

## Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025

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<b>Submitted by:</b>	Queenslanders with Disability Network Ltd (QDN)
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4 April 2025

Education, Arts and Communities Committee

Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4001

**Email:** [eacc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:eacc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

**Re:** Submission on the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025

Dear Committee Secretary,

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025. QDN is an organisation of, for, and with people with disability, operating a statewide network of over 3,000 members and supporters. Our members share information, feedback, and perspectives from lived experience to inform systemic disability policy and advocacy. This submission reflects the experiences and insights of our members, all people living with disability.

We support the Queensland Government's response to the Disability Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disability, and acknowledge the significant benefits of inclusive, integrated education for all.

Many QDN members have spoken to us about their experiences in Education. They have reflected on the importance of inclusivity, giving personal accounts of how inclusive educational environments lead to increased opportunities post school in relation to building friendships and connections with peers, undertaking paid work, further studies at TAFE and University and pursuing other life goals such as creating a home, getting married and having children.

Based on member feedback QDN recommends considerations are given to the amendments to the Education Bill that address the following key issues:

- **Ensure suspensions and exclusions are implemented as a last resort.** The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) identified the key issues and experiences of children with disability in education systems including the high levels of suspension and exclusion. Disability Royal Commission Recommendation 7.2 which focuses on prevention of inappropriate use of exclusionary discipline against students with disability as well as Recommendation 7.3 Improve policies and procedures on the provision of reasonable adjustments to students with disability are critical for consideration. All children have the right to an education and be included as part of the school community and their education journey. It is important that actions are taken that ensure Student Disciplinary Absences (SDAs) are used only as a last resort. QDN recommends that the Bill is amended to ensure suspensions and exclusions are implemented as a last resort with adequate safeguards around mechanisms to monitor and oversight decision

making to ensure the rights of students with disability can access an inclusive education system.

- **Prioritise inclusivity and equity** in line with the Royal Commission's recommendations. QDN supports the Right to Learn campaigns and actions that strengthen inclusion, the right to enrolment for students with disability, and implement robust oversight mechanisms to ensure compliance. Collaborations between mainstream and non-mainstream schools should also be fostered to promote smoother transitions and inclusive educational environments.
- **eKindy and eLearning programs** eligibility to ensure that children with disability have adequate access to this program, however, it is important that this is not seen as an alternative to reinforce exclusion practices based upon inadequacy of staff knowledge and experience and supports for children with disability in early childhood programs. It is acknowledged that children with disability experience conscious and unconscious bias and discrimination in accessing universal early childhood education systems and it is important that the legislation and subsequent policies around this do not deliver unintended consequences around access and equity of eKindy and eLearning programs. It will be important that actions are taken to address the digital divide and digital exclusion of people with disability in implementation of elearning programs. Families with low digital literacy and limited access to digital devices and challenges with affordability including parents with disability need to be considered and targeted strategies in place to support access and inclusion.
- Additionally, Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) is an important part of the education ecosystem, and it is important that children with disability are supported adequately with reasonable adjustments to be able to access and be included in OSHC. This includes adequate funding for staff training, accessible facilities, and tailored support programs, as well as clear guidelines to prevent discrimination and foster equity.
- As part of the Disability Reforms, the NDIS review has recommended the implementation of Foundational Supports which has been agreed upon by First Ministers. It will be critical that mainstream services like Education are implementing policies, programs and measures for students with disability that work effectively with the foundational supports particularly for children with disability 0-8.

QDN supports implementation of the Queensland Disability Reforms Framework focused on the implementation of Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review in partnership with people with disability and their families to deliver on inclusive education and a more inclusive Queensland community where people with disability can actively participate and access mainstream services and systems alongside their peers.

Yours Sincerely,

Michelle Moss  
Chief Executive Officer

Queenslanders with Disability Network