

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)
Subject: Proposed changes to homeschooling legislation
Date: Monday, 11 March 2024 11:16:42 AM

Dear Committee Members,

As a disabled parent, homeschooling a soon to be registered (per age requirements) disabled child, I am deeply concerned by the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation. For many neurodivergent, or otherwise disabled children, homeschooling is not solely a choice but a necessity- it is the only available way we can foster an environment where they can thrive. Facilitating learning for our children at their own pace, continually adapting to suit their specific individual strengths and weaknesses.

It is particularly alarming to see intent to make homeschooling more rigid and inaccessible while simultaneously doing nothing to prevent the disproportionately large numbers of disabled kids being suspended. Suggesting the band-aid solution of allowing parents to appeal suspensions creates precisely zero accountability on the school to undertake meaningful changes to prevent the suspend-able scenarios from occurring in the first place.

Rather than focusing on homeschooling when there is no actual evidence that change is even needed, perhaps it would be better spent addressing the systemic barriers preventing many disabled children from accessing quality education in mainstream schools.

Children with disabilities all too regularly face significant challenges in traditional school settings, where rigid structures and standardised approaches are simply too restrictive to accommodate their diverse needs. So rather than watching my child be cast as "the naughty kid", propelled into a self-fulfilling cycle of being punished for being physiologically incapable of meeting the expectations of compliance utilised in school settings, crushing his self-esteem and motivation and leading to ever greater dysregulation and maladaptation, our family is choosing to homeschool.

Homeschooling provides a lifeline for children like mine, offering the flexibility and personalised support they require to learn and grow in a safe and nurturing environment. Rather than limiting the options available to families, we should be working to ensure that all children have access to a range of educational opportunities that meet their individual needs and preferences. This includes advocating for greater resources and support for inclusive education practices within mainstream schools, as well as the continuing provision of options like homeschooling with the freedom necessary to create a more tailored approach.

These legislative changes are being presented as creating equity when the absolute reality is, for my already marginalised community, it will push it even further out of reach. In conclusion, I urge you, please prioritise addressing these, at best unneeded, potentially devastating proposed law changes. Please allow me to continue prioritising the needs of my child over the requirements of a document that was never created with children like mine as its focus. Allow me to help my child reach his full potential, instead of being further handicapped by a childhood filled with shame and inadequacy.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,
Mariah Spencer,
Brisbane Resident
Ph [REDACTED]
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