


Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitted by: 
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

RE: The EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, particularly the proposed requirement for home educators to implement and adhere to the Australian Curriculum and report against all KLA's in their learning plans. I do not support these proposed changes for the following reasons:

- As a home educating parent of two neurodivergent children with multiple disabilities and special needs (Autism, PDA, ADHD, Anxiety, Situational Mutism and school refusal), I strongly believe that these proposed changes would be detrimental to my children's mental health and education because it would prevent my children from learning in the way that best suits their unique needs and alternative learning styles.
- Forcing home educated children to follow the one-size-fits-all Australian Curriculum would NOT be in their best interests because it does not recognise the unique needs and alternative learning styles of neurodivergent children, children with disabilities and diverse learners. The lack of recognition and accommodation for these children is therefore discrimination against disability, neurodivergence and gifted/asynchronous development (according to the Department of Education Home Education Unit Research Insight Report released in November 2022, 61% or two-thirds of home educating parents are educating a child with a disability or health issue with the most common disability or health issue being neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism and ADD or ADHD (46%), followed by social emotional or behavioural difficulties (31%), and learning disabilities/difficulties (27%).
- Under the proposed bill, home educating parents would lose their rights to choose how to educate and support their own children in the way that works best for them. Their freedom to choose curriculum that is best suited to their children's needs would also be severely limited and restricted to the Australian Curriculum which would then be their one and only choice.
- Under the proposed bill, the workload and reporting requirements of home educators would also increase substantially causing parents to spend more time on tedious paperwork and less time educating and supporting their children. It is also expecting home educating parents to understand a curriculum that was designed to be taught by teachers to students in a school setting. The Australian Curriculum was not designed with home educating parents and children in mind.
- According to the Department of Education Home Education Unit Research Insight Report released in November 2022, **only 8% of parents "always intended to home educate"**

which means that a whopping 92% of home educating families have children who previously attended a traditional school, but **school did not work for their child/ren**. This statistic alone shows that school is not suitable for *all* children and attempting to replicate school-at-home by forcing home educators to use the Australian Curriculum will not work for these children. I would like to know – what will happen to the children who refuse to go to school, have school trauma or for whom school did not work if this bill is passed and they are made to do school-at-home using the Australian curriculum? What will happen if these children refuse to follow the Australian curriculum because it is too “school-like” and reminds them of their school trauma? Has the committee thought about and considered the needs of this very vulnerable group of children?

It would be wonderful if the committee understands that school and the Australian Curriculum does not work for *all* children and those with disabilities and special needs need an entirely different and alternative approach, namely an individually tailored education which is based around the child’s interests and delivered at a pace that suits them. Such an approach helps these children stay engaged, motivated, and interested in their education.

Please know that for children, like mine, who have special needs and/or disabilities, are neurodivergent or are diverse learners, and experience social/emotional and behavioural difficulties, an individually tailored, interest-driven, flexible approach to education is not just a preference or choice but **an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of the child**.

Yours sincerely,

Extremely Concerned Home Educating Parent of Two Neurodivergent Children