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REVIEW FINDS NATIONAL CURRICULUM BIASED AND SUBSTANDARD

“Today is the beginning of the end for the National Curriculum,” says Hannah Pandel, Research Fellow at the free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

The federal government’s review of the National Curriculum, conducted by Professor Kenneth Wiltshire and Dr Kevin Donnelly, was released today. The Review concluded that ‘there is a lack of balance as the curriculum, especially as a result of the cross-curriculum priorities, fails to adequately deal with the historical impact and significance of Western civilisation and Australia’s Judeo-Christian heritage and values and beliefs.’

“This confirms IPA findings that the National Curriculum distorts the past for ideological purposes.

“The Review exposes the National Curriculum for what it really is: politically biased, superficial and lacking in academic rigour,” says Ms Pandel.

In particular, Donnelly and Wiltshire find that the curriculum’s ‘cross-curriculum priorities’ – Sustainability, Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories – are inappropriate and ideologically driven. The Review notes: ‘it was a mistake to endeavour to embed each of the three themes across the whole curriculum.’

“It is also very troubling that the Review finds the National Curriculum promotes faddish teaching methods at the expense of other ‘evidence-based approaches.’

“Teaching using a phonics model has been identified as leading to successful literacy outcomes, yet the Review finds it is neglected in the National Curriculum, particularly in the early years,” says Ms Pandel.

For more than two decades, the Institute of Public Affairs has argued that a National Curriculum is an ideological project to impose the political values of a narrow educational establishment on all students.

“The Review finds that the current National Curriculum is ‘monolithic, inflexible and unwieldy.’

“The National Curriculum should be abolished. Curriculum decisions should be made by schools, teachers, and parents, not politicians or bureaucrats in Canberra,” says Ms Pandel.

For media and comment: Hannah Pandel, Research Fellow, hpandel@ipa.org.au or 0409 234 530