



The Uniting Church in Australia  
**QUEENSLAND SYNOD**



**Presbyterian Church  
Of Queensland**

**On March 27, 2018, this statement was provided to the relevant parties who participated in the conversations facilitated by Mr Chesterman AO RFD QC.**

## **Joint statement from the Moderators of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod and Presbyterian Church of Queensland**

In 2017, the Moderators, at the invitation of the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA), asked Hon. R. N. Chesterman AO RFD QC to facilitate conversations with relevant parties of Somerville House and the PMSA. This was in order to promote a genuine environment of discussion, healing and reconciliation and to ensure that the best interests of the students and staff at Somerville House were upheld. We are pleased to advise that Mr Chesterman has now told us he believes his work is completed.

Mr Chesterman believes that all parties are deeply committed to working together for the good of the school and have found common ground to continue this work together.

Ancillary to his work, Mr Chesterman made a number of observations in relation to the governance of the PMSA.

1. The restriction in the by-laws and constitution of the PMSA which limits membership of the council to members of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod or Presbyterian Church of Queensland should be removed or reduced in scope:

- a. Generally; or
- b. With respect to the councillors appointed by the PMSA itself.

2. The number of PMSA councillors should be reduced to nine; three appointed by each church and three by the councillors.

3. The maximum term which PMSA councillors may be permitted to serve should be ten years.

4. Appointments to the PMSA and to individual school councils should be advertised and suitable candidates actively sought out and encouraged to nominate.

5. Parents' organisations should be consulted and involved in the selection of community (school) councillors.

6. All but the most junior staff employed by the PMSA should be appointed after advertisement and external recruitment.



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These observations will be provided to the Australian Institute of Company Directors for it to take into account in the context of its review.

We are deeply grateful to all those who chose to be part of this work and we will continue to hold the Somerville House students and their families, the staff and the community as our highest priority throughout this process.

We thank Mr Chesterman for his work on our behalf and commend all parties involved for their commitment and perseverance.

Rev David Baker  
Moderator  
Uniting Church in Queensland

Rt Rev Greg Watt  
Moderator  
Presbyterian Church of Queensland