

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

**Submission No:** 659  
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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)  
**Subject:** I vehemently oppose proposed changes to homeschooling legislation  
**Date:** Friday, 15 March 2024 4:34:09 PM

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Dear Committee,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed changes to homeschooling laws. As a parent who has chosen homeschooling as the best educational pathway for my children, I firmly believe that these changes will have detrimental effects on the ability for parents and carers to provide a high-quality education, and as such, I vehemently oppose these changes.

Homeschooling encourages a tailored learning environment that meets the unique needs and interests of children. In a classroom of 25 or more, it is not possible to engage with a child at a depth that is achieved via the personalised attention inherent in homeschooling. Mainstream schooling also cannot provide a personalised learning prescription that caters to the specific interests of a child or dig into a subject that flags an interest in the way that homeschooling can. For example, mainstream schooling cannot provide a "Paddock to Plate" multi-year study for a 10 to 12 year old child where that child breeds, raises, personally butchers (under supervision of a qualified home butcher), and cooks his own pigs. Mainstream schooling cannot encourage a capable child to explore animal husbandry, breeding genetics, animal midwifery, specific animal nutrition, and alternatives to treatments that have become "strain resistant" within the legal framework for the caprine dairy industry. With homeschooling, this can be achieved without jeopardising the core learning areas of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

In addition, homeschooling has allowed us to engage better as a family. With one parent who works FIFO, mainstream school hours would significantly reduce parental engagement. Homeschooling, conversely, allows the opposite. When their dad is home, he is able to fully engage with the learning activities, and we also have the flexibility to organise excursions and holidays when he is home. Studies show that parental engagement, especially that of fathers, greatly influences a child's cognitive and social development.

The proposed changes threaten to undermine our autonomy as parents to make educational and family decisions that are in the best interest of our children's development and well-being.

My children are happy and thriving with the current home education system. My eldest turned 17 in December 2023 and can no longer be enrolled with HEU. However her young age was no impediment to her being accepted at CQU to undertake a Certificate IV in Entrepreneurship and New Business. She is also in the final stages of writing her first novel (part of a series). My daughter has never set foot in a classroom. My son is chasing a butcher's apprenticeship. Even though he is only 14 years old, he is confident and secure in the career path he wishes to pursue. My youngest daughter is developing an interest in fashion design and showing amazing talent as an artist. This is evidence that the current homeschooling legislation is more than adequate to ensure children receive a high-quality education that will enable them to pursue any career from

professional, to trade, to creative arts.

Enforcing the use of ACARA in the homeschooling setting (a curriculum that was designed to be delivered by a teacher to 25+ students in a classroom setting) would be incredibly detrimental to the fostering of individual learning. It would completely undermine the countless hours parents and children have put in to personalised learning prescriptions to support individual learning needs.

Instead of imposing restrictive measures, I encourage the government to support homeschooling families by providing resources and assistance to ensure the success of our children's education. At this point in time, homeschooling families are disadvantaged when compared to families sending their children to public schools.

"In 2023, the primary SRS amount is \$13,060 per student and the secondary SRS amount is \$16,413 per student." <https://isa.edu.au/our-sector/funding/school-funding-model/> Homeschooling parents do not receive this funding, plus they usually have to sacrifice all or part of the earnings of one parent to be able to homeschool.

Where children are homeschooled because mainstream education has failed them, and their mental health has been severely damaged by their experiences in mainstream education, there is no support for the homeschooling family. There is no acknowledgment of culpability by the schools, and families are left to pick up the pieces on their own.

The choice to educate from home is not one that is made lightly. It takes an extraordinary amount of dedication and sacrifice, lifestyle changes, giving up careers, and living on a single income to even make this possible. My family made this choice 14 years ago so that our children would have the absolute best possible education, one that is individualised and meaningful to each child. We are nearing the end of our homeschooling journey with only 4 years of secondary education left for the youngest two children. I passionately believe that all future parents should have the opportunity to choose what a high-quality education looks like for their family and not have this imposed upon them by someone who has no idea of the dynamics of their family or the individual needs of their children.

Yours sincerely,

Dani-Lee Kershaw

