

**Submission
No 401**

**INQUIRY INTO EDUCATION AMENDMENT (ETHICS
CLASSES REPEAL) BILL 2011**

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ETHICS and SRE

The richness of our country's multiculturalism is reflected in many ways, and as this richness has increased with time, so too has the diversity of religious beliefs. Generally, we have a high level of tolerance for this diversity of religion, and make efforts to cater for all philosophies. Increasingly too, the traditional Christian religions are losing followers, due not only to the increase in other religions, but also due to greater numbers of people deciding not to practise religion at all.

In this context, it is important to consider the options for our children and their education. As we cater for Anglicans and Catholics, Muslims and Jews, Buddhists and Baha'i, we must also cater equally for those who use non-religious based principles for their decision making. Which is why the introduction of Ethics classes has been so well received by so many, and why such classes should be available to all children, just as children are offered the various religious classes from which to choose.

In summary:

- Keep Ethics classes, and roll out their availability to all children;
- Treat Ethics classes as a "religious" choice; and
- Treat Ethics classes, and the various religious options, the same. Subject to the same scrutiny, process and decision making, without fear or favour.

It's the least we can do for our children.