



Rutherford College

25 November 2025

Hon Erica Stanford
Minister of Education
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Tēnā koe e te Minita,

Re: Opposition to the Removal of Board Expectations to Uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the wider Rutherford College community, I write to express our opposition to the recent directive to remove the expectation for school boards to uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi as part of their governance responsibilities.

At Rutherford College, we view Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a foundational document that reflects not only our nation's history but also the shared commitment to partnership, participation, and protection that underpins our work as educators. Upholding Te Tiriti is central to ensuring equitable outcomes, fostering cultural understanding, and strengthening the sense of belonging for all students, particularly our Māori learners and their whānau.

We believe this directive risks undermining the progress that has been made toward a more inclusive and culturally responsive education system. Our Board remains committed to honouring Te Tiriti principles in our decision-making, school culture, and curriculum, regardless of legislative or policy change.

We respectfully urge the Government to reconsider this directive and to continue supporting schools in upholding the intent and spirit of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a cornerstone of education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Ngā mihi nui,



Veronica Henderson
Presiding Member