ST STITHIANS COLLEGE

STATEMENT: TRANSFORMATION AT THE COLLEGE

(19 March 2009)

As a South African, Methodist Church School we commit ourselves to becoming a more diverse school in terms of both our student and teacher bodies. We strive to be a school where each individual feels welcome and affirmed, and where each one is encouraged to explore and develop their cultural and religious identity as South Africans and as global citizens/ leaders. Within our College we want to develop learners who celebrate diversity and who are comfortable with debate and discussion, because the College provides a safe space within which we can all explore difference, experience dissonance and recognise our common humanity.

We recognise that to achieve this we, both as individuals and as a College – *One & All*, have to constantly explore our assumptions, challenge our prejudices, learn to understand the experience of others and allow each one to be him/herself. We believe that this builds on our tradition of critical thinking and our core values. It is recognised that this is not easy and will involve a lot of hard work.

We want to do this because it underpins the values that we espouse as an institute of education and we believe it is a crucial part of building leaders. It is necessary to master these challenges if we are to grow individuals who can lead in the complex world in which we live and work.

When we talk about transformation, we would usually include the dimensions of race, gender, ability, religion, culture and socio-economic position. However, in the context of where we are as a country and as a College, for the purposes of this statement and in defining the role of the Transformation Committee we wish to focus only on the dimension of racial transformation. A separate process and strategy will be implemented to address the issues associated with gender differences. There has been a process in place for several years that has started addressing diversity in abilities. Focusing specifically on the dimension of race is not intended to indicate in any manner that the other dimensions of transformation are unimportant or have been or are being adequately addressed. The dimension of racial transformation is so important at this stage of the College's development that it requires the dedicated and focussed attention that will be provided by the Transformation Committee.

Our commitment to transformation does not in any way contradict our Methodist identity and our commitment to the values in The Saints Charter, *vis-à-vis*:

> *St Stithians strives for excellence in all spheres and a continuation of its fine reputation as a leading South African school at the cutting-edge of innovation and educational issues.*
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> *St Stithians encourages learners to do their personal best, fostering a healthy sense of competition while at the same time teaching learners to work collaboratively. It encourages and teaches a sense of self-confidence, self-discipline, humility and respect avoiding any form of arrogance.*

St Stithians recognises the need for both educators and parents to provide educational resources and support. All our learners develop a love for learning, through effective communication, respect and courtesy, which forms the basis for the partnership between parents, learners, teachers, management and support staff.

All decisions at the College are subject to four key criteria:

- The values espoused by the College, as articulated in the Saints Charter.
- The Methodist Church identity of the College.
- Excellence in education, as articulated in the Saints Charter.
- The long-term sustainability of the College.

The College has developed a plan of transformation to realise the intentions of this statement. Each individual school has also developed plans so that the College can achieve its transformation goals. The Transformation Committee, a sub-committee of the College Council, will monitor the College's implementation of its transformation strategy. Transformation remains a central plank of the short, medium and long-term strategy of the College.

There are five goals around which the strategy is built.

Goal 1: To foster and communicate our commitment to transformation and our Statement on Transformation so that it is understood, accepted and supported by all stakeholders

Goal 2: To establish an environment:

- That is welcoming to all;
- Where learners, parents and staff value themselves and learn to respect differences that exist in our society;
- That understands that we are united in diversity and that diversity brings strength;
- That promotes dissonance and discourse in a safe space, within a framework of ethical and value based rules, and which leads to a greater understanding of the social relevance of identity and transformation.

Goal 3: To continue to transform the learner population in terms of race.

Goal 4: To ensure that the College Staff is more diverse in terms of race.

Goal 5: As an institution, the College is committed to assisting in the transformation of the South African economy by supporting in our procurement and tendering policies BEE compliant companies.

Adopted by the College Council: 19 March 2009