



MARIST BROTHERS

Berne Education Centre

Annual Report, 2005

The Berne Education Centre is an Independent Catholic School owned and operated by the Marist Brothers offering a positive option for students (Years 7, 8, 9, 10) whose education is at risk.

Goals and Objectives:

Our goals are the same as those of any school: all true education aims at producing **persons for others**, people who can live outside themselves for others. This may sound overly optimistic in a school for needy and difficult children at risk, but any goal less than this fails to respect these children as human beings who share the same joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties as all other persons. However, we can state our goals more precisely:

Goals:

1. To assist students to appreciate themselves as worthwhile and capable human beings;
2. To assist students in the process of realising their God-given potential;
3. To prepare students to take their place as just and responsible members of society;
4. To prepare students to share their skills and talents with others in the workforce, and thereby contribute to the common good;
5. To provide a secure, safe, enriching and challenging educational environment;
6. To provide a second chance for students in difficulty, outreaching to their families and wider social networks.

Objectives: (implementing the goals)

- a. Provide a relevant and comprehensive education for all;
- b. Improve each student's literacy and numeracy skills;
- c. Help any capable student to gain a School Certificate;
- d. Address any needs in each student not specifically educational: personal, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual;
- e. Work with each student's family, especially the parents;
- f. Confront specific problems a student may have, and work with each person and their families to overcome these;
- g. Work to restore a student to mainstream education wherever possible;
- h. Help each student realise their immediate goals by developing a realistic "exit" plan;
- i. Develop relevant personal development and camping programs;
- j. Organise work-experience and voluntary service programmes.

Enrolment Procedure / Students 2005:

Berne receives referrals from a wide range of educational and welfare professionals. Parents and Carers also often make contact directly. Following initial telephone enquiry for enrolment a School Counsellor contacts enquirer to discuss enrolment suitability. An assessment is made considering relevant information that is collected. An interview with student, parents / carers and Berne staff (Principal, Deputy, Counsellor and Year Co-ordinator) may then follow. If Berne is not suitable, or if no place is available, alternatives will be suggested to the family. If accepted into the program, an enrolment form and information pack will be given to the parent / carer.

Following are details showing numbers of students enrolled at the Berne Education Centre at the start of each term during 2005:

Term 1:	Year 10:	20	Year 9:	10	Year 8:	3			Total	33
Term 2:	Year 10:	20	Year 9:	14	Year 8:	5			Total	39
Term 3:	Year 10:	18	Year 9:	14	Year 8:	6			Total	38
Term 4:	Year 10:	18	Year 9:	15	Year 8:	8	Year 7:	4	Total	45

Throughout the year a number of students who were enrolled at Berne (not included in figures above) participated in special programmes which were overseen by Berne but undertaken outside the Berne Centre. Student numbers for these enrolment circumstances include the following:

Term 2: 1
 Term 3: 4
 Term 4: 2

Staff 2005:

The eleven (full-time) and four (part-time) teachers and School Principal employed at the Berne Education Centre all have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution. Three teachers have qualifications in Special Education and five have Masters degrees. Two full-time and one part-time School Counsellors were employed. Other specialist positions at Berne include Chaplain, Careers Advisor, Teachers Aide and one full-time and one part-time Youth Workers. One full time and one part time Office Assistants were employed. Berne operates a school canteen employing a Canteen Manager.

Irish Students and other practicum students

The Berne Education Centre is asked to accept students from various educational institutions for practicums. In 2005 two Irish students studying a BSc Honours in Community Youth Work at the University of Ulster spent eight weeks working alongside staff at Berne. This was a very rewarding experience for them and also for our students and staff.

Three psychology students from Sydney University and Australian College of Applied Psychology also undertook practicums at Berne for various lengths of time.

Volunteers

The Berne Education Centre is very grateful for the constant support of our many volunteers. It would not be possible to achieve everything we do at this school if it wasn't for the valued assistance of our generous volunteers who provide support to us in so many ways including day-to-day classroom assistance; Special Examination Provisions; Careers Days and Motivational Speakers; grounds and equipment maintenance; support on camps and excursions; fundraising; and help in the Canteen.

Professional Development

All staff members at Berne gained new skills this year by undertaking training or enrolling in courses. Professional development for staff included attendance in one or more of the following programs: P.A.R.T.; Funding Literacy and Numeracy; Healing Family Rifts; Estrangement and Family Dysfunction; NALAG Conference; Chaos in Grief seminar; Creating Positive Places for Boys; School Link Training; Depression in Young People; Written Word seminar; Behaviour Management; Microsoft Educational Road Show; Microsoft ICT in Education; Sharing Our Call; Managing Challenging Behaviour; Bullying; Classroom Management for Difficult Students; AMSA Conference; Enhancing the Educational Outcomes for Boys; Civics and Citizenship Strategies for Stage 5 History; Civics Strategies for Stage 4 & 5 Geography; Managing Disruptive Behaviour; English Teacher's Association Conference; MEARS Meeting New Zealand; Social Justice SVDP. All staff attended a full-day seminar 'Raising The Bar' with keynote speaker Julie Hook which was conducted by the Association of Catholic Special Schools and Services.

Berne also held a Staff Spirituality Day and a two day Senior First Aid Course. Eight staff members now hold current First Aid Certificates.

School Policies:

Berne's school policies are published in 'The Berne Education Centre Handbook'. Policies are developed by consultation with staff and, where relevant, parents. Before adoption they are submitted to the School Advisory Board for further consultation and approval.

Discipline:

Staff at The Berne Education Centre aim to provide a quality education for students at risk of not realising this opportunity. This includes the care and safety of students in our charge. Good discipline is fundamental to the achievement of these aims; hence our policy is set within the context of student welfare. On a broad level, our discipline policy relates to our ethos of self-respect, mutual respect and safety with regard to relationships within our school community, and more generally, the wider community. This level is referred to as *The Discipline Code (i)*. At another level, our policy relates to the behavioural expectations that we have of our students when they are at school. This level is referred to as *Behaviour Management (ii)*.

The policy aims to:

- reflect the Catholic Marist ethos of the school
- exist within a framework of student welfare
- underline our expected standards of behaviour
- outline responsibilities for staff, students and parents
- abide by legislation

The policy agenda is underpinned by the idea that all behaviour leads to consequences that may or may not be in the student's best interest, and that in this regard, students have autonomy of choice. We hope to develop in our students social skills that result in positive consequences. Ultimately, we hope to develop self discipline in the students to the point where they effectively take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Our policy is based on the idea that students and staff are entitled to the following expectations.

The Students can expect an environment where they can:

- live happily
- learn to the best of their ability
- contribute to Berne
- feel safe, physically and emotionally
- learn & develop social skills and self-discipline
- be treated with politeness, respect and fairness
- experience resolution of conflict

The staff are entitled to an environment where they can:

- teach and work effectively
- be treated with politeness & respect and feel safe, physically and emotionally
- experience resolution of conflict
- expect parents and carers to take an active role with regard to discipline

Pastoral Care:

“Champagnat believed that the Lord had entrusted Jean-Baptiste to him and to the Brothers, and he was to be treated as if he was their own child.”

This belief underpins the structure of pastoral care at Berne, even though the majority of staff is lay.

We believe that all true education aims at producing **persons for others**, people who can live outside themselves for others. This may sound overly optimistic in a school for needy and difficult children at risk, but any goal less than this fails to respect the children as human beings who share the same joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties as all other persons.

Education is about the development and formation of the “whole person”: someone capable of contributing to the society to which they belong; of understanding who they are before God and their fellow human beings and of reaching the potential desired of them by their Creator.

Our school grows out of a tradition that respects the essential uniqueness of each person, yet sees the bonds that being us to one another. We recognise that the students we are responsible for having been negatively affected by many forces, most beyond their control. However, we believe great things for them and hold realistic expectations of their capacity to overcome and to succeed.

In this light, pastoral care is a major driving force behind our program here at Berne and permeates all our initiatives.

Everyone at Berne contributes to the Catholic and Marist spirit by promoting Catholic and Marist values, and fostering positive relationships within the school community.

Grievance Procedures:

Complaints or grievances can be addressed to the Principal or Deputy Principal. Complaints or grievances will be treated with confidentiality and given priority attention. Forms for specific grievances are available from the school office.

Curriculum:

This school follows the Board of Studies syllabus for each course offered (as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990).

It is our aim to have an inclusive curriculum, where we recognise culture and heritage.

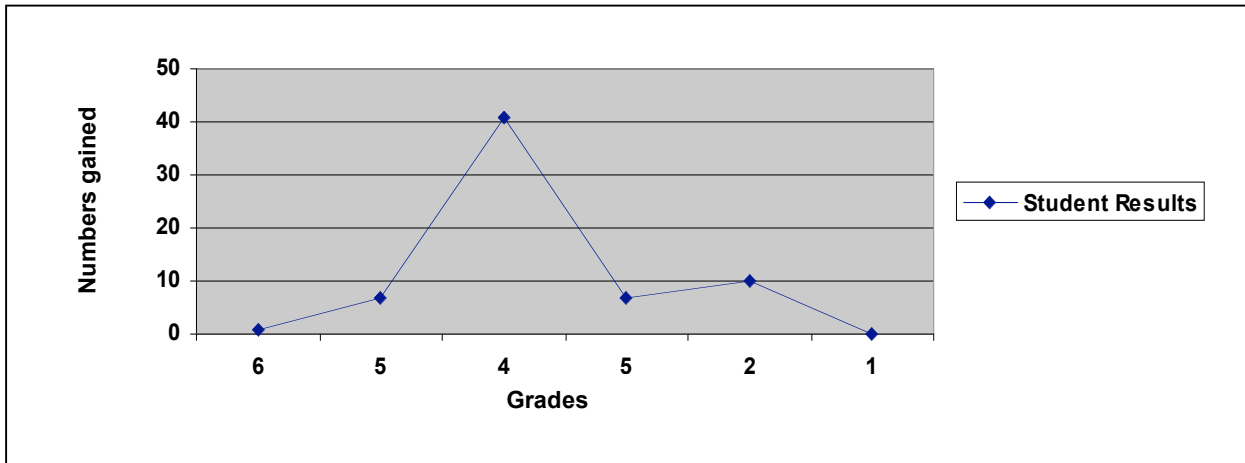
With regard to Aboriginal Education, we often visit sites around Sydney and the Greater Blue Mountains as Geographical settings for our understanding of Aboriginal life. We have visited Aboriginal Art Galleries as part of our Year 8 Program as well. Berne has enrolled students possessing Aboriginal heritage. In 2006, it is the school's intention to invite Graeme Mundine as a special speaker to address our students. His role is that of Executive Secretary for NATSIEC - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission.

Statewide Tests and Examinations:

2005 School Certificate

External School Certificate Test Results, individuals

	6	5	4	3	2	1
English	1	2	11	4	1	-
Maths	-	1	1	10	6	-
Science	-	1	11	8		-
History	-	2	10	5	1	-
Geography	-	1	8	7	2	-
Total	1	7	41	34	10	0



2005 School Certificate

School vs State Grading Pattern Comparison

Course Name	Students in School	Students in State	School Pattern (%)					State Pattern (%)				
			A	B	C	D	E	N	A	B	C	D
English	20	81980	10	35	45	10		14	24	36	19	7
Mathematics Intermediate	11	34514	9	64	9	18		10	22	37	23	8
Mathematics Standard	9	16476	11	33	44		11	8	18	33	27	14
Science	20	81967	20	25	50	5		13	23	35	20	8
Australian Geography	20	82025		5	20	75		13	22	34	21	9
Australian History	20	82021	10	40	50			13	22	34	22	9
Technics	9	19333	22	22	56			14	25	33	19	8
Visual Arts	10	16008	10	10		80		25	30	28	13	5

Achievements, School Initiatives and Significant Programmes:

Suspension Withdrawal Assistance Programme (SWAP)

SWAP is a service provided by the Berne Education Centre offered to students from mainstream education who are at risk of not receiving an education because of their behavioural issues and who fall into one of the following categories:

- **Suspension** – the program provides a safe place, at the Berne Education Centre, for students to attend whilst they complete their suspension from mainstream school. Supervision and support with school work is provided.
- **Withdrawal** – a time out place for students to receive one-on-one attention especially in the area of behaviour modification

- **Assistance** – observation of student in the mainstream classroom and offer of advice and strategies to cope with specific behavioural problems

SWAP has had a number of students from mainstream schools this year and there have been many enquiries for information about the programme. By attending SWAP, students are not only given an opportunity to maintain their academic learning, but have also been able to confront the issues which lead to their suspension from school and discover more positive options. The ‘Assistance’ component of SWAP has been used extensively with the coordinator observing students in the mainstream classroom and providing advice and strategies on how to deal with particular behavioural issues.

The SWAP Programme in 2005 undertook the following:

- Students who were suspended from school. Over the year, three schools took advantage of this service. Students were suspended from between three days to two weeks. Many schools were very interested in this aspect of the programme and were discussing how this would fit in with their disciplines structure.
- Students who asked to have some time out from their school – this was used as the step before being asked to leave. Five schools took advantage of this aspect with two schools using the programme more than once.
- Schools which asked for assistance within their school. This involved staff members visiting the schools to talk with staff and to offer advice regarding classes and individual students. Five schools utilized this aspect of the programme.
- Inservicing of staff at mainstream schools. Two schools invited us to run an inservice for their whole staff on Learning Styles and the impact of this on their difficult students.

Changing Lanes Programme

The Changing Lanes programme plays an important role at the Berne Education Centre. It was developed as a response to the needs of ex-students who required support and assistance with post school options.

Throughout 2005, a number of ex students accessed the programme due to an inability to gain or maintain employment or places in educative settings. This occurred for a variety of reasons such as mental health/ behavioural/ learning difficulties/literacy and numeracy deficits, an inability to move beyond their comfort zone, relationship difficulties, poor self-esteem, lack of initiative and confidence to seek help from outside agencies, lack of resilience, poor organisational skills, co-dependency issues, difficulty making commitments, inability to gain/sustain employment/ complete work experience programmes and a lack of interpersonal skills/ job seeking skills.

The programme therefore sought to identify, assist and support ex-students in achieving and realising their goals and their post school options. Breaking their cycle of hopelessness was a primary focus.

Listed below are some of the issues/ difficulties that our ex students sought help with:

- Housing
- Clothing
- Medical/ health issues/ Medicare
- Liaising with Centrelink/ government agencies/ welfare agencies

- Liaising with community service officers/ legal professionals and being an advocate for our students
- Applying for passport, birth certificate etc
- Family reunification
- Accessing agencies/ programmes for gambling/ alcohol/ drug addictions
- Welfare support
- Distance education/ applications/ tutoring/ support
- Work experience placement
- Social skills training
- Finding appropriate TAFE courses/ Career guidance
- Accessing support services in TAFE/ Senior schools
- Assisting in enrolment processes
- Study and organisational skills training
- Referral for mental illness e.g. Depression. Seek counselling support.
- Liaising with parents
- Resume/ job applications/ job search skills/ interview skills/ phone skills

Throughout 2005 two staff members completed a Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training. Our aim for 2006 is to introduce nationally accredited courses that will enable students to be more employable, confident and closer to achieving their goals.

Buddies and Friends Programme

The Buddies and Friends mentoring program has had a successful beginning over the past year. The program matches students from the school with screened and trained members of the public, with the aim to form strong and lasting supportive friendships. The program is available to all students from Berne. From among the 30 or so enquiries we received from members of the public interested in becoming volunteer mentors, 6 applied and undertook the training. Four students from the school also showed interest and started the program. By the end of the year we had 3 ‘matches’ developing into great friendships (two of these were from the year 10 group and one from year 9).

Through the year we also received some generous donations, which all went towards funding the activities, so as to reduce the cost for both the volunteers and students/parents.

As of the start of this year we have another 3 enquiries, with 2 young ladies interested in applying to becoming mentors.

Outdoor Education Programme

The Outdoor Education Program occupies an important place in the Berne Education Centre curriculum providing a catalyst for pro-social change in our at-risk young people. The Program engages students with demanding outdoor challenges with support to help them develop their personal attitudes and values of self-esteem, motivation, confidence, team work and responsibility. Established beliefs and behaviour patterns are challenged through exposure to different environmental demands and provision of models of appropriate behaviour. Students acquire valuable life skills – including bush survival skills; improve with parent, teacher and peer inter-relationships; and understand themselves and others better.

Berne conducted eleven very successful camps this year, each of three or four days duration. Camp locations included: Mulgoa, Blue Mountains, Bathurst, Kangaroo Valley, Barrington River, Mungo Brush, Mowbray Park and The Snowy Mountains. Camp activities included:

bushwalking, bush craft, rock climbing, bike riding, canoeing, horse riding, skiing, ski boarding, swimming, fishing.

School Newsletter

Berne began producing regular school newsletters for the first time in 2005. Nine issues were distributed to our community this year and we are aiming to produce twelve in 2006. This initiative has been well received and has become an important vehicle for sharing news and information.

2006 Goals:

- To strengthen the Special Education area in the curriculum, and develop the role of Special Education Co-ordinator
- To expand students' sense of social justice and community involvement
- To fully implement the refined Discipline System (Appendix A.)

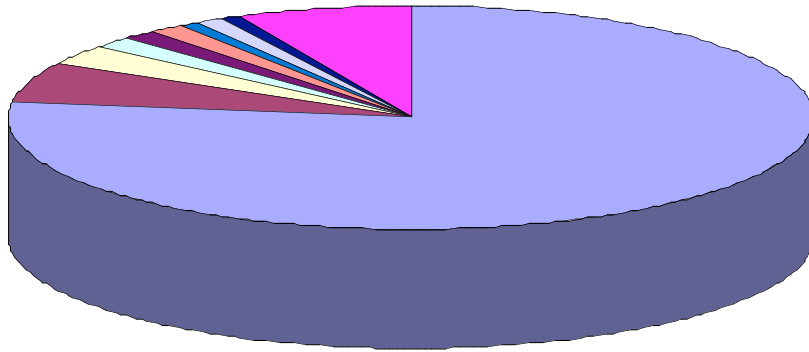
Financial Information:

Total Income : 2005 :	1,454,783.34
Total Expenses : 2005 :	1,510,519.62
Profit / Loss:	-\$55,736.28

- All accounts are audited annually by VJ Ryan & Co., Accountants;
- All government monies received are expended on wages in each calendar year.

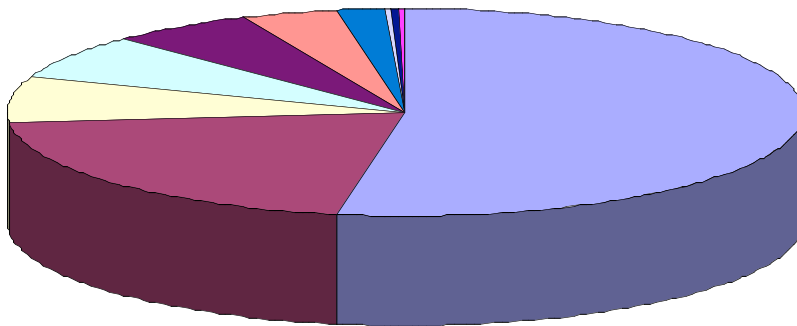
Summary financial information:

Expense Summary Jan 01 - Dec 20, 2005



Salaries and Stipends (77.25%)
Motor Vehicle Expenses (5.8%)
Special causes and needs (2.69%)
Tuckshop (1.81%)
Fundraising Ex. (1.38%)
Camp (1.29%)
Contra (Out) (0.99%)
Insurance (Student Ac. & Dis.) (0.95%)
KLA Resources (0.90%)

Income Summary Jan 01 - Dec 20, 2005



Govt. Grant (Grant recurrent) (52.78%)	Province (20.50%)
Other Income (7.26%)	Fees (7.07%)
Donations Rec'd (5.75%)	Fund Raising In (3.87%)
Tuckshop (1.84%)	Contra (In) (0.41%)
Refunds (0.32%)	Bank Interest Rec'd (0.18%)
Bus Rental (0.01%)	

Berne Education Centre Advisory Board Members 2005:

Ex-Officio Members

Br. David Hall fms

Br. Michael Flanagan fms

Appointed Members

Mr John Couani

Mrs Eva La Rocca

Mr Michael Prest

Mr Merv McCormack

Ms Liza Adams

Conclusion:

As the Principal of the Berne Education Centre I guarantee the contents of this report are accurate, and the Report reflects the true nature of Berne to the best of our ability. As we are a small and very busy school, committed to students with high support needs, time available for report writing is limited.

**Br. Michael Flanagan, fms
Principal**

Appendix A

BERNE EDUCATION CENTRE : STUDENT (DISCIPLINE) MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

**If you always do what you've always done,
you'll always get what you've always got.**

Assumptions:

1. Students at Berne want to be here and want to learn.
2. Students at Berne want the best School Certificate they can get.
3. Students come to Berne on the condition that they do not disrupt the learning of others.
4. Students at Berne are educated with the whole person in mind : the school's stated Expectations reflect this belief.

Pastoral Considerations:

For Pastoral reasons students at Berne are divided into Year groups, that subsequently divide into pastoral care groups. A Journal group is formed vertically, i.e. students from each Year group.

For Pastoral reasons, students are taught in small groups (generally less than 5) in streamed classes for the main S.C. subjects. As a special school, many other unique features are incorporated into Berne's structure to address the special needs of the students.

Discipline Considerations:

In order to maximise each student's success and personal development, a system of levels is maintained that places each student according to behaviour(s) and level of disruption of others.

<u>LEVEL ONE</u>	-	<u>GREEN</u>	-	normal operational level
<u>LEVEL TWO</u>	-	<u>ORANGE</u>	-	partial separation from normal operations
<u>LEVEL THREE</u>	-	<u>RED</u>	-	full separation either within Berne or in an outside agency, programme, etc.
<u>LEVEL FOUR</u>	-	<u>BLACK</u>	-	full separation from Berne permanently or temporarily (i.e. return possible <u>if</u> strict conditions are fulfilled).

IMPLICATIONS AT EACH LEVEL

GREEN (1)	ORANGE (2)	RED (3)	BLACK (4)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal classes • Streamed to suit academic ability • Small classes • Subject Teachers • Full access to privileges at Berne • Full access to extra-curricular activities • Full access to awards and rewards • Monitored by Pastoral Care Group Teachers and Yr. Co-ordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some normal classes – re. only those they don't disrupt – base is B/Unit • No streaming: work supplied by teachers • Class size varies according to no. of students at this level • May not use Community Room (may have sep. rec. times) • Restricted to access to camps and excursions • Access only to Beh. Man. Card Rewards • Monitored by Yr. Co-ordinators and B/Unit Co-ordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No normal classes – full programme taken on an individual basis / work supplied by Special Co-ordinator • Either in B/Unit or SWAP room • May not use Community Room or have recreation with other students • No access to camps and excursions • No access to any awards / rewards • Monitored by SWAP co-ordinator and Deputy Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Removal from Berne</u> a) <u>Permanently</u> (i.e. expulsion, parents asked to take student elsewhere) b) <u>Temporarily</u> (i.e. student must do something else for a specified time under specified conditions) # If in b) – return to Berne is to the <u>RED</u> level of operation # Monitored by Principal and School Executive

N.B.

- a) Students really determine their level by their behaviour and/or co-operation;
 - b) No time limits apply to Orange, Red or Black (b) levels – monitoring will determine this for each individual student;
 - c) Our aim is to have all students at the Green level all the time;
 - d) Students may be dropped more than one level if behaviour warrants this. Progression back up is one level at a time.
 - e) Students may be permanently excluded from Berne at the discretion of the Principal (or the Deputy, in Principal's absence) if behaviour warrants this.
 - f) Suspensions may occur from any of the first 3 levels at the discretion of Year Co-ordinators, the Deputy-Principal and/or the Co-ordinators of the B/Unit and SWAP programme. However, return to school must be to the level they were suspended from, or one lower.
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- ❖ • It is important to understand that at all times flexibility and possibility of resolving problems will apply
 - ❖ • Exceptions may be made, but this policy is designed to apply to all students under normal circumstances. Good policies (i.e. workable ones) are not designed "for" the exceptions, they "allow" them.
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- * * At the centre of this system is the belief that as responsible educators we cannot let the behaviour(s) of individual students disrupt the education of the many. While going out of our way to help the individual, in the long run we'll opt always for the common good.