

Media Release

Best place for the contest of ideas is in the classroom

Catholic school students would receive a more balanced view of important social and political issues in class than at unregulated, non-educational events, Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) said today.

CSNSW Chief Executive Officer Dallas McInerney says Catholic education supported students becoming more informed about the world and their role in its future but noted the expectation of the NSW Government that during school hours all students should be at school.

“While we are pleased to see our students passionate about the environment, the best way for young people to really make a difference is to receive a quality education in the classroom – inquiry through scholarship. This will provide them with the skills and knowledge to positively change the world as adults,” Mr McInerney said.

“Skipping school doesn't change the world, and we don't accept there needs to be a clash between attending class and caring about global issues.”

“We believe students should learn about and discuss these issues in class where there is a responsibility on teachers to present information on important, contentious issues in a balanced and factual way.”

Council of Catholic School Parents Executive Director, Peter Grace, added that while it is encouraging to see young people care about global issues, the best way to learn about these issues is from teachers and peers at school, and from their families at home.

“Our Church has a long tradition of Catholic social teaching, at the centre of which is the dignity of the human person and the common good. This tradition is best served by school students receiving a sound education in which they discuss topical issues in the classroom setting,” Mr Grace said.

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