



**Bendigo Autistic Advocacy
and Support Service**

Co-Convenors
Beck Kelly - Sarah Hansford
Tony Langdon - Susanna Flanagan

Ms Susan Pennicuik MLC
206-208 Bay Street
Brighton, Vic 3186

E sue.pennicuik@parliament.vic.gov.au

10th April, 2017

Dear Ms Pennicuik;

Re Draft Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017

We are writing to seek your support with opposing the draft Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017. Please also see our correspondence to you dated 10th February 2017.

There are not only many inconsistencies and inaccuracies within the draft regulations but also sections that would involve **extreme disadvantage and hardship** for many children and families. In fact, it would be **profoundly detrimental and pose a significant risk for the safety and wellbeing of many children** and families.






The ambiguity and lack of accountability evident in the draft regulations is extremely concerning and gives the Department of Education and Training (DET) and/or the Victorian Regulation and Qualification Authority (VRQA) scope to enable horrendous precedent in (including but not limited to):

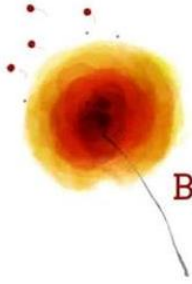
- student restraint and justification of
- increased and detrimental restrictions on home schooling students and their families
- force suffering children to remain in toxic and harmful environments
- force undue and disadvantageous hardship and costs on home schooling families

Numerous sections within the draft regulations not only contravene the UN Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act of 2006 (amongst others), they are not compliant with the Education and Training Reform Act of 2006 or the Victorian Guide to Regulation: A handbook for policy- makers in Victoria (Commissioner for Better Regulation 2016).

In our personal and professional experiences, we have seen many children removed urgently from the school environment (mainstream and 'special' schools) after suffering profoundly within a system that fails at best and abuses at worst- children with disabilities, gender and sexuality differences.

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We have also observed the significant improvement home schooling has had in wellbeing and ability to engage in meaningful learning for these children; even though many of them are struggling significantly with trauma relating to their school experiences.






We invite you to read our submission for further details and welcome your contact should you welcome our input or require further information.

We look forward to working with you in the interests of the safety and wellbeing of all children as the utmost priority.

Regards;

Susanna, Sarah, Beck and Tony
Co-Convenors
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