

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

**Submission No:** 1545  
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**Submitter Comments:**

Dear Committee

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the education bill that has been recently presented to parliament. As a parent who is home educating, I do not support some of the changes that have been put forward and I know they will greatly impact the learning journey of my daughter as well as the home-schooling community as a whole.

The changes that will most affect my daughter's ability to flourish and grow into a contributing member of society are, being bound to the Australian curriculum and reporting on all of the 8 KLAs each year.

Being bound to teaching the Australian curriculum would in fact be detrimental to my daughter, as the way it is structured is not the way in which she learns at all. My daughter learns best by investigating topics that are of interest to her and approaching them in a holistic way. This approach allows us to look at a topic and how it fits into the wider world rather than just learning skills that for her, make no sense or have no context.

A great example of that is, during the past year and a half, she has been keen to learn about time. According to the curriculum we should be working towards year 2 outcomes, whereas she is actually working across all the time concepts from year 1 to year 3 outcomes in both the maths and science KLAs. She has an understanding of all the concepts and how they relate to one another and yet isn't meeting many of the actual outcomes as written in the curriculum document. Learning occurs like this across almost all of the KLAs and yet she would be deemed as failing in a mainstream classroom.

Understanding why something needs to be learnt or she is deeply interested in the topic is the driving force for my daughter. For this reason, in a 12-month learning year we may not cover each KLA as we will focus in on topics that are relevant to our family life or driven by motivation. This along with my daughter being autistic with a PDA profile and having a phonological language disorder will make reporting on the 8 KLAs almost impossible. My husband's and my main focus are to ensure we are shaping a child who will be able to become a self-sufficient adult. Therefore, putting a focus on teaching a second language becomes pointless when there is a deficit in fundamental literacy skills that will aid our daughter in becoming that self-sufficient adult.

By choosing to home educate my daughter, I can ensure that she is learning effectively because I can tailor the content to her specific needs and be as flexible in the delivery of the content as required which leads to a much more authentic, practical and enriching learning journey. We get to experience learning from our environment rather than just from books.

Last winter we had snapdragons blooming in our garden, as flowers are scarce in winter, we got to experience European bees pushing themselves into the snapdragon to gather pollen. We watched the bees come and go pushing into the flowers and then flying off, the wonderment of that learning experience is something that can't be replicated, we also all learnt as a family that, yes bees can, if they need to, collect pollen from snapdragons without getting trapped inside.

The proposed requirements to complete a plan and report using all 8 KLAs will, in fact take me away from providing my daughter a high quality education, including the experiences shared above because I will be too busy teaching dry facts and information and completing paperwork instead of being out in the world experiencing learning. Not only will these changes to planning and reporting increase my workload, but there will be more stress and strain put on the HEU department due to the influx in these more complex plans and reports sent to be read and assessed that will require more man hours than it does now.

Home education offers something that schools and distance education just cannot, highly individualised learning that covers not just academics but the necessary life skills to grow our children into self-reliant adults. I implore you to consider the vast range of children who are learning at home who will not fit into the ACARA boxes, including my own. Every child deserves the right to be afforded the opportunity to learn how they need to learn. These proposed changes will prevent that.

Thank you for taking my concerns into consideration and I urge the committee to consider the implication the proposed amendments will have on our diverse home-schooling community.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Durham  
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