

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

**Submission No:** 216  
**Submitted by:** Sally Poole  
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**Re: Amendments outlined in the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024.**

Dear Committee Secretary

As a home educating parent to teenage Daughter, I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed compliance to the Australian Curriculum. It is both my experience and strong belief that our education system needs to be flexible, relevant, and engaging. A system whereby the student develops a genuine and deep passion for learning, a system that inspires students to be self-motivated learners who are continuously seeking answers, a system that does not stifle or put constraints on what a student "should" be learning at a given age, a system that doesn't dampen the boundless potential of our children.

One of the main determining factors of my decision to home educate my daughter was due to the overcrowded, irrelevant, inflexible Australian Curriculum.

My daughter had slipped through the cracks of the Catholic education system (where she completed the majority of her primary schooling) as well as the public system where she began her education which ended up in disastrous consequences for her.

What we were facing for her secondary schooling was so overwhelming for her that she involuntarily became mute and began having black out seizures (which she has never had in her life) These were caused by the sheer panic and anxiety of the pressure she was under in her first week of secondary schooling.

My decision to home school was not an easy one. I am a single parent and have had to change my entire life to be able to educate my daughter.

We spent much of the first year of home school in and out of specialist offices, sitting and waiting and supporting my daughter while she struggled to regain her sense of self. After the years of being told that she would never amount to anything, that she was so far behind that she would never survive in high school all dished out by the teachers who were there to supposedly support her it validated for me that my decision to home educate has enriched her life and educational experience exponentially.

My Daughter was told she was unable to read and that she would never read. Today she reads daily and devours great novels. This occurred organically, her ability to researches study and delves into history, science, other cultures, all topics that she has grown to embrace and enjoy. Her knowledge base is wide and varied and her ability to retain, recall and comprehend complex information is far beyond her young years.

As I withdrew her from mainstream education my daughter was diagnosed as Neurodivergent level 2. This was to be a huge learning curve for us all as she learns very differently from others. Noises and other environmental elements all impact and contribute to her learning experiences.

Would you not agree that the ability to tailor an educational program to suit her needs, her abilities, her unique strengths, learning style, and identifying areas of struggle and adjusting accordingly, is surely the gold-standard in delivering a high-quality education.

Now let's imagine that If I were to be made to tailor my education program within the confines of the Australian Curriculum, I know that my daughter will become disengaged and will revert into the shell that she was.

I Was given the opportunity to run an alternative education setting In Mildura Loddon Mallee area Victoria in the early 2000's. I had my own staff and was given permission to write my own education program based on each student's needs and likes. The program was co-funded by the Victorian Education Department and the Department of Human services. The kids I had were all disengaged and those about to be expelled from schools across the district. It was no walk in the park, but it was successful.

My programs worked as they got kids back to school or into work or vocational study. To this day those kids still talk about that program from over 20 years ago and how it changed their lives.

The beauty of home education is the freedom and flexibility to provide an exciting, relevant, and exceptional education, tailored for her. I am strongly opposed to home educating families being constrained by the requirement to follow the Australian Curriculum. In this present time in history, where world-class educational resources and curriculum from all corners of the globe are readily available and accessible, literally at the touch of a keyboard, it makes no logical sense to me to implement this restriction. I also have concerns for how is "be consistent with" the national curriculum going to be interpreted by the HEU? Can you please provide me with more information regarding this?

Further to this concern, the requirement to report, with evidence, across each learning area, is excessive. Does the HEU even have the staffing levels to be able to thoroughly assess each individual report in a timely manner? Or is this a way to put home education into the too hard basket by placing more and more restrictions in place.

I do agree that reporting is important, however I strongly oppose the need to report across all key learning areas however this requirement will just take precious time away from families working hard to implement their learning plan and from parents actively researching relevant resources, just basically taking time away from educating our children.

My Daughter thrives in the home education environment and is a well mannered, compassionate individual with hopes and dreams and is madly making plans for her future and what that will look like for her.

I invite you to explore more widely the ways a high-quality education can look, and to champion educational innovation and reform that will empower students to thrive in a dynamic and modern world. Student-centered approaches, rather than top-down directives that do not hold the student's best interests at heart, need to be at the forefront. I am lucky enough to be the owner of an RTO and I own an accredited life skills program. There are so many other ways to educate young people, not everyone is suited to a formalized classroom that stifles the individual and destroys their sense of self.

I want more for my daughter; more than standardised testing, more than a restrictive learning model that takes the one-fits-all approach. The education system, as it presently stands, is a flawed system; bullying is rampant, both cyber and violent, teachers are leaving the profession in droves, class numbers are high, and support is low. Every child deserves better than this. Education reforms are most definitely needed, but this just feels like bureaucratic impositions to deter individuals from taking the home education route.

This serves as a perfect opportunity for you, and other stakeholders, to perhaps see another side to our education system. To look beyond the past, into the dynamic needs of the future, and to take a moment and think of the ramifications of your actions. By embracing flexibility, relevance, and student-centered learning approaches, we can create a more inclusive and responsive education system, one that prepares all children for lifelong success and fulfilment.

Kind Regards

