

NSW Home Education Inquiry  
NSW Parliament House  
via email: HomeSchooling@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear committee,

In response to a question taken on notice, please find my answer below:

***Question by The Hon. David Clarke:***

*You can take this question on notice. Would you like to get back to us on other ways you think home educators might be financially assisted? I understand how the voucher system works, but you might want to put some thought to other ways?*

**My response:**

My response takes several things in to consideration. These things are:

- 1) Financial support should be given to home educators that currently save the government money and often place themselves into financial hardship for the benefit of their children
- 2) Checks that can help to ensure financial assistance is going to those that will put it to good use in an appropriate manner
- 3) The understanding that the government would like to introduce ways of better monitoring home educators
- 4) The understanding that the government would like to reduce the numbers of unregistered home educators
- 5) The fact that the government currently invests billions into students that attend school and \$0 into home educators
- 6) The fact that home education is a legislated and approved form of education and should be supported as such

I have arrived at one option that I think would work best to allow for the aforementioned considerations.

I believe that the all-round best option of financial support would be to give monetary payments in return for clarification that home educators are meeting the syllabus and registration requirements. A payment could be made to home educators after confirmation by BOSTES that parents are meeting their home education requirements. So for example, parent A could register for home education and after a period of time (say 6- 12 months) that parent could arrange a follow up visit from BOSTES where the AP confirms that the parent is on track with the home education plan and the AP then relays this information and the parent receives financial assistance in the form of monetary payment directly from the government. This gives financial support to home educators that are complying with syllabus and registration requirements. This also enables the government to set up checkpoints to ensure that payments are going to those that are home educating to a standard that the government desires. The payment could be an option for home educators, so therefore it does not impede those that wish to continue to remain unregistered due to strong philosophical or religious beliefs. It is, however, a very big draw card that would have many beneficial effects – it would encourage a larger rate of registration and would encourage more effort to be made to ensure that minimum NSW syllabus requirements are met. It would also encourage home educators to be more amenable to suggestions from experienced APs and foster better relationships between home educators and BOSTES. Given that approximately \$16000 is invested by the government per public school student per annum, I would recommend approximately \$10000 per annum per home educated child.

Given that the government currently pays people to be unemployed, it seems logical and reasonable that it would be a better investment to support home educators that are actively raising and educating children to be quality members of our society. Please ensure that you also read the additional information that I am supplying to the committee in another letter.

Kind regards,

A simple, handwritten signature consisting of a single, continuous, slightly curved line.

Guy Tebbutt

4<sup>th</sup> October 2014

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Dear committee,

In response to the opportunity to add additional information to the inquiry, I would like to add information to a series of questions and responses between Dr John Kaye and myself that occurred on the day of the public hearing.

I refer specifically to this passage on page 4 & 5 of my transcript:

*Dr JOHN KAYE: Very briefly, can you explain to me how you get to the idea that home-educated families should get some access to State funding?*

*Mr TEBBUTT: Because my understanding is that the New South Wales Education Act makes reference to homeschooling as a legitimate form of education. So, whilst the Education Act refers to home education as a legitimate form of education, and in the same document there is reference to schools being a legitimate form of education, whilst they are both legislated and approved in the same document then I fail to see why children who attend schools should have more favourable rewards or investment than homeschooled children.*

*Dr JOHN KAYE: From a budget bottom line perspective, would you accept that home education is extremely expensive per student?*

*Mr TEBBUTT: Yes, it is.*

*Dr JOHN KAYE: Yes, very expensive for a State budget, but particularly from a Federal budget bottom line point of view because we forego tax revenue when a parent leaves the work force to educate a child. You would accept that that is an expensive outcome for the Federal government.*

*Mr TEBBUTT: I am not very well versed in finances and economics at a Federal level. But I guess, from what you are saying, yes, there would be some taxes lost.*

*Dr JOHN KAYE: Thank you.*

**Additional information:**

Firstly, when Dr Kaye asked *“From a budget bottom line perspective, would you accept that home education is extremely expensive per student?”* I misinterpreted the question and answered from the frame of reference that I have as a home educator, meaning that “from my budget bottom line home education is very expensive for us as a family”. In following comments, Mr Kaye then introduced clarification of “State budget and Federal budget”. My response did not mean that I think home education is expensive for the government, I meant that home education is expensive for home educators.

Both Dr Kaye's questions and my responses also failed to take in to consideration a very important factor. That factor is that even though a home education parent may stop paying income tax when he or she leaves the work force to home educate, the first home educated child also saves the government approximately \$16000 per annum in education costs. (see \*\*calculations footnote) **So, for the first child home educated the government almost breaks even. For the second child, the government saves approximately \$16000 per family, the third child the government saves approximately \$32000 per family, approximately \$48000 per family for the fourth child etc..**

Based on an today's average Australian income of \$1516.90 per week - reference from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6302.0> , which is \$78878.8 per annum by my calculation , the average income tax revenue retrieved by the government would be about \$17167 per annum per person. Also consider here, that the average home educating mum is more likely to be below that average income level if she was in the workforce.

When this information is taken into account, my response to Dr Kaye's question *“From a budget bottom line perspective, would you accept that home education is extremely expensive per student?”* changes to **“No, home education saves the government millions”**

**\*\*Calculations footnote:**

I have taken this reference from

[http://cese.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/PDF/NSWStats\\_at\\_a\\_Glance\\_August2014.pdf](http://cese.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/PDF/NSWStats_at_a_Glance_August2014.pdf)

The costs for the 2011-2012 year were \$14123 for Primary and \$16749 for secondary

students. I then averaged these to \$15436 and inflated it by 4% to represent growth in the costs to bring it closer to what is relevant in the 2013- 2014 year. Giving an end result of \$16053 average cost per school student per annum.

Kind regards,

Guy Tebbutt

4<sup>th</sup> October 2014