

19 October 2020

#### PRESENTATION TO EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 21:10:2020

I grew up in Apartheid South Africa where the government pursued a course of separate development along racial lines. I make this point to underline the principle that adversity can sometimes strengthen and toughen one. In my community, elders and leaders got together to ensure that sacrifices were made to build schools and ensure there were skilled people who operated them. Whereas my ancestors were indentured labourers coming to work the sugar cane plantations on the eastern sea board of South Africa, they, with foresight, gave pre- eminence to careers such as medicine, teaching and commerce. The influence of community can have significant impact on growth and welfare of our children.

I ,off course, wanted to become a doctor and had the required pass in my matriculation (A – level equivalent) with the exception of Afrikaans which was considered the language of the oppressor, so I did not make the quota. I instead opted to qualify in mathematics teaching, in which there was a dearth of qualified mathematics teachers who could teach up to matric (A – Level). I qualified for a substantial government bursary with the proviso that I completed a science degree and I taught in a government school for four years. I shared my late Dads love for travel, who when I was in year 11, re – mortgaged our home and set off on a trip to India, which was unheard of at the time. I followed his adventurous spirit and also pursued my travel aspirations when I discovered that a highly qualified mathematics teacher could open the doors of many schools around the world. My international teaching experience has been wide ranging .I have completed teaching stints in the UK, Guernsey, Abu Dhabi and many schools in South Africa in the private and public sector. My abilities as an excellent teacher (this is pronouncement coming from my head teacher of the school before I arrived in St Helena) have been honed by experiencing learners of diverse abilities and backgrounds. In Abu Dhabi for example, the challenge was teaching mathematics in a foreign language, at the Guernsey Grammar School it was working with a very talented group of level 6-8, s at key stage three. My qualification with a pure maths degree has ended up with me having to teach A – Level mathematics, which is what seems to be the requirement at Prince Andrews as well. I take every student as his or her own person and must say that I have not experienced one dull moment as a teacher, in a calling which has spanned over thirty years.

I have always been aware of my obligation to give back. We cannot survive on this planet without each other. Just prior to arriving on St Helena I had been working for a NGO Protec which is a national academic support group in South Africa that works to skill talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds in STEM education. I did the mathematics support at our branch. I also project directed the acquiring and setting up of a sports field for informal settlement children with my earnings from the UK. (Did not rely on external funding). Just a few weeks before I left I set up my family home as a care centre for differently abled persons and am in need of funds to expand the centre into a frail care centre, because that's where the need is, in my community. My need to come and work in St Helena is primarily to fund this project.

Finally, this is what I will offer by teaching at Prince Andrew. I have consulted with Mr Steven Powell, the head of department, to agree in the areas I will work in:

The new specification for teaching A – level mathematics has restructured the what is now called the old A level to offer what is now called pure maths 3 and pure maths 4. I have expertise in teaching both papers and will rewrite schemes of work for the new specification, and collect resources and source the text books (which are not yet out). In addition, I will explore avenues to increase the

proportion of students transitioning from GCSE into 6 Th form study of mathematics by creating a bridge module to close the gap between the two levels. The new GCSE spec has been written to allow more students to bridge this gap. The current need in St Helena is to have the workforce be fed by home grown talent. Mathematics is used everywhere in the world of work to gauge competencies. We plan to hone the mathematical skills of all our students at every level.

Every student is valuable, so we have entered, some students on the entry level certificate which will allow for them to achieve a qualification or pursue a level 2 functional skills qualification or maybe even sit the foundation GCSE paper. I am currently working with four students to achieve this qualification . I take it as a challenge to help every student on the ELC to surpass expectation placed on them.

Finally, Mr Powell has suggested a 'surgical intervention programme' for all students not hitting their predicted grade level. I did set up a drop in session at the Guernsey Grammar School which worked well as an early warning system to identify and help the right students. I'm looking forward to help set up this programme so that the favourable student: teacher ratio at our school is optimised and put to good effect.

I would like to thank , from the bottom of my heart , The education committee , who under the direction of Mrs Wendy Benjamin , has allowed me the privilege of working on this beautiful St Helena with wonderful , innocent children who seemed to be untouched by the vagaries of this difficult world we live in.

With best wishes

Kesh Naidoo