20 October 2010

REPORT INTO SCHOOL ETHICS TRIAL

The Minister for Education and Training Verity Firth has released an evaluation into the trial of ethics in NSW primary schools which has found a high level of support for the course in school communities.

Ms Firth said the report would now be available for public comment before a decision was made on the future of ethics classes.

“The independent evaluation found high levels of engagement among students when discussing ethical issues and that it enabled them to discuss and understand the principles of ethical decision-making.

“It also found that the course met the aim of introducing students to the language and nature of ethics and ethical issues.

“Overall it’s a positive report which makes a number of recommendations to be considered if the course is approved.

“I’d like to thank the St James Ethics Centre for its development of the course materials and I look forward to hearing the views of the community before a final decision is made on its wider implementation.”

The trial was conducted in 10 NSW primary schools during Term 2 of this year and involved more than 500 students in Year 5 and 6.

The trial was an Australian first and students were encouraged to discuss situations involving fairness, honesty and responsibilities.

“It’s important to point out that the Government has no plans to replace Special Religious Education in NSW public schools – that’s never been our intention,” Ms Firth said.

“But parents who choose not to send their children to scripture classes have a right to see their children engaged in some type of meaningful activity.

“Any approval of ethics would simply provide an alternative without diminishing in any way the importance of religious classes for other families.”

For the full report go to: [www.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au)
For comment: [ethicsreportfeedback@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ethicsreportfeedback@det.nsw.edu.au)

Closing date for comment on the evaluation report is Friday, 5 November 2010.