



HEADMASTER'S LETTER

UNION HIGH SCHOOL • 23 SEPTEMBER 2026

Dear Union families,

COURAGE IN THE EVERYDAY

As another term draws to a close, I am reminded of the poem **It Takes Courage**, which I shared with our learners at our final assembly today.

Courage is something we speak about often, usually in connection with great acts of bravery. Yet the poem reminds us that courage is just as often found in the quiet choices we make each day: choosing not to join in when others gossip, standing up for someone who is not there to defend themselves, holding fast to what we know is right, and having the strength to walk a different path when following the crowd would be easier.

These are not always the kinds of courageous acts that attract attention, but they are the ones that shape character.

Term 3 has given our young Unionites many opportunities to practise exactly that.

It has been a wonderfully full term. Our classrooms, sports fields, stages and school grounds have been busy with children learning, competing, performing, laughing, making memories and, inevitably, navigating a few challenges along the way. There have been achievements of which we are enormously proud, but there have also been lessons that cannot be measured by a mark, a score or a certificate.

Those quieter lessons matter.

At Union, we have always believed that education is about far more than what happens behind a desk. It is about helping young people grow into decent, resilient and thoughtful human beings. It is about learning to win graciously and lose with dignity; to recognise that being part of a team sometimes means putting someone else first; to value friendship; to take responsibility and to understand that our actions contribute to something bigger than ourselves.

That, perhaps, is one of the great privileges of belonging to a school such as ours. Generations of Unionites have walked these passages, sat in these classrooms and played on these fields. Each has left something of themselves behind, while carrying a little of Union with them when they moved on.

Our learners today are part of that same story and the way they conduct themselves now helps shape the Union that those who follow them will inherit.

To our staff, thank you for the patience, energy and genuine care you continue to invest in our children. To our parents, thank you for your support and for being such an important part of the partnership that makes our school community what it is.

And to our learners: enjoy the break. Rest well, spend time with your families and return ready for the final chapter of the year. **Be proud of what you have accomplished this term**, learn from the things that did not go according to plan and remember that courage is not always something dramatic.

Very often, it is simply choosing to try once more, to do the right thing and to be a little better than we were yesterday.

May we return for Term 4 rested and ready to finish the year with purpose, kindness and courage - and with the quiet pride that comes from knowing we are part of something rather special.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Pringle', with a stylized, cursive script.

William Pringle