

## Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

**Submission No:** 140  
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**Publication:** Making the submission public but withholding your name  
**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, Thank you for taking the time to read my first-hand account as a homeschooling parent. In light of the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation, I believe it's very important that you hear from families with lived experience in this area, and how the proposed changes are going to affect us. My specific concern is the proposed enforcement of homeschooling families to follow the Australian Curriculum. Since embarking on our homeschool journey two years ago, the positive changes to my daughter's emotional well-being and learning journey have been nothing short of incredible. The personalised, one-on-one learning approach I have created for her has allowed her to feel safe to learn at her own pace, increased her self-confidence, improved her self-regulation abilities and re-discover the joy in learning. It is worth noting that my daughter is on the autism spectrum, and is diagnosed with a sub-type of ASD called "Pathological Demand Avoidance." This makes learning in a traditional sense incredibly difficult, because everyday demands that most children can navigate with ease cause an incredible amount of anxiety and dysregulation in my daughter. The result of trying to conform to the curriculum on a set schedule with same age school peers caused her an unbearable amount of distress, to the point that her mental health became a crisis situation requiring multiple professional interventions and medications at the tender age of 6. Through much trial and error, I have worked collaboratively with my daughter on how to curate a homeschooling experience that provides her with a high quality education, while also catering to her individual needs. At age 9, I can confidently say we have achieved that. My daughter no longer has aggressive outbursts and very rarely has meltdowns at home, no longer expresses that she doesn't fit into this world or that she wants to die. She has developed skills in the arts and physical education, which include competing in State level at her chosen sport, becoming a teaching assistant to her coach for younger children, participating in weekly art and pottery classes, participating in skateboarding lessons, attending parent-led homeschooling co-op events, forest school experiences, permaculture and gardening. At home she has learned valuable life skills including cooking (which is how she learned about measurements and fractions), caring for our animals and also has completed training with me in wildlife care and tends to sick lorikeets with seasonal paralysis syndrome. She can handle money, buy things at the store on her own, speak confidently with adults and actively pursue new interests on a regular basis. Most importantly, she is HAPPY and is regaining self-confidence. My daughter is also diagnosed dyslexic. Both the school she previously attended, as well as myself, kept hitting a brick wall in our attempts to help her learn to read. We tried countless strategies, including dyslexia-friendly methods. My daughter would shut down immediately, throw the books, cry, cross out pages in her workbooks and abscond from the classroom. I was so worried she would never develop the necessary literacy skills she needed to thrive in this world. Upon researching, I discovered that my daughter is an autodidact learner, and that I needed to make her a collaborative part of this process. The more we all pushed the more she resisted. Put simply, she wasn't ready, until she was. Once my daughter was in the safety of her home with no pressures and had a chance to reset her nervous system, she wanted to learn how to read messages from her friends, and in her online game. She started sounding out words. Asking me how to spell things. Memorising sight words. All of a sudden, those skills I was so worried she lacked came together, on her terms, at her pace, and then she flourished. This is a perfect example of why the curriculum should not be enforced on homeschooling families. A lot of us have removed our children from mainstream school because they didn't fit the system to start with and it's been necessary to take a different path. As parents of homeschoolers, we are often living on single incomes, sacrificing our own careers, superannuation

accrual and independent social lives. We get very little financial assistance, and it's not a path we take lightly. We know our children best, and who is more vested in their interests to become the best versions of themselves that they can be than us, their parents? Not all children are going to thrive under a one-size-fits-all curriculum. For the ones that need something different, if parents are ready and willing to take that less-travelled path with them, that should be their right. Diversity is essential for a flourishing society, and if you listen to some of the stories of grown homeschoolers and see what they have accomplished, I have little doubt you would be much enlightened as to how a personalised approach has helped them to soar. Please don't support the enforced following of the Australian curriculum for homeschoolers. We are a flourishing community without it. Kind regards, [REDACTED]