



ONE NATION NSW IGNORANCE IN EDUCATION BILL

Respect and understanding grow when a range of different students from diverse backgrounds play, socialise, and learn together. The [One Nation NSW Ignorance in Education Bill](#) undermines the right of every child to a quality education in a school where they have a place and feel valued. This Bill attacks not just teachers and trans and gender diverse students, but all of us who believe in a strong education system that supports every child, no matter who they are or may grow up to be, or what family they come from. Here's how the Bill undermines education in NSW.

UNDERMINING EDUCATION

Schools provide children with their first relationship with the world outside of their families, enabling the development of social relationships and interactions. Strong communities are created when everyone is comfortable, skilled and enthusiastic interacting with a wide range of people.

This Bill allows a parent to remove a child from any lesson at a public school which contradicts their political, social or personal values.¹ This will deprive a child from hearing differing views about issues such as climate change, Australian history, the experience of people with different religious beliefs or cultures, and LGBTIQ+ people.

This Bill will have the effect of gagging discussions in public schools on contemporary topics, depriving all children in public schools from hearing perspectives on important issues. This is because teachers will simply avoid discussing such issues for fear of having a complaint brought by a parent who has different views, no matter how isolated or isolating those views may be.

When teaching topics concerning political and social values, matters of personal wellbeing and identity, and moral and ethical standards, teachers will also need to be careful they are not seen to be advocating or promoting any view that may be considered 'ideological'.² Teachers will be at risk of losing their accreditation, and thereby their ability to teach,³ if a parent complains that teaching about the Stolen Generations, racism, climate change, or the struggle for LGBTIQ+ and other civil rights is 'ideological'.

A PLACE FOR EVERY STUDENT

Every child, no matter who they are or may grow up to be, should have a place in and feel valued at their school.

The Bill prohibits providing support to trans and gender diverse students, as it prohibits recognising their existence. Schools counsellors and teachers in public or private schools who recognise trans and gender diverse students for who they are, or who suggest that a person's gender may be different to the one assigned to them at birth,

¹ *Education Act 1990* (NSW), proposed s 17D.

² *Education Act*, proposed s 17B.

³ *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004* (NSW), proposed ss 21(1A) and 24(2).



will risk losing their jobs.⁴ Students with physical sex characteristics that do not align with norms for male or female bodies are deemed 'disordered' by the Bill.⁵ Teachers will risk losing their accreditation, and thereby their ability to teach, if they respectfully recognise the gender and sex diversity of students in their classrooms in line with their duty of care.

But every student who grows up in a family or situation that another parent finds objectionable, may find themselves silenced in class. Teachers may simply remove content to avoid the disruption caused by a parent who threatens to pull their child out of any class featuring content they disagree with. One parent may have the effect of stifling the discussion of content that every other parent who doesn't complain supports being taught.

Every student deserves to have who they are and why they matter reflected in class, regardless of what another parent thinks about them or their family. This Bill conflicts with the duty of care schools have to the welfare of all their students.

UNWORKABLE AND UNNECESSARY

Teachers who encourage their students to ask the big questions and who recognise the diversity of students in their classrooms should be recognised for their efforts, not restricted.

This Bill requires public schools to publish an advance annual summary of everything being taught that year which touches on matters concerning any political or social values, moral

or ethical standards, or personal wellbeing and identity. Apart from requiring teachers to summarise a year's worth of work at the beginning of each year, it is impossible to see how this requirement will encourage students to ask questions in class and be encouraged by their teachers to think for themselves about contemporary issues as they arise.

Rather than supporting our teachers to teach, this Bill requires them to spend time resolving conflicts among parents (and even between parents of the same child) with different and potentially irreconcilable political or social views.

PARENTS ALREADY HAVE A SAY

Parents want the very best for their kids and our leaders should want the same. That's why parents are already recognised as having the primary responsibility for their child's education,⁶ and have choices about how and where their children are educated.⁷ Religious parents can already object to their children being taught particular content.⁸ There is simply no need for this Bill.

EXAMPLE SCENARIOS

Example 1. In response to a complaint about climate change being taught in science class, a teacher begins their class with *'there are some who deny that climate change is real, or is induced by humans. What we are learning today is one view of the cause of climate change, but there may be other views'*.

Example 2. A student comes out as trans to a school counsellor and seeks their support. The

⁴ *Education Act*, proposed ss 15(6), 17A and 17C; *Education Standards Authority Act 2013* (NSW), proposed 11(1)(d) and *Teacher Accreditation Act*, proposed ss 21(1A) and 24(2).

⁵ *Education Act*, proposed s 3 (definition of *gender fluidity*).

⁶ *Education Act*, s 4(b).

⁷ *Education Act*, s 22.

⁸ *Education Act*, s 26.



school counsellor responds, *'I'm sorry we can't discuss this'*.

Example 3. A teacher asks their students to write a story about their favourite thing to do and share it with the class. A student talks about going to the playground with their two mums. The parent of another student, who hears about this, objects to their child hearing same-sex relationships 'normalised' in class. The teacher doesn't know what to do, and the Bill provides no answers as to how they should reconcile different views among parents.

Example 4. A couple of parents object to their children learning about holidays in different religions. Their teacher decides not to teach about holidays at all to avoid the difficulties of meeting all parents' views.

Example 5. A teacher overhears a student say to another student that 'all Muslims are terrorists'. After similar repeated comments, the teacher raises the matter with the parents of the student, who say they agree with their child's views and object to having their child silenced in sharing their views. The Bill now prevents the teacher providing any 'instruction' to a student on matters concerning moral and ethical standards and political and social values to which the parents of the child object (s 17D).

Example 6. A parent objects to a teacher enforcing an anti-bullying policy which conflicts with their views on women, LGBTIQ+ people, people from different cultural or religious beliefs, people with disability, or people living in non-nuclear family structures. Section 17D of the Bill now prevents the teacher providing instruction to the child on any moral and ethical standards that conflicts with their parent's views.

WE NEED YOUR VOICE

The NSW Parliament has allowed One Nation NSW Leader Mark Latham to chair an [inquiry](#) into his **own** Bill. The inquiry is now accepting submissions through this [online questionnaire](#).

To stop One Nation NSW using our parliament to attack our students, teachers and education system, **take action now:**

1. Complete the [online questionnaire](#):

While you can complete the questionnaire as you wish, we suggest answering [question 1](#) (your name, email and postcode will be kept confidential), saying you '**oppose**' the Bill in [question 2](#), and sharing a story about a teacher who made a difference to you or someone you love in [question 8](#).

The rest of the questions are optional, and **your response will count even if you don't answer them**. Some questions only allow for a yes/no response on complex topics, which could be misused by One Nation NSW to build the case for its unnecessary and harmful Bill. That's why, saying you '**oppose**' the Bill in question 2 is the most important thing.

2. [Write to our NSW Leaders](#) telling them to stop this harmful Bill.

For more information email us at

info@equalityaustralia.org.au or visit our [website](#).