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## VICTORIAN HOME EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMUNIQUE NO. 29: 7 November 2024

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The 29th meeting of the Victorian Home Education Advisory Committee (VHEAC) was held on 7 November 2024.

### VICTORIAN REGISTRATION AND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY UPDATE

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) reported on the continued increase in home schooling registrations with 12,058 students currently registered. Members heard that communications have been sent to parents seeking confirmation of home schooling continuation, and to inform parents about unregistered schools. The *Education and Training Reform Amendment Bill 2024* before the Victorian Parliament will strengthen the compliance and enforcement powers of the VRQA in relation to unregistered schools.

### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Department of Education provided an update on the Victorian Government's inclusive education reforms and the changes that have been implemented over the past 4 years in government schools to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Home education representatives discussed the reasons parents choose home education for children with disability and their concerns about mainstream schooling not meeting the needs of these students, particularly those with multiple disabilities. Members also raised concerns about the inequity of funding for homeschooling students with disability who are not eligible for registration upon turning 18 years of age (except where they turn 18 during the registration year).

### UPDATE ON POLICY ISSUES RAISED BY VHEAC

Members noted the department's update on the policy development for a Ministerial Order to enable registered home schooling students, under the age of 17 years, to be exempted from home schooling to pursue full-time education or training, or employment, or a combination of these. Consultation with home schooling representatives will now be in February 2025, with implementation of the Ministerial Order expected to commence in August 2025.

### HOME EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

Home education representatives raised the issues of inaccurate advertising by businesses offering home schooling services, including on social media, which is confusing for members of the community. Methods to communicate home schooling requirements to the community is under consideration by the VRQA.

### VHEAC UPDATE

Members noted that home schooling nominations for the 4 vacancies close on 7 December, and this will be extended to allow more time for expressions of interest.

Members acknowledged the significant contribution over many years of Sue Wight and Ben Clark who will not renominate when their terms conclude in December 2024.

## MEETING ATTENDEES

The November 2024 meeting was attended by the following members:

- Richard Johnson, Executive Director, Planning, Risk and Non-Government Schools, Department of Education (Chair)
- Gerard Mount, Acting Deputy CEO, Students and Services, VRQA
- Chris O'Sullivan, Manager, Home Schooling Unit, VRQA
- Dr Glenda Jackson, Director, Australian Home Education Advisory Service
- Heidi Ryan, Disability Advocate
- Ben Clark, Home Education Representative
- Kirsty James, Home Education Representative
- Pavlina McMaster, Home Education Representative
- Sue Wight, Home Education Representative
- Megan Fisher, Home Education Representative

## ABOUT VHEAC

VHEAC provides guidance, information, and feedback to the department and VRQA on the operation of the home education regulations and on home education matters in Victoria. VHEAC was established in the context of the regulatory changes to home schooling that commenced in Victoria on 1 January 2018.

VHEAC meets at least 3 times each year and a communique is published after each meeting. The department provides secretariat support to VHEAC. Communiques from previous VHEAC meetings can be found online on the department's website at <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-home-education-advisory-committee>.

## VHEAC SECRETARIAT

Department of Education

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To receive this information in an accessible format, please contact the VHEAC Secretariat.