at teacher's training college in PE (want to teach maths) and one starting diploma in civil eng. Once these youngsters pass matric with maths there is plenty of opportunities for them to be granted scholarships and bursaries as major businesses all have social responsibility budgets and also need to improve their BEE scorecards.

State of education in SA currently absolutely shambolic. Only 57% of Knysna Secondary passed matric - substantially less than previous year. There was a prolonged teacher's strike in May/June as well as confusion over the matric timetable until the last minute. Lots of youngsters in the poorer schools consequently became demoralised and lost interest. Frightening statistic is that only 5% of successful matriculants at end of 2006 had maths as a subject - so much for a developing country. Former Model C (white) schools (now reasonably integrated) are still doing well as parents and corporate bodies raise funds to employ more and better teachers - Knysna High had one failure out of 104 pupils in 2007 after 8 years of 100% matric pass rate. Usual howls of unhappiness re 2007 results in papers etc but not sure that the politicians have the ability to improve the mess. 2008 also first year of new syllabus in matric - not sure what this will mean but Mike thinks the maths will now be harder. In summary, I have no doubt that FLKS with Mike's efforts has made a significant difference to most of those 13 youngsters.

### **FLKS Strategy for 2008**

Currently the majority of the pupils live in Municipal (Council) houses and approx 10% in shacks. Although some of their parents could possibly afford private lessons, we believe it is unlikely that they would actually dip into their pockets for them. However both Mike and I are keen to expand the effort into the really poor areas such as Dam se Bos and Wit Locasie, the former in particular consisting of mainly squatter type shacks and heavy drinking. Mike has already been approached by a few youngsters who queried the possibility of lessons in Wit Locasie.

From a funding point of view you need to advise whether we should try to get things rolling there now or wait until more donors come on line. We may well have to pay some nominal rentals but would try to get the use of Child Welfare sites, Churches or as a last resort community halls - latter tend to be difficult as municipal types don't appear to be very interested. Please chew on the above and let us have your comments. Keep well and regards Martin