

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 122
Submitted by: Kate Kleinau
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

To the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee, I write to you as a homeschooling parent of a neurodivergent child and as a Occupational Therapist working in developmental paediatrics. I want to express my deep concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in our state. Specifically, enforcing home educated students follow the Australian Curriculum. I can understand that you feel the new legislation is in the best interests of every child, however through 15 years of professional work as an Occupational Therapist, and experiencing homeschooling my own neurodivergent child for the past 2 years, I have to respectfully disagree. My professional and personal experiences have provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of homeschooling. There are many children for whom following the Australian curriculum is not what is best for them and can indeed be detrimental. I have worked with hundreds of families for whom the school system is not designed for. Hundreds of families for whom even distance education is not suitable. Hundreds of families for whom the only way to maintain their child's mental health and well being is to home school. Hundreds of families whose children need to feel safe in order to be able to learn and access an education. Where learning has to be fostered by highly attuned parents and led through intrinsic motivation, with an individualised approach, individualised curriculum and an individualised timeline for each child. I firmly believe that without lived experience, it's challenging to fully grasp the intricacies of homeschooling and to understand what legislative measures are truly needed to ensure homeschooled children receive a quality education. It's not merely about enforcing rigid curriculum requirements but rather about fostering an environment that empowers parents to provide personalized, holistic education tailored to their children's individual needs and aspirations. While the Australian curriculum may be presented as a superior option, it's essential to acknowledge that it's just one of many possibilities. For some children, it may indeed be adequate, but for others, it may not align with their learning preferences or life goals. This underscores the importance of offering diverse schooling options and supporting parents in making informed decisions about their children's education. In conclusion, I urge the committee to approach homeschooling legislation with a deep appreciation for the lived experiences of homeschooling families and a commitment to ensuring that all children have access to a quality education that meets their unique needs. By listening to the voices of homeschooling parents and advocating for policies that promote flexibility, autonomy, and inclusivity, we can create a more equitable and responsive educational system for all. Thank you for considering my perspective. Sincerely, Kate Kleinau