

# Anglican Church trust writes off \$14.8m in Hawke's Bay schools' debts

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Ric Stevens

The High Court has approved an application by an Anglican Church entity to forgive a \$14.8 million debt owed by the trust which supports Te Aute College and Hukarere Girls' College in Hawke's Bay.

The application was made by the St John's College Trust Board, a charity which provides for scholarships and approved educational programmes within the Anglican Church.

Between 2014 and 2020, the St John's College Trust Board advanced approximately \$14.85m to the Te Aute Trust Board, which supports the two Māori-Anglican schools.

The money was advanced under fears that the two schools might close without funding support.

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Both the St John's College Trust Board and the Te Aute Trust Board operate under the auspices of the Anglican Church.

When the St John's board advanced the money it had no expectation that it would ever be paid back.

On June 16, 2021, it resolved to forgive the debt so that it would not have to be repaid, but sought the approval of the High Court out of an "abundance of caution".