



# TINTERN SCHOOLS

30 October 2008

John Carter  
Committee Secretary  
Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Carter

As Principal of Tintern Schools I write to alert the Senate Inquiry to my grave concerns regarding the Schools Assistance Bill 2008.

Tintern Schools operates two independent schools in the outer east of Melbourne. Tintern Girls Grammar is a Pre Prep to Year 12 school for girls of approximately 900 students. Southwood Boys Grammar is a Prep to Year 12 school for boys of approximately 450 students.

Tintern Schools provides educational and cultural experiences that offer each student opportunities to:

- develop an enquiring mind;
- find purpose and enjoyment in learning;
- value and appreciate excellence and opportunity; and
- develop personal and professional skills for life

in the context of the dynamic and challenging environment of C21 Australia and its global context.

Students are encouraged to strive for:

- Academic, creative, spiritual and physical maturity;
- Personal excellence of endeavour;
- An ability to relate to others in a positive and affirming manner; and
- Self discipline and responsible use of authority

in an environment which engages students, staff and families in cooperation and respect, and in which care, compassion, challenge, fulfilment and commitment are guiding values.

My concern is that there are proposed sections of the Schools Assistance Bill 2008 that have the potential to significantly compromise Tintern Schools ability to deliver its mission to those families who have taken a considered decision to make the sacrifices necessary to afford an independent education for their children.

There are a number of matters on which I seek specific reassurance and which do warrant the utmost scrutiny by the Senate before consenting to the passage of the Schools Assistance Bill 2008.

Will Tintern Schools be able to continue its current educational program that includes multiple pathways for senior students through the provision of the VCE, VCE/VET and International Baccalaureate?

If not – how will the school meet its stated and unique educational objectives and give expression to its core religious, educational and cultural values?

Will Tintern Schools have to report commercial-in-confidence financial information? Given the highly competitive nature of the independent schooling market it is imperative that there are some details of internal school operations that remain confidential within a school community.

If schools are required to reveal commercial-in-confidence financial information, how will this assist governments to better manage education services?

Who would be responsible for the collection and dissemination of a schools financial information and to whom might it be disseminated and for what purposes?

Will the school's financial information be the basis for new federal and state funding models?

I look forward to your response to my concerns.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Jenny Collins  
Principal