

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 106
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Submitter Comments:

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in our state. As a constituent and a member of the community, I believe it is crucial to voice my apprehensions about the potential impact of these changes on our education system. I am a homeschooling mother of two, as well as a qualified teacher. Our decision to commence homeschooling our eldest this year was heavily influenced by my own experiences working in the education sector. The proposed legislation raises several pressing concerns that I believe need to be addressed. Firstly, enforcing the use of the Australian Curriculum on the basis of ensuring the delivery of a quality seems unnecessary at best, given that we are already required to submit our plans for approval by the HEU. If the quality of the education we are delivering to our children has already been assured by this, then I can only assume that these changes are aimed at standardisation over quality. I'm sure you will agree that a one-size-fits-all approach is in nobody's best interests. Homeschooling children currently have access to world class programs, tailored and delivered by the people who know them best – their parents. I'm concerned that restricting us to the confines of the Australian Curriculum will unfortunately have the effect I feared would result from enrolling my child in a mainstream school – the crushing of his natural love of learning, the driving force of his curiosity, and the diversity and richness of his interest and experiences. Additionally, I find the suggestion that parents be required to demonstrate that homeschooling is in the best interests of the child to be at best, an overreach, and at worst, frankly offensive. As a parent, delivering an educational program which has already been assessed and approved by the HEU; and without a mark against my name to suggest that I am anything other than loving and competent in this capacity, I find the suggestion that I be required to justify my decisions in this area to a government body who has never so much as encountered my child to be a gross overstep. Particularly given there is no such requirement that the government respond in kind by demonstrating to me that it is my child's best interests to be educated within a system which so flagrantly disregards all research in this area. Moreover, I am worried about the lack of transparency and public consultation surrounding these changes. As a stakeholder in our education system, I believe it is imperative for the voices of educators, parents, students, and community members to be heard and considered in any decision-making process that impacts our schools. In light of these concerns, I urge you to carefully reconsider the proposed education legislation and to prioritize the best interests of our students, teachers, and schools. I implore you to advocate for a more inclusive and collaborative approach to policymaking that values input from all stakeholders and ensures the integrity and quality of our education system. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and for considering my concerns. I look forward to your response and to further dialogue on this important issue.