

John Robertson MP

NSW Opposition Leader

Carmel Tebbutt MP

Shadow Education Minister



Friday, 11 November 2011

O'FARRELL TO CONSIDER DUMPING ETHICS CLASSES

MINOR PARTY DEAL REVEALED AS GOVERNMENT SENDS ETHICS CLASSES BILL TO COMMITTEE

The O'Farrell Government looks set to dump ethics classes as part of a deal with the Christian Democrats – and has referred a Bill to repeal the popular classes to a parliamentary committee instead of opposing it.

"The O'Farrell Government today confirmed it is considering repealing ethics classes in NSW public schools," Opposition Leader John Robertson said.

"Instead of voting down Reverend Nile's Bill to repeal ethics classes, the O'Farrell Government voted for it to be considered further by a parliamentary committee.

"If the O'Farrell Government wasn't preparing to break its election promise to retain ethics classes in NSW, they would have simply voted down Reverend Nile's Bill.

"Barry O'Farrell promised to retain ethics classes in public schools as an alternative to scripture, but that pledge is now being traded off as part of a dodgy deal with the Christian Democrats.

"Barry O'Farrell is trying to trade off ethics classes for NSW school students so he can get the Christian Democrats to support his plans to privatise electricity.

"Any changes to ethics classes will confirm Barry O'Farrell is doing deals with the minor parties to try to buy their votes for electricity privatisation."

Shadow Education Minister, Carmel Tebbutt said students would be left worse off if the O'Farrell Government went ahead with its dodgy deal to repeal ethics classes.

"Ethics classes are an alternative for students who do not attend scripture," Ms Tebbutt said.

"Barry O'Farrell promised to retain the popular ethics classes as an alternative to scripture during the election campaign, but it appears his promises do not count for much.

"The former Labor Government introduced the popular ethics classes after a trial and rigorous evaluation. The classes have been widely praised by parents, teachers and students.

"NSW public school students should not be used as a political football by Barry O'Farrell to cut deals with the minor parties in the Legislative Council."

MEDIA CONTACT: SAMANTHA DAWSON 0418498963