

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I wholeheartedly agree that every child deserves access to a high-quality education. However, I must express my reservations regarding the adequacy of the Australian Curriculum in fulfilling this fundamental right. In today's interconnected world, where the internet provides instant global access to a wealth of educational resources and innovative curricula, it's imperative that we reconsider the notion of a one-size-fits-all approach to education. The Australian Curriculum, while well-intentioned, may not necessarily meet the diverse needs and aspirations of all students. In a landscape where alternative educational pathways are readily available, why should homeschooled children be confined to a single curriculum? Instead, we should embrace the richness of educational diversity and empower parents to choose the educational approach that best aligns with their children's interests, abilities, and aspirations. Rather than enforcing adherence to a standardised curriculum, I propose that we allocate resources towards funding research and innovation in home education. By investing in comprehensive studies that explore the effectiveness of various homeschooling methodologies and curricular approaches, we can better understand how to support homeschooling families in providing high-quality education for their children. As a parent of a neurodivergent child, I have spent hundreds of hours consulting with numerous specialists and allied health experts to determine how to best educate my eldest child in particular. We have liaised tirelessly with his former school to try to implement these recommendations. Unfortunately, what my eldest child required was just not able to be achieved by his school. My child learns best with a goal-led learning style. This enables him to become deeply immersed in an area of interest and this will often cross at least 5 key learning areas. Adhering to the Australian Curriculum would render this impossible for my child, and to this date, has been the only learning style that he has engaged in. Since following this goal-led approach, he has found his way back to having a love of learning that he had lost from the stresses and trauma he has suffered from attending mainstream school and not having his support needs met. My middle child is tested and diagnosed gifted and even once grade skipping, he was still top of his class and was not getting his needs met through the Australian Curriculum. Since starting home education, he was able to do an online adult university course on Paleobiology at only 9 years old and have an online meeting with an incredible palaeontologist. He could not have been able to do this while following an overly packed full and repetitive curriculum that does not work for him. My youngest child is going through testing now for her neuro-diversities but it is known that she is dyslexic. To follow the curriculum would mean a lot more pressure on her where she has not had this so far. She has an extreme passion for learning and is a child who has homeschooled from the start. She has struggled with learning reading and writing in the traditional ways, unlike her brothers who were both reading and writing before they were school aged. She has not noticed these struggles as she hasn't had to compare herself to others too much and has been able to take it at her own speed and follow her passions. She has finally picked up reading through memorising her musical theatre scripts and songs- her main passion in life! And will not read me books at night as well as me reading to her. I could not imagine the stresses and loss of love of learning she would go through having to follow a strict curriculum instead of following a program that works for her. Her loss of love of learning would absolutely break our family's hearts. Researching and facilitating home education takes a lot of time and energy, but I have decided to follow this path with my children because they just don't respond to the Australian Curriculum. As a parent, it would be substantially easier to just enrol my children into distance education but we have already discovered that this method of learning would be detrimental to my children and our family. Drawing on our experience with traditional schooling and

learning methods, we would be unable to successfully follow the Australian Curriculum. In conclusion, I urge the committee to consider alternative approaches to homeschooling legislation that prioritise flexibility, innovation, and parental choice. By embracing the opportunities presented by digital technology and global connectivity, we can create a more inclusive and dynamic educational system that empowers all children to thrive in the 21st century and beyond. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Sincerely, Danielle Arthur Homeschooling Parent