

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

**Submission No:** 1992  
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**Submitter Comments:**

To the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee,

I am writing to object to the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Bill 2024 in the current form. I have specific concerns with the implications of Clauses 18, 64 and 68 and I am in support of the Free2homeschool Movement.

My son attended school for three and a half years. It was the worst three and a half years of our lives. My son is twice exceptional, or 2e. He is exceptionally gifted and has dysgraphia. School was a place of torture for him. He did not fit the round hole required to succeed in the school environment. Very early on I was dragging him to school each day as he screamed, cried and begged me not to make him go. This broke my heart and I tried working with the school to resolve the issue. Nothing changed. Over time he developed learned helplessness as he realised his actions made no difference to the outcome. He began to withdraw and shutdown. He told me 'Mummy, school is so boring that it hurts.' He was soiling himself each day and began pulling his hair out, resulting in a large bald patch on the back of his head. We were referred to a child psychologist. She tried to help him but eventually acknowledged that the school environment did not meet his needs. We pulled him out and began homeschooling. Over time our little boy returned; his humour, inquisitiveness and love of learning. He has never returned to school. This year he will be completing a Cert III in IT and next year will begin university at the age of 17. My question to you is this: under the new 'guiding principle' legislation, who makes the decision on what form of education is in the best interests of the child? Is it the school who has a vested interest in that child remaining enrolled? Is it a government employee who doesn't know the child in the slightest? Is it medical professionals like child psychologists and paediatricians? Does that mean that a child needs to deteriorate, mentally and physically, to the point of needing these professionals before home schooling is considered a viable option? Surely a parent has the right to make that decision before it gets to that point.

When we began we initially used the Australian curriculum as our guide. We very soon discovered that the scope and resources available were nowhere near in-depth or challenging enough to meet my son's learning needs. I researched extensively and sourced a wide variety of resources and curriculums from around the world that provide a very comprehensive and high quality education. As one example, we use Art of Problem Solving for our maths curriculum. It does not align with the Australian curriculum. It has been written by maths professors in the United States specifically for mathematically gifted students. This curriculum is perfect for my son. How can it be logical for the government to impose restrictions on homeschoolers as to the curriculum they are allowed to use? Why would I want to curtail and limit my son's learning because the government has deemed their curriculum as the only curriculum that counts as a 'high quality education'?

Section 36 of the Human Rights Act 2019 states that every child has the right to have access to primary and secondary education appropriate to the child's needs. The Australian Curriculum does not meet the needs of all children. As a parent I have the right to choose the best education for my children. I refuse to hand my parental rights and the human rights of my children over to the government. I do not co-parent with the government.

Kind Regards,

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