

Progressive Atheists Inc.

Est. 10 Jan 2010 | Reg: A0054119U

Proud Member of Atheist Alliance International

Allied with Secular Coalition of Australia



Victorian State Election Candidate Survey - November 2014

Candidate Comments - Question 1

Question 1. Special Religious Instruction: are you in favour of continuing Special Religious Instruction in publicly funded Primary Schools?

Animal Justice Party | Monbulk District | McADAM, Jennifer

Special religious instruction: if it is a non-specific programme that teaches about all religions, I believe this would be valuable for students.

Animal Justice Party | Southern Metropolitan Region | WALSHE, Nyree

I am in favor of religious instruction being available for students in public schools if the students and their parents choose. It is a disadvantage for low-income religious families if instruction is not available in the public system. However it should not be compulsory as some students will not be religious. There is a need for ethics and community responsibility instruction to be offered as an alternative.

Animal Justice Party | Western Victoria Region | GAMBLE, Jennifer

I believe families should be given the option to 'opt in' to religious education that is undertaken during lunch time/non-class time.

Australian Country Alliance | Murray Plains District | WINN, Bryon

I support multiculturalism, want to be fair and consult local community.

Australian Country Alliance | Ripon District | DOMASCHENZ, Trevor

Hi I am Trevor Domaschenz the ACA candidate for Ripon. Not a big fan of yes/no. I believe in freedom of choice and stand for Country/rural people. One of my daughters is unmarried with a partner and 4 young kids(happily). My other children are happily married. Even though she is an atheist she puts her children first and they go to a catholic school. She considers the values there are better for her kids.

Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Cranbourne District | PERERA, Jude;
Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Dandenong District | WILLIAMS, Gabrielle;
Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Mill Park District | D'AMBROSIO, Lily;
Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Wendouree District | KNIGHT, Sharon

The Labor Party has long supported the notion that one of the greatest strengths of the Victorian community is its diversity.

As a way of understanding the different perspectives that exist within our multicultural society, government schools have the ability to teach their students about the varied beliefs and cultural understandings of our society.

When Labor introduced the new Education and Training Reform Act in 2006, we again committed to the principal of secular education.

While that Act makes it clear that government school education must be secular, it provides schools with the option to offer 'special religious instruction (SRI)' in the school through 'instruction provided by churches and other religious groups and based on distinctive religious tenets and beliefs'.

This instruction is not compulsory and parents may request that their child does not attend such classes.

It is very important that informed parental consent is obtained for student participation in SRI, and Labor supports that information being provided to parents.

Labor in government would be vigilant in overseeing that all SRI delivered in schools complies with the Act and relevant policies, including that instructors do not induce or attempt to induce the conversion of students to a particular religion, or encourage any student to attend religious events held outside of school.

Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Eltham District | WARD, Vicki

Only if it is wanted by the school

Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Mildura District | ROBERTS, Shane

I believe that Religious Education (RE) should be an option for students in government schools. I think that all religions and beliefs should be taught if students elect to study RE, by educating students it provides a greater understanding and acceptance of different religions and cultures.

Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Sandringham District | ZIGOURAS, Christina

I believe that public schools should educate children on all religions prevalent in Australian society as an introduction to religion in society.

Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Warrandyte District | KENT, Steven

Special religious instruction should take place in a separate classroom for those parents who have consented to do so. Any child that has parents that have not consented should not be sitting in same classroom at time of the religious instruction.

Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch | Western Victoria Region | PULFORD, Jaala

Religious instruction ought to be a matter for families to discuss at home and/or part of the curriculum, taught by qualified teachers.

Independent | Bayswater District | CARBONARI, John

The retention of Australia's cultural heritage is supported.

Independent | Pascoe Vale District | TIMPANO, Francesco

The information provided is inadequate to make a yes/no response or I am yet to adopt a firm position on the issue and am undertaking further study/research and analysis before deciding.

Independent | Ringwood District | CHALLINGER, Michael

I am in favour of teaching Civics, ethics, comparative religion and tolerance for one session per week. Specific denominational instruction should only be available out of school hours at the parents' request and at their expense.

Independent | Williamstown District | WEHBE, Khalil

Depends which type religious they are using, not been commercially or bad advises.

Independent | Eastern Victoria Region | DAVID, Jean-Michel

All schools (State, Independent and Catholic) are in large part funded through our taxes - including therefore Special Religious Instruction [SRI]. It should also be noted that SRI is not compulsory. I remain in favour of the provision for key cultural and historical instruction in schools.

Independent | Eastern Victoria Region | SINDT, Christine

Victoria was the first place in the world to provide free compulsory, secular education. The values of the Bible, which includes the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, are enshrined in our Westminster system of government, and are best taught through the family.

Independent (Save the Planet Party) | Frankston District | SMITH, Reade

I support the need for children to be able to learn about all religions, especially at school. I'm uncomfortable with the instruction of only one religion at government funded schools.

The Basics Rock 'n' Roll Party | Northern Metropolitan Region | SCHROEDER, Kris

While I am very much against the surface-level appearance of Religious Education and "Chaplaincy" in Schools, I want to clarify why I selected Other. It is important children understand religion. While not being preached to, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. have been the cornerstones of the societies that we live in. To ignore their existence entirely is to ignore knowing "where you came from". So I am in favour of education around what these movements have meant over history, and what faith means to many people.