

Monday 14 June 2010

VIC COALITION WILL ENFORCE TRUANCY LAWS

A Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Government will enforce the truancy laws John Brumby has been too incompetent and lazy to use.

Labor's own laws passed four years ago make it compulsory for parents to ensure children attend school, with fines for each day a student misses school without a reasonable excuse.

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* states that:

'It is the duty of the parent of a child of not less than 6 nor more than 16 years of age—

- a) to enrol the child at a registered school and to ensure the child attends the school at all times when the school is open for the child's instruction; or*
- b) to register the child for home schooling in accordance with the regulations and to ensure that the child receives instruction in accordance with the registration.*

2.1.2 Offence for parent to fail to comply with duty

A parent of a child of compulsory school age must not without a reasonable excuse fail to comply with the duty set out in section 2.1.1.

Penalty: 1 penalty unit for each day on which the duty is not complied with.'

Under Labor's soft approach to school discipline, no fines have been issued to the minority of parents who allow their children to miss school and miss out on an education.

A Coalition Government will enforce these laws to remind parents of their responsibility to ensure their children attend school.

The current laws include a number of reasonable excuses for students missing school, including illness, accident, religious reasons or if the *'absence from school or instruction was because of the child's disobedience and was not due to any fault of the parent'*.

Most parents ensure their children do go to school, but the law should be enforced to cover the minority who keep children from school without a good excuse.

Policy

Students cannot receive a proper education if Labor's soft approach to school discipline means they can miss school without penalty.

The Coalition will give more power to principals to enforce discipline and will ensure that current penalties for truancy are applied.