

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)
Subject: Advocating for Homeschooling: Supporting Children's Individual Learning Needs
Date: Monday, 11 March 2024 5:04:17 PM

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to emphasize the importance of understanding and supporting the diverse learning needs of children, particularly those who thrive in non-traditional educational environments such as homeschooling. As a homeschooling parent deeply committed to my children's educational journey, I urge the committee to consider the detrimental impact of forcing children back into environments that do not suit their learning needs.

For many homeschooling families, including mine, the decision to homeschool stems from a desire to provide our children with an educational experience that honors their individual interests, strengths, and aspirations. Homeschooling allows our children to pursue their passions, delve deeply into subjects that captivate their curiosity, and develop the skills necessary to succeed in their chosen paths.

By following their own learning interests and setting goals tailored to their personal futures, homeschooled children are empowered to take ownership of their education and chart a course that aligns with their unique talents and ambitions. This personalized approach fosters a sense of agency and self-efficacy that is often lacking in traditional school settings, where children may feel constrained and/or overwhelmed by rigid structures and standardized expectations. My child became completely overwhelmed at school and in distance education needing to adhere to the full national curriculum. During this time his basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic decreased and he no longer wished to improve on his skills or even wanting to learn. A child not willing to learn is devastating to see. Children are born with this love/skill embedded within them. How is witnessing a child unwilling to learn even possible after all the scientific studies investigated over the years in education and child development?

As homeschooling parents, we have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of this approach on our children's academic success, personal development, and overall well-being. Rather than seeing children fail, homeschooling offers a lifeline—a chance for children to thrive in environments that nurture their individuality and potential. My child has been willingly researching interest topics and without realising is already improving on his basic skills and is excited to learn again. I was looking forward to homeschooling my child in his teenage years, as he could follow his interests and figure out career choices. He could then look forward to starting tertiary education early, either at TAFE or University. This does not sound feasible if he has to adhere to the full curriculum throughout his learning journey. This new agenda does not sound flexible or creative for the children who struggle with trying to digest the whole curriculum and trying to commit it to memory for the reporting processes that will also be affected. Furthermore, as parents we are the people who know our children better than anyone, the right to choose what is in their best interests is our decision and not for us to prove. The law is overreaching trying to take this decision out of our hands.

The amendments that are being proposed to the planning and reporting processes are not just putting extra pressure on families but also will be putting extra strain on the Home Education Unit. The HEU would need extra time to read and revise all the plans and reports which would be incredibly lengthy. Also with the amount of information that

would be needed to go into these plans and reports, homeschooling families would be under an incredible amount of strain to try to show cause within the decreased time frame of 14 days. The HEU would then be inundated with revised paperwork as most families would not be accustomed to writing and referencing the national curriculum as we have not been trained in it like professional teachers (who also need to stay updated with professional development training with ACARA after years of tertiary education).

I implore the committee to take the time to speak directly with homeschooling families and to listen to their insights and experiences. By understanding the diverse motivations and approaches within the homeschooling community, we can work together to create policies that support children's individual learning needs and ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lyndal Phillips.

Homeschooling Parent.

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