

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1730
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Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in our state, particularly the focus mandating an adherence to a standardised curriculum.

I am a mother of 4 children and we have been homeschooling since my oldest was kindergarten aged. Homeschooling has been a wonderful experience for us - we enjoy the family time, the flexibility, the one-on-one teaching and the ongoing opportunities of learning through life.

The Australian Curriculum was designed for a classroom setting. With a large group of children being taught by one teacher, it is necessary for the children to be learning the same thing at the same time. While many homeschooling families choose to follow the Australian Curriculum closely, many prefer a more individual approach - with no pressure to learn things at the exact same time as everyone else, and not having to “keep up”, seeing as the children are not moving into a new class with a new teacher every year.

During our homeschool journey, we have had access to many beautiful curriculum programs and resources to make learning enjoyable, engaging and suitable to different learning styles. Many of these resources are mastery based, so children have the opportunity to learn and master a concept before moving on to the next topic, at a pace that suits them. Sometimes progress is slower than the school system, or sometimes it is faster with all the one-on-one time available. But there is no pressure to learn particular concepts by a certain time, because the learning is individualised.

This has been working very well for my children, and I will share some of the journey of two of my children so far (they are very different).

My 10 year old daughter had many wonderful homeschooling experiences. A recent highlight was a program learning writing, vocabulary, history and geography through horse-themed classical literature (she is very keen on horses). However, this year she requested to go to school to see what it was like (she also had a close friend there which added to the appeal). Though we had never followed the Australian Curriculum in the previous 5 years, she has slotted into the school routine very well, and has been enjoying every day. In the 9 weeks she has been at school, she has received good feedback from the teachers, and received awards including Student of the Week and an Accelerated Reader award. Her individualised homeschooling experience has not held her back.

My 7 year old son is very content to be homeschooling. He is interested in all things mechanical and electronic, and has a high level of understanding of power generation, circuits and STEM concepts. When he is bored, instead of asking for TV or video games, he asks for “something to pull apart”. Meanwhile, literacy has been an ongoing struggle for him. I have come across an excellent reading program for him, which we are working through slowly but successfully. We also have a strong focus on literature and history (both Australian and world history) which he is enjoying, and countless learning opportunities in all areas as we live our daily lives together. Sometimes the best learning comes through opportunistic learning when we can delve into topics of interest as they arise. Our style of

home education is working very well for him, and unfortunately our teaching and learning methods would have to drastically change if we were forced to adhere to the Australian Curriculum.

I feel that my children are thriving with homeschooling, as are many other children. There are so many options to make it an ideal learning experience for our children as individuals. Introducing the Australian Curriculum to home education will be “fixing what isn’t broken”.

Regards,

Leacia Sharp

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