



[REDACTED]

Mr David Southwick MP
re: Parliamentary Enquiry to Music Education
Parliament House
Spring Street
East Melbourne 3002

dear Sir

I became aware of the above mentioned enquiry during the summer break. I am not a teacher; retired nurse in fact, with one of my interests being music at all levels. I regard education in any discipline as essential to living well, and more importantly adding balance to to our local & global community.

I am unable to make a submission to the music enquiry as I do not possess experience in this field. However I passed AMEB Gr 5 piano at age 17 before commencing my nursing degree. Music is in my genes...

So, at the risk of wasting your time I decided to relate the following event to you. One Friday last December, I found myself as usual in the atrium at Fed Sq, after leaving my French conversation pals (a weekly social group) at Café Chinotto. I was on my way to Ian Potter gallery...

Well! There they were, a choir. This small group of students, oozing confidence, discipline & presentation, singing Christmas Carols. They were in tune, articulate & musical. The female teacher was living her musicality as she guided them through the performance. She was so enthusiastic, sharing her professional skills. The performance was well presented, full of light & shade, with I guess, the highlight being from 3 Tongan boys. There were other confident & able soloists. One girl did the 'mixing'! Needless to say the musical balance was first class.

I asked a young woman near me, who they were. She told me that the school was Werribee Secondary College. Her son (Yr 7 perhaps), was in the front row looking so serious, with the blazer sleeves almost hiding his hands. As I listened I thought to myself that the Premier or Minister for Education should be sharing this concert with me. An experience that says it all. I resolved to contact the school, which I did not do until now. One could say that little did I realize at the time, I would be writing to share my positive experience with you in your capacity heading the enquiry into Music Education.

) As a retired nurse, mother, grandmother etc. you know what I am going to say. We have a duty in this wealthy, prosperous country of ours, to put all our resources into education & health at all levels. We have an obligation to provide & maintain these essential elements in our democratic society. State education must come first in our society, together with the first class public teaching hospitals of my day. We have a duty to offer music, along with sport to all students, for some it may be their only chance in life.

On that Friday last December after the performance, I wandered away & pondered about the good news that is never published. These students should have made front page in the local paper. Perhaps they did!
I submit my letter, suggesting that the funds in the budget for music education at Werribee have been well spent.

Sincerely



Brenda Matthews

cc Mr Steven Beutyn
Headmaster
Werribee Secondary College

cc Mr Ted Baillieu MP for Hawthorn