

25/01/2013 12:23

Dr Christina Murray

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I have just been informed that there is a proposal to cut funding for music at my daughters school, Canterbury Girls Secondary College and am writing to express my dismay at this extraordinarily shortsighted proposal. We elected to send our daughter to this school, and plan to send our second child there, in the main for the excellent music program it offers. We are not in the zone for CGSC, but our two local state schools offer almost nothing in the way of a music program, so we applied for and were successful in getting our daughter entry to Canterbury Girls. I have seen the enormous benefit musical studies and performance has provided both our girls. Our eldest is articulate and confident, and we believe this has resulted from her being involved in numerous eisteddfods, many performances at her school and at other schools and also being selected for the State Schools Spectacular. She has held a number of official positions within her school and is a confident public speaker - which I chiefly attribute to her lengthy experience as a musical performer. She is also an excellent and confident mathematician, and I am given to understand that there is a strong association between knowledge of music and mathematical ability. Our eight year old equally has grown in confidence with her experiences of musical studies and performance at her school, Mont Albert Primary. She has been performing with the school orchestra at eisteddfods and public performances since the age of 6, and is now also in the school choir. I believe it would be an enormous loss to our children to lose access to the musical education and experiences that they currently receive at their public schools. We believe still that it possible for our girls to receive an excellent education at public schools, but at our schools we put up with poor and lacking facilities, and the teachers and parents must put a lot of effort into fundraising to pay for various maintenance and teaching necessities. It should by no means be assumed that because our schools are in relatively well to do parts of Melbourne, that the students or the schools themselves are similarly endowed with money. It would be a serious blow to our family if the music programs at our schools were to be cut. Music is so important to both our children that we would be forced to consider sending them into the private system - something that we have resisted until now as being unnecessary and also a move that we would struggle to afford. I therefore ask that the Committee decide to at least retain the current level of funding for music education in our public schools.