# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE**  | **Visit to New York** |
| **DATE**  | **28 September 2018** |
| **BY** | **Kirsty Williams, Cabinet Secretary for Education** |

This is to update Members on my recent visit to the United States to promote Wales as a study destination, support bilateral education relationships and develop international opportunities for students, teachers and academics from Wales.

The visit included meetings with representatives from leading US universities, international education organisations, the UK Ambassador to the UN, HM Consul General for New York and Trade Commissioner for North America, leaders within the US and New York education systems, visits to schools and hosting a ‘Study in Wales’ reception.

I met with senior officials from the Institute of International Education to discuss Wales’s ambitions for international education exchanges and outward mobility opportunities for Welsh students. I will be making a further statement on international student mobility in the coming weeks.

I visited both Columbia and Princeton Universities to discuss joint-working and promote student and academic exchanges. I was pleased to support Swansea University’s engagement with Columbia as they deepen and formalise their partnership across research, civic engagement and student mobility.

Working with Global Wales, I hosted a ‘Study in Wales’ reception at the UK Mission to the United Nations. My thanks go to Her Excellency Dame Karen Pierce for meeting to discuss areas of common interest such as citizenship education and for supporting the delivery of the reception. It was extremely well attended with representatives from colleges and universities across North America, Welsh-New York civil society, Welsh university alumni and many others.

The visit also provided the opportunity to promote interest in our education reform journey, learn from developments in the US system and develop international engagement opportunities for Welsh students and teachers.

I had a positive meeting with Kerry Kennedy (President) and Karen Robinson (Senior Education Manager) of the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights organisation. Following these discussions, we will be further engaging on areas of joint-interest in curriculum reform, education purposes and citizenship education.

I also had the opportunity to visit schools and meet teachers, students and leaders in New York. This included Eva Moskowitz, CEO and Founder of Success Academy Charter Schools, Lukas Weinstein and Lisette Gomez of Children’s Aid Society’s National Center for Community Schools, and Mariano Guzman and colleagues at the New York City Department of Education. We discussed professional learning, leadership development, well-being strategies and community engagement. These discussions will lead to further opportunities and programmes as I continue to prioritise international best practice and evidence to support our education ambitions.

Across my many meetings there was significant interest in what Wales can offer for students and educationalists, as well as an eagerness to engage with our reforms and deepen partnerships and exchanges. Our successful universities, colleges and schools are integral to enhancing our international profile, as well as strengthening our bilateral links with North America for the benefit of students, teachers and staff within our education system.