



Cape Home Educators

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Dear fellow Home Educators

A call for unity

I am writing to you hoping to provide clarity on the new developments with the Department of Basic Education (**DBE**).

Background

At the DBE Home Education Roundtable discussions, held in February 2020, it was decided that work groups had to be formed to continue engagement with all stakeholders for the continuation of the Roundtable process.

To achieve this, the Pestalozzi Trust invited relevant stakeholders in the home education movement (including prominent associations, organizations, curriculum service providers, independent advisors, as well as Facebook administrators) to a Home Education **CODESA**. This name was chosen, because the CODESA on which the South African constitution is based, was a meeting in which groups from very diverse backgrounds came together and found consensus on a new constitution.

The format of the CODESA was a series of online meetings during which stakeholders had discussions with the purpose of finding an unified position.

Cape Home Educators (**CHE**), and many other prominent associations, organizations and individuals in the home education movement participated in these meetings to form the Liberty in Learning Coalition (**LIL**).

Partnering with LIL

The Cape Home Educators constitution clearly states our objectives:

ARTICLE 2: OBJECTIVES

2.1 The Association shall endeavour to obtain the recognition of society and the protection of the law for the obligation and concomitant right of the parents to be able to educate their children themselves.

2.2 The Association recognizes that the State has a constitutional obligation towards the child to provide education, in cases where the parents are unable or unwilling to educate their children themselves.

2.3 The Association shall recognize that the parents have the right to delegate the task of education to persons of their own choice.

2.4 The Association shall, insofar it is able to,

2.4.1 Provide advice, guidance, assistance and support to existing and potential Home Schooling groups and/or families;

2.4.2 Investigate and research Home Schooling developments both nationally and internationally.

As our objectives are in complete alliance with the goals of the LIL coalition, stated here:

To (a) honor the responsibility of parents to serve the best interest of their children by promoting the freedom to tailor education to each child, and to (b) ensure that any laws governing education serve the best interest of the child and respect the role of family, community, and culture in education.

CHE have chosen to partner with the LIL Coalition to unite Home Educators in that common goal. Members of the LIL coalition agree to support and uphold their goals, as well as the integrity of each individual and organization associated with Liberty in Learning.

Furthermore, the coalition serves as a place for various home education associations to meet and debate differences, in order to act as a united front in defending the above-mentioned goal.

Renewed discussions on the Implementation of the Home education Policy

The LIL Coalition sent an email to the DBE to introduce the LIL Coalition, on 29 May 2020. This initiative opened the floor to renewed discussions between the DBE and LIL Coalition. These proceedings led to the DBE inviting LIL Coalition, home educators and other individuals to the formal online meeting that was held on Monday, 17 August 2020. Cape Home Educators representation consisted of myself, Tess Simmonds and Nicky Wesson. The Department asked that home educators should join their provincial associations to ensure that they are represented. Furthermore, they gave us one week to do so, expecting a complete list to be submitted containing provincial organization and task team representatives.

CHE has been in existence since 1996. We have engaged with the DBE for many years. We were at the forefront during the 2015 consultative meetings regarding the formulation of a new policy for home education in South Africa.

Representatives from all the home education associations and the Pestalozzi Trust reached a consensus on principles on which revised law and policy on home education can be based. Leendert van Oostrum defined six principles that described how home education could be regulated without infringing on the rights of children and parents. These principles were handed to the DBE at the end of the meeting in 2015.

We remained engaged, writing many letters, attending meetings, advocating home educational freedom.

The Policy was already signed by the Minister in 2018. The BELA Bill has not yet been promulgated. The current engagements is for so called "implementation" of that policy. However, the policy will need to change because it is based on the BELA Bill.

CHE invites you to join us, as we go forward to engage with the DBE

Though we can't change the Policy now, our comments *may* influence it's enabling legislation, the BELA Bill, and then as a result of that, the Policy *might* also have to change.

We hope a new, changed policy will come from this current engagement. Enabling Home Education, that will truly allow us to honor the responsibility of parents to serve the best interest of their children by promoting the freedom to tailor education to each child. To ensure that any laws governing education serve the best interest of the child and respect the role of family, community, and culture in education.

I call on you to stand united, not guided by fear and mistrust. To be informed of the right to home educate. This is not the time to allow divisive elements to drive our actions. We all need to responsibly consider the consequences of the decisions we make now.

This is our chance to preserve home educational freedom for generations to come.

You are welcome to contact me.

Marietjie Ueckermann

Chairman

Cape Home Educators

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