

Wesley College Report to the Old Students' Association

Term 1, 2026

Wesley College has begun 2026 in a position of encouragement and renewed optimism. Despite a number of structural and organisational changes over the past year, the College continues to grow in strength, spirit, and purpose. The commitment of staff, students, families, and the wider Wesley community has been clearly evident, and this report highlights several key developments and achievements from the start of the year.

Facilities and College Culture

One of the most significant and visible developments has been the completion of the new quad area. Featuring a basketball court, tiered seating, landscaped areas, and an outdoor dining space, the quad has been an immediate and outstanding success. It has quickly become a central gathering place for students before school and during breaks. More importantly, it has enriched the tone and culture of the College, promoting positive social interactions, active engagement, and a strong sense of belonging across year levels.

At the start of the year, the entire College attended school camps. These camps played a vital role in resetting expectations and rebuilding relationships after time away from school. They were especially valuable in strengthening connections between students and staff and fostering a positive, unified culture. While the educational and wellbeing benefits were considerable, it is acknowledged that whole-school camps are both costly and logistically demanding. These factors will need careful consideration as planning for future years continues.

Attendance and Student Support

Attendance remains a key focus area for the College. Encouragingly, attendance has been good despite recent changes, including the closure of the hostels. Prior to Polyfest, regular attendance was approximately 63%, with average daily attendance sitting at around 90%. These figures reflect the ongoing efforts to support students to attend school consistently.

The provision of breakfast each morning has continued to make a meaningful difference, ensuring students are ready to learn when they arrive. In addition, College bus services are supporting reliable access to school, particularly for students facing transport challenges. Together, these initiatives are contributing positively to both attendance and overall student wellbeing.

Academic Achievement

The 2025 NCEA results are still provisional, but there are strong early indicators of success, particularly at Level 2, where results are looking very positive. This reflects focused teaching, targeted support, and an ongoing commitment to student achievement.

There is still work to be done at Level 3, especially in relation to University Entrance attainment. Life and Faith has been introduced as a compulsory subject at Years 12 and 13. This aligns closely with Wesley College's special character while also providing students with an additional and meaningful pathway to achieving University Entrance.

Cultural Life and Polyfest Success

The College is currently enjoying another highly successful Polyfest season. Despite the challenges presented by being a day school and many students living some distance from the College, there has been strong participation and achievement across several groups.

The Samoan Group returned to the Polyfest stage this year and received highly commended for their performance, a proud moment for the College and community. The Cook Island Group did not compete but presented a beautiful showcase performance that was warmly received by the crowd. The Tongan Lakalaka group placed third in a strong field, while the Taufakaniua group achieved an outstanding first place, ahead of both Tangaroa College and Dilworth.

Individual success was also celebrated, with Year 10 student Jayden Namoa placing first in his Tongan speech competition. He received the highest points of all competitors in his category, an exceptional achievement at such a young age.

The Kapa Haka Rōpū is scheduled to perform in the final week of term, and anticipation is high for another powerful performance after their success in 2025.

Wellbeing, Leadership, and the Future

Despite the challenges of recent years, the College is in a very positive place. Recent wellbeing pulse checks indicate that both students and staff are generally feeling safe, supported, and optimistic. This sense of wellbeing is reflected in daily interactions across the College and in the calm, purposeful tone of the learning environment.

A discussion document for the redevelopment of the hostel has been shared with the Trust Board. The suggested vision is to create a smaller, high-quality boarding facility that continues to support students who need it most, while ensuring sustainability and excellence in pastoral care.

Finally, we are looking forward to the return of Dr Evans next term following his sabbatical. His leadership and presence are highly valued, and we look forward to welcoming him back to the College community.

Wesley College remains deeply grateful for the ongoing support of its Old Students' Association. We hope that the involvement of our old students is something that we can continue to foster and strengthen in the years to come.