

## **Re: Young Liberals MAKE EDUCATION FAIR Campaign**

It is quite unfortunate that there is political bias in our educational institutions in this day and age. When political viewpoints from either side of the political spectrum become institutionalised in our fundamental public bodies, it may turn them into recruitment camps for the ambitious hacks of our day. We trust these institutions to properly educate our youth in a straightforward (politically neutral) manner, without the lessons leaning left or right. However, this problem ultimately lies with the teachers, who, by holding such highly trusted position, have the greatest deal of contact with students daily and are highly influential.

My personal experience of politically driven educational bias comes from my tertiary studies at university. I major in politics and international relations, so I easily clash with my left-leaning peers on a regular basis. I was once taught by an excellent tutor, who unfortunately gave better grades to those students who displayed a political standpoint that reflected his own left leaning personality. I've come across other peers who show similar tendencies to appreciate the work of left-wingers more than any other student. And in my department there are few who appreciate any other political standpoint.

Students are easily malleable, and, as said earlier, they trust the opinion of their teachers to a high degree. The teacher-student relationship has much to do with why teachers are so influential. Students are entrusted by their parents, and by the community, to these people to properly educate them.

One of the key values of our educational system should be to encourage students to explore a range of ideas and determine for themselves how to perceive the issues of our day. Education does not end at the teachers, students who fail to properly analyse an issue from all angles are often blind to reality. Teachers often fail to inform students that they need to take initiative in their learning, engage with their peers in a forum of debate, and not to submit so easily to an appealing ideal without assessing its qualities and, especially, its flaws.

Lessons in academic, social, and economic initiative and independency should be considered for as necessary for the education of our youth. We don't want a dependent society of zombies, who fall into radical ideals without properly assessing the substance of those values. The teacher-student relationship owes much to the cognitive submission of pupils to their educational peers. Lessons in independent study will help drive students to a better quality of education, as they will challenge their peers, and engage in strong and healthy debate.

Another significant issue is teachers who attempt to live vicariously through their students.

Those who influence student opinion and attitude for the purposes of their own political agendas should not be in one of our society's most fundamental positions. Again, the trust given to teachers can be abused, by forcing radical unilateral opinions onto the malleable minds of our youth. Perhaps better work standards should be employed for all educational institutions to ensure that teachers don't turn their classrooms into re-education camps.

An unbiased education is not a big ask of our institutions or teachers. The duty to the students should override any political perspective held by educational peers.

Tarrant Kim Tolotta