



March 2008

Dear Friends,

Ruach is a first year student at Cornerstone. Unfortunately this will be his one and only year at the school because he is an 8th grader who will be graduating in June. In a recent conversation with him, he told me how badly he regrets not having come to Cornerstone sooner. Although he is a good student, by his own admission Ruach says he is not nearly as prepared for high school as most of his classmates who have been attending Cornerstone for years. *"This is a really good school,"* he said to me. *"I have never been challenged like I am this year. I only wish I would have started coming here sooner."*

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Two additional comments that Ruach made held my attention. First, he said, *"What I really like about this school is that the teachers here care a lot about the students and I've never experienced that before. They really watch out for us and they push us to learn."* Then he said, *"And I like that this is a Christian school. I wasn't sure at first if I'd like that but it's definitely making a difference for me. By coming here I'm not only getting smarter, I'm getting better and my faith is really growing."*

A Cornerstone education is transforming. Students who begin school with minimal preparation or who transfer to us grade levels behind in their academic abilities, are inspired to achieve at higher levels when they come to Cornerstone. Considering the fact that the majority of our students live below poverty level, are growing up in a community permeated with drugs, crime, and violence, and are surrounded by many peers who think very little about education, it is nothing short of a miracle to see how our students rise above these influences and achieve at phenomenal levels.

Of course, there are several factors that help Cornerstone be such a transformational experience for children. First, all of our teachers and staff are Christian. Kids who come to us knowing very little about Christ and the teachings in Scripture are being taught to build their lives and develop their characters on the sure foundation of faith in Jesus the Lord. Second, as a small school, students receive personal attention and they are held to high expectations. Every student is seen as a child of God, full of hope and potential. Therefore, poor performance in the classroom or in personal character and conduct is not an option. Third, Cornerstone is surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses; individuals who regularly pray for our students and faculty, and who support the mission of the school with volunteer time and generous gifts. The school is absolutely dependent upon these many faithful friends.

Yes, Ruach is right. Cornerstone is a good school. Take away any of the factors mentioned above, though, and Cornerstone becomes just another school. We will do our part here. We need you to keep supporting us with your prayers and contributions. Please help us continue to be a model inner-city school that is educating children for successful lives and loving them into the Kingdom of God.

Gratefully,

Dick Ollinger
President/CEO