

Submission
No 244

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 23/02/2012

Partially Confidential

23rd February, 2012

The Chairperson
Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2
Parliament House
SYDNEY 2000

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

SUBMISSION: ETHICS CLASSES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

My husband and I both support ethics classes in public schools. We strongly believe that our children have the right to learn, just as children attending SRE are learning. We have three children in the public education system, but our oldest missed the opportunity to participate at her primary school. We don't want her brothers to be similarly disappointed.

Our family celebrates various religious and spiritual customs – we are a biracial family and teach our children tolerance, empathy and inclusion. We don't question the rights of other children who choose to attend SRE classes, in fact we welcome it. We do ask that our children are given the same democratic right to choose an alternative to doing nothing productive or challenging. This is surely a waste of public education resources when teachers have to supervise children who are not engaged in structured education.

We do not want to see the Education Amendment (Ethics) Act 2010 repealed. The program hasn't been running long enough to evaluate outcomes. However, SRE classes are well overdue for an inquiry into their place within state education. Perhaps the inclusion of ethics within the SRE framework would be worth considering?

Finally, although our school has yet to trial ethics classes – our principal and P&C are supporting a democratic survey of the entire school with the aim of introducing ethics classes in the future. We support the retention of the Education Amendment (Ethics) Act 2010 and hope our younger children will have the option to participate.

Regards,