

**Submission
No 30**

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

Name: Ms Catherine Pedler

Date received: 3/12/2011

Catherine Pedler

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000
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Dear Sir/Madam,

I write in support of retaining the option of Ethics classes to be held in public schools during time allocated for SRE.

As the appointed Ethics Co-ordinator at our School I have seen firsthand how these classes have filled a void that left a number of our children previously without opportunity to access learning during SRE time. Historically children who have not attended scripture have been forced to occupy themselves with minimal supervision, while their SRE peers have enjoyed access to learning, appropriate supervision and care.

As a parent I am delighted with the content of the curriculum. Every week I enjoy discussing the ethical dilemmas at home with my child and sharing our views as a family. The introduction of ethics classes has not only provided my child with thought provoking material but this has flowed on to him reaching out to discuss and seek advice from us. He has also benefitted enormously from the classes as it has encouraged him to share his ideas confidently with his peers, which has flowed on to his classroom. This positive feedback is shared by all of our parents of the children attending ethics classes in our school.

I would specifically like to draw your attention to the following major points.

1. There has been no formal enquiry into the provision of SRE classes since their inception over 100 years ago. Whilst I encourage any investigation into classes that are taught into our children it is unfair to allow SRE to go unchecked and unsupervised while demanding that Ethics classes be investigated.

2. If ethics classes are to be removed as an alternative to non scripture, thousands of children across NSW will be discriminated against. In our school the removal of classes would affect 20% of our Year 5 & 6 students. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to abandon and disregard the needs of 20% of our children. As a parent I find this offensive and outrageously unacceptable.

I vehemently oppose any plan to remove Ethics classes as a meaningful alternative for students whose families choose not for them to attend scripture classes and will actively campaign against any government that chooses politics over the welfare of our children.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Pedler
Ethics co-ordinator