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**Sent:** 21 February 2014 03:46 PM  
**To:** Ngcobo.P  
**Cc:** Mongezi Mabungane  
**Subject:** re: Home school questions from C Dudley MP

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**RE: QUESTIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION REGARDING HOME EDUCATION**

Thank you for your response to my phone calls this week regarding Home Education – this email serves to give you a list of points for clarity as you suggested – to enable the DBE to respond properly.

These are some of the questions that I get asked and I would like to be able to respond to them more accurately.

1. Does the Department of Basic Education recognize the primary responsibility of parents to care for their own children – including feeding them, clothing them, housing them, providing for their medical care, and educating them?
2. Is the department trying to change “registration of a learner at home” into “asking permission to educate a learner at home”? When one registers a newborn infant, one informs the authorities that the child has been born. One does not “ask permission” for that child to exist. When parents register a learner at home, they inform the department that they have exercised their constitutional right to choose homeschooling for their child. Why is it now necessary to “ask permission” to do so?
3. Why is it not possible for homeschooling curriculum providers to be registered with Umalusi unless they are using the South African state curriculum?
4. Would it be possible for the Department of Basic Education to consider sending a representative to examine the curriculum offered by a homeschooling curriculum provider, with a view to approving it?
5. Is the department now insisting that home education parents use an “approved” curriculum (presently, only the state curriculum is “approved”), and insisting that home-school parents have teacher qualifications. What are the relevant details?
6. Why does the Department of Basic Education insist that homeschooling must take place in a learner’s own home, when there may be a more suitable place available, such as a grandparent’s home, a friend’s home, a church facility, etc?
7. What are the reasons for not allowing a group of homeschooling families to work together in a location suitable for them all?
8. What are the departments concerns regarding educationalists in South Africa producing an alternative, private matric curriculum and exam, to be written by homeschoolers and/or private schools, one that is approved and registered with Umalusi

as a viable alternative to the state matric – providing parents and students with a choice?

9. ACDP MP C. Dudley asked a question to the Minister of Education in connection with the development of a policy on homeschooling - Question 2521. In the answer to the question, the minister claims to have performed an "*an extensive consultation process*".

The Association for Homeschooling has been representing homeschooling parents since 1992. The Association has been interacting with national and provincial government on home education at public meetings and by writing letters at every opportunity. The reports on public meetings and letters can be viewed on their website at [www.sahomeschoolers.org](http://www.sahomeschoolers.org).

The Association for Homeschooling has not, in the past fifteen years, been contacted by the Department of Education in connection with a new policy on home education, in spite of the department claiming to have performed "*an extensive consultation process*".

Who has the Department of Education contacted during their "*extensive consultation process*"? Would the department agree that it is misleading to claim extensive consultation if the elected representatives of the organised homeschooling community have not been approached?

10. Is the department aware that many homeschoolers feel that there is a degree of animosity towards homeschoolers, on the part of the department? Is there some basis for this perception and if so what are the relevant details?

11. Is the department aware that some homeschoolers feel the Department makes it difficult for them to write the National Curriculum Matric, what are the relevant details?

12. According to the 2011 census there are approximately 57 000 home school learners in South Africa and this has grown significantly in the past 4 years. According to Pestalozzi Trust the figure should be at least double as many do not declare that they home school due to a fear of being prosecuted. If all these homeschoolers were to go back to school tomorrow morning we would need at least 50 to 100 additional schools! Where will the education department find schools for these children? Where will they find teachers who dedicate one-on-one time and excellent standard of education as home school parents do? Is it not a democratic right of parents to give their children what they consider to be the 'best' when it is within their ability to do so?

13. Why is the education department focusing their attention on home education at this time?

14. Why is it that home schooling does not seem to be recognised by the department as an asset to education especially when schooling for poor and underprivileged communities still needs so much attention and funding?

15. How much of a drain on budgets will it be to employ people to enforce regulations like those proposed by the Western Cape Department? Should this not be the responsibility of recognised Home-school organisations?

16. What statistics or research has informed the national and provincial draft policy on home education? (Home School Parents are offended that strong proven statistics and research available to them, seems to have been ignored).

17. Notice 196 of 1995 Department of Education: "The parents or guardians have the primary responsibility for the education of their children" - Does this right no longer

apply?

18. What has motivated the department to try and change the way home education is functioning, especially since the results achieved through home schooling are evidence of a successful system and approach. Why is the department trying to "fix" a home-educating system that isn't broken?

Thank you for taking the time to help this community and the broader Christian community to understand these important issues better - it is much appreciated.

Regards

Cheryllyn Dudley MP ACDP  
National Assembly - Parliament RSA