

**Submission
No 191**

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

Name: Ms Elizabeth Moll

Date received: 21/02/2012



19th February 2011

Attention: the Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing concerning the inquiry into the Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill 2011. I believe that holding Special Education in Ethics classes (SEE) at the same time as Special Religious Education (SRE) classes represents an indirect attack on SRE. I believe that SRE is important for all primary school children to have the opportunity to attend should they wish to, given the significance of the claims made about Jesus in the Bible and also the influence that this has on Australian society.

The Bible claims to be a revelation showing God's love for the world and his generous offer of salvation and eternal life for all who depend upon the death of his son Jesus on the cross two thousand years ago. Such a generous gift which has consequences for accepting and rejecting is well worth investigating in order to make an informed

choice about. SRE seeks to educate primary school children about the God of the Bible and his son Jesus Christ so that they may not be ignorant and may make an informed choice about whether to trust in him or not. Offering SEE classes at the same time as SRE classes precludes children attending SEE classes from hearing from the Bible so as to make an informed decision.

In addition, SRE classes are important for educating children attending primary schools in New South Wales ~~from~~ ^{about} understanding the religious history and cultural heritage of their State. Also, a basic Bible knowledge will assist in interactions with others in society. Terms such as 'a good Samaritan', 'prodigal son' and 'Garden of Eden' are terms that are frequently used in newspapers, and if children have not had exposure to the Bible through SRE classes it is unlikely as to whether they will understand such terms.

Finally, attendance at SRE classes will also educate children about religious holidays that are currently observed in NSW - Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Christmas Day are three examples.

Further, if the SEE classes are worthwhile for children to attend, would it not be more viable to offer ethics instruction as part of the general school curriculum? This way all students will have the opportunity to learn about ethics and

morality, not just those who opt out of SRE classes. A more appropriate option for 'non-SRE' students could be a General Religious Education class providing an overview of the main religions which have adherents in NSW. This is a more comparable alternative option for students who wish to opt out of SRE classes.

Please consider the requests made in this letter - to enable SRE to enjoy that status it has been afforded in NSW over the past century for the benefit of school children. I hope that SEE classes can be offered at an alternative time so as not to draw students away from SRE, and to enable SRE students to participate in SEE classes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Moll.