

Wesley College Integration Agreement

“SPECIAL CHARACTER CLAUSE”

To all Synods and Hui Poari: For information and distribution to any interested parties.

Conference in 2007 received a notice of motion:

That:

- (i) The Methodist Church of New Zealand – Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa initiate conversations that will clarify what the Wesley College Special Character Statement expressed in the 1976 Wesley College Integration Agreement means for the 21st Century; and*
- (ii) this notice of motion is referred to the Council of Conference, Tauwi Strategy and Hui Poari.*

The Wesley College Special Character Statement is Clause 4 of the Wesley College Integration Agreement between the Board of the Wesley Training College (now the Wesley College Trust Board) and Her Majesty the Queen acting by and through the Minister, dated 30 November 1976.

Extract from the Wesley College Integration Agreement, November 1976

4. THE parties hereto accept and agree that Wesley College was originally established to provide education with a special character and that at the date hereof it provides education with the special character described in this clause. Wesley College is a multi-racial school which while being non sectarian has a direct affiliation with the Methodist Church of New Zealand and with the strength and support of this church affiliation provides education based on the beliefs and philosophies of the Christian faith. This includes religious observances.

In addition to religious education the College also supplies industrial (which term includes agricultural) training and an emphasis on instruction in the English language.

Wesley College has a special obligation to provide education for students of Maori descent, students of Pacific Islands descent, and orphans or otherwise disadvantaged students. It aims to provide a school at which students of all races can receive their education and learn to live and work together in harmony.

Wesley College caters primarily for students boarding at the Proprietor's hostel with which it has a close association. It is acknowledged by the parties hereto that the Proprietor's hostel at present provides for residential accommodation with a special character that is an essential component of the special character of the school.

Following conversations at Tauwi Strategy, Hui Poari, Council of Conference and the Wesley College Trust Board during 2008 Council of Conference agreed at its April meeting that the work on the Wesley College Special Character Statement was completed and that it be distributed to the Church for information.

It should be noted that once the Church has completed its consideration of the Special Character statement it is the responsibility of the Wesley College Trust Board to propose any change in the wording to the Ministry of Education.

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4. THE parties hereto accept and agree that Wesley College was originally established to provide education with a special character and that at the date hereof it provides education with a special character described in this clause.

Wesley College is a multi-ethnic school that has a direct affiliation with the Methodist Church of New Zealand – Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa. The Methodist Church of New Zealand – Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa is a Treaty-based Church that expresses its governance in a bicultural, power-sharing partnership between Te Taha Maori and Taiwi.

This has historical and contemporary relevance that is expressed within the College as:

- Treasuring our Christian and Methodist heritage and learning to express it relevantly.
- Openness to the future and to new insights, experiences and people.
- Support for values which respect the integrity of persons and communities.
- Consideration of the needs of others, especially the economically marginalized.
- Use of language and images that are inclusive and which express equality.
- Provision of safe environments in which students can learn to live and work together in harmony.
- Opposition to cultures of violence and to systems of domination and exclusion.
- Processes for dealing with conflict, harassment, abuse and violation.

Wesley College seeks to provide a broad-based education with special attention to numeracy, literacy and other key competencies. This emphasis on a broad-based education is expressed in the College motto: Fide, Litteris, Labore – Faith, Letters (learning) and Labour (hard work).

Wesley College has a special obligation to provide education for students of Maori and Pacific Islands descent and students whose family and personal circumstances require special care.

Wesley College caters primarily for students boarding at the Proprietor’s hostel. It is acknowledged by the parties hereto that the Proprietor’s hostel provides the special character as defined in this clause.

While the statement is for information, any comments or reflections can be sent to Amy Scott amys@methodist.org.nz for report to Council of Conference and the Wesley College Trust Board