

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1761
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

Re: Inquiry into Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Dated: 25th March 2024

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes in homeschooling legislation, particularly the requirement to follow a specific curriculum.

Whilst I am not a homeschooling parent, I am a grandparent of homeschooled grandchildren.

The substance of homeschooling, (which is a beneficial and required/necessary alternative to a school-based education), lies in the freedom it provides children the opportunity to learn in a way that supports individual needs, interests, skills, abilities, and learning styles. I understand that the Australian National Curriculum is available to all and a small number of homeschool families draw upon it as suits their own children's learning needs, and that this has been a working and evolving process over a lengthy period. To now introduce sweeping changes without adequate consultation with all, including the most affected and interested parties, does not support a democratic approach. To remove/exclude choices for families without considering their opinions appears to diminish opportunities to foster diversity and inclusion, rather than support it.

One very significant concern is that by imposing a mandated curriculum, these proposed changes will force some children back into the school system where they will continue to fall behind, resulting in worsened rather than improved outcomes for children and society as intended. From my standpoint, the best interest of children is better served by maintaining real and distinct options for children and families, as well as providing support to families who choose to homeschool that is substantial, considered and informed by the home educating community.

In conclusion, by modifying the legislation to address child safety concerns through mandating a standardised curriculum raises further, considerable, significant issues. These changes will not effectively address safety concerns and would instead result in pushing families of concern off the radar, exacerbating risks. *Instead of solely focusing on home education laws, broader reforms to child protection systems are needed.*

Any and all proposed changes should be carefully considered and taken after consultation with all groups/parties affected to balance educational autonomy with child welfare.

I appreciate the inclusion of my concerns for consideration.

Regards,

Olga