



To: Hon Erica Stanford
Minister of Education
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Thursday 13 November 2025

Tēnā koe e te Minita,

The Board of Trinity Catholic College wish to express our full support for the statement released by Dr Kevin Shore, Chief Executive Officer of the New Zealand Catholic Education Office (NZCEO), regarding the *Education and Training Amendment Bill (No 2)* and its proposal to remove the requirement for school boards to give effect to *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*.

As Dr Shore's statement articulates, Catholic education in Aotearoa New Zealand has long upheld a commitment to *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, grounded in both our faith and our special character. That commitment is not dependent on legislation. It is shaped by our values of justice, human dignity, partnership, and the call to walk alongside *tangata whenua* in a spirit of mutual respect and shared responsibility.

We echo the view expressed by our Bishops that *"The Treaty provides the moral basis for the presence of all other peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand and guarantees reciprocal rights and obligations between the Crown and Māori."* (NZ Catholic Bishops, 1990). We also stand by Pope Francis's call to place indigenous peoples at the centre of dialogue, recognising that they are *"not merely one minority among others but should be the principal dialogue partners."* (*Laudato Si'* #146)

Trinity Catholic College supports that Catholic schools continue to give effect to *Te Tiriti* — through our curriculum, our governance, our relationships with Māori whānau and iwi, and our daily school life. Regardless of the legislative outcome, we remain committed to:

- Embedding tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori in our learning and school culture
- Upholding the principles of partnership, participation, and protection
- Deepening our understanding of Māori spirituality and wairua
- Fostering meaningful engagement with Māori whānau and communities
- Supporting ākonga Māori to thrive in their identity and achieve educational success

Removing these provisions from the Act would, we believe, be a step backward. The presence of *Te Tiriti* in legislation affirms our shared national commitment to partnership and equity in education. Diluting this may risk undermining the progress we have made — and continue to make — as schools and communities striving toward honourable relationships and just outcomes for Māori learners and whānau.

We urge the Government to reconsider the removal of these important provisions and to recognise the role that education plays in shaping a just, inclusive and future-focused Aotearoa.



TRINITY CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Hei ākonga mā te Karaiti

Trinity Catholic College stands firmly alongside the NZCEO and the wider Catholic education community in continuing to honour *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* as both a moral obligation and a vital expression of our special character.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Trinity Catholic College Board