

I am alarmed at the recommendation by the Productivity Commission, that charities that provide religious education should have their DGR status withdrawn.

The Jannali Schools Board of Christian Education was formed in the early 1980's in a collaboration of five local Churches to employ teachers to provide SRE at Jannali Boys High School and Jannali Girls High School, then from 1991 at The Jannali High School.

I attended Jannali Boys High School in the 1980's, experiencing the SRE teaching provided by the Board, and for the last eighteen years I have acted as Treasurer for the Jannali Schools Board of Christian Education.

Across those eighteen years, the Board has employed seven extremely talented and dedicated teachers to provide SRE in a variety of permanent full-time/part-time capacities as well as numerous casuals. Currently the Board employs two permanent part-time teachers. In taking these roles, the teachers have sacrificed higher salaries and career advancement they could have achieved in other fields, as acts of service to bring SRE to the students at Jannali High.

The SRE teachers and Board have played a vital role in partnership with the school executive in providing education and spiritual support during difficult times. During the Covid lockdowns, the Board was able to provide food hampers and care packages to be distributed through the SRE teacher and school to families in need.

It is my belief that none of this work, and all the benefits that have derived from it over decades, would have been possible if donations to the Board by individuals were not tax deductible. The Board's yearly budget is funded seventy percent by donations from individuals and the remaining thirty percent from Churches. Should donations to the Board lose their tax deductibility, I suspect the majority of individual donors would cease and the Board would not be able to fund the same level of employment.

Not only would this be a terrible outcome for the teachers that will lose their jobs, but for the entire school community in losing the only spiritual presence in the school.

I urge the Commission to reconsider this short-sighted recommendation.