

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 103
Submitted by: Nicole Sabapathy
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I am the mother of two homeschooled children and I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed changes that would require homeschooling families to adhere to the Australian Curriculum. I have completed 3 (of 4) years of a teaching degree, before moving into the science field completing my PhD and teaching within the university environment. I value and take my children's education very seriously. While I wholeheartedly agree that every child deserves a quality education, I firmly believe that imposing a standardised curriculum on all homeschooling families is not the solution. Every child is unique, with different learning styles, interests, and needs. We were forced into a situation of having to homeschool my neurodiverse child. The standardised curriculum does not work for her, and she came out of the school environment 2-3 yrs behind in her learning. By having the flexibility to customise her education, and create a program she will actually engage with, we have made significant process in her learning.

My eldest only commenced homeschooling this year, after we saw the advantages of using a tailored educational approach with his sister, (and after being physically assaulted at school on a couple of times). He is an extremely academic child, who while did well academically, however was bored and disengaged with his learning using the Australian curriculum in the school environment. In the home learning environment I have been able to extend his learning, and deep dive into his learning interests. It has been a delight to see his spark for learning reignited. He is now thriving, and I don't feel he would be having such a positive learning experience if we rigidly stuck to the Australian curriculum. I understand that the Australian curriculum serves as a guide for homeschooling families, but mandating its strict adherence would only hinder our ability to provide a personalised and effective education for our children. My children have thrived academically, and their mental health has improved greatly, since leaving the traditional school environment. I feel Imposing the Australian Curriculum on my children and all homeschooling families would be a step backward, limiting the flexibility and effectiveness of our children's education. Furthermore, I want to address any misconceptions or stereotypes surrounding homeschooling. In my experience over the last 2 years, homeschooling parents are deeply passionate and invested in their children's well-being and education. The homeschooling community is caring, supportive, and dedicated to providing the best possible educational experiences for our children. In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider these proposed changes, remove the adherence to acara and instead support the individualised education that homeschooling provides. Let us continue to tailor our children's education to meet their unique needs, interests, and abilities. Thank you for considering my perspective on this important issue. Sincerely, Dr Nicole Sabapathy