

# School in Steiner struggle

Brian Sinclair

A CAMPAIGN is being waged to rid Footscray City Primary School of the Steiner education stream, Steiner parents say.

The school has a traditional education stream and the alternative learning Steiner stream, based on the philosophies of Rudolf Steiner.

The Education Department has received a letter written by Steiner parents hitting back at moves by non-Steiner parents to remove them.

The letter says the non-Steiner group has "obstructed every single attempt to have a reasoned and thoughtful discussion" and "will not stop until they have removed Steiner from the state school system and specifically FCPS".

An Education Department memo issued in September last year outlined policies for schools which teach alternative streams.

In October, Education Services Minister Jacinta Allan dissolved the school council and appointed five people including principal Win Warren to an interim school council until March 31 next year.

Ms Warren said the memo was a significant step forward for state schools which run alternative learning streams.

"It's now supported by the Gov-

ernment and they would like parents to accept the situation and work together," she said.

Ms Warren said it would be a pity if the school had to revert to one stream.

"We're making it run well with the two philosophies being taught with huge co-operation across the staff who are willing to listen to each other and put the kids first."

Ms Warren said the situation had upset Steiner parents.

"I think the Steiner parents would simply like to feel they have a rightful place in the school and feel accepted.

"There are so many talented and well educated, highly intelligent people in the school community and it would be great to just have them working together really well."

An Education Department spokeswoman said the interim school council had agreed to an independent evaluation of the school's special curriculum.

"We understand this evaluation will be under way shortly," the spokeswoman said.

"The Victorian system of school-based management ensures that school councils make decisions about curriculum policy.

"These decisions are based on the needs of students and the views of the broader school community."