

Submission
No 17

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

Name: Dr Mark Staples

Date received: 1/12/2011

Partially Confidential

Dr Mark Staples

2011

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Director,

It is deeply concerning that NSW is considering reintroducing discrimination against children and families on the basis of their religious beliefs by repealing the Education Amendment (Ethics) Act 2010. There must continue to be a meaningful option for SRE classes for children and families that do not follow one of the religions providing SRE classes in their local school.

If there is to be an investigation of the ethics classes, it would also be outrageous discrimination if there were no parallel investigation of the other legal SRE options provided by religious groups.

The ethics classes have already undergone a year-long formal trial and evaluation. However there has never been any formal scrutiny of the curriculum or the teacher training for the religious SRE class providers. I have serious concerns about the quality and competence of the religious SRE classes and teachers, based on the experience of my son's prior participation in such classes. If you must run a formal investigation, please start by evaluating the religious SRE classes of all religions under the same basis as the evaluation of the ethics classes that has already been conducted.

Last year the P&C at my son's school, _____ voted to send a letter of support for the introduction of the ethics classes. Ending the requirement for ethics classes to be an option for SRE would be discriminatory and highly offensive to the many people with deeply-held beliefs on this issue.

Sincerely,

Mark Staples