

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitted by: Janine Steffen
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Submitter Comments:

I am deeply troubled by the implications to homeschooling families, should all of the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 be implemented. My main concerns are with the changes to Clause 68 Section 217 (1) (b), (2) (c) and (3), where the definitions and requirements around educational plans and reports have been effected. I would greatly appreciate you taking the time to consider the following, brief explanation as to why. According to the current requirements for registration (details can be found here, <https://education.qld.gov.au/schools-educators/other-education/home-education/registration>), a written education program should demonstrate a high-quality education for each child, with the following points being recommended as considerations in the educational planning process:

- is responsive to the changing needs of the child as indicated by the short and long term educational and personal goals
- has regard to the age, ability, aptitude and development of the child concerned
- is conducted in an environment conducive to learning
- is responsive to the child's need for social development
- utilises suitable and relevant teaching strategies to deliver the educational program to the child
- engages the child in a range of rich and varied learning experiences
- is supported by sufficient and appropriate resources
- uses strategies for monitoring educational progress.

The above mentioned guidelines are conducive to individual growth and development according to each child's abilities, interests and potential. They allow flexibility to customise a child's education to their best interests. However, replacing this current system of designing educational programs, to only allow home schooling families to adhere to the Australian Curriculum, removes our ability to put our children's academic progress first. The national curriculum is designed to have students on a par for the purpose of grading students knowledge and understanding using tests and assignments. While I truly value the concept behind trying to give every child the same opportunities to learn, and deeply agree that we should have some assurances that home educated students are receiving proper educations; I strongly urge you to appreciate that children who are genuinely given personalised, high-quality home education plans, are better off for not having to strictly adhere to a rigid curriculum in its' entirety. I have been homeschooling for 5 years (since pre-covid) as well as being a full time career, and the workload is overwhelming already. Homeschooling is not an easy option, nor is it financially lucrative. While there are a small portion of disingenuous exceptions, most people choose to sacrifice an enormous amount of time, money, personal space and effort, so we can raise our precious children to be the most well-rounded, well educated, responsible and happy young adults when they enter into society. The changes being proposed will drain our valuable time, will cause untold stress and anguish for both the children and educators, and the educational outcomes will not be favourable. Lastly, the reporting process, similarly to the planning process, is currently already comprehensive. By asking us to report the progress of every key learning area is brutal to be frank. We currently are required to demonstrate progress in Maths, English and 1 other subject are, by providing 2 sample pieces for each, our annotations and a written report of the child's progress being demonstrated. Honestly, this process is already grueling when you are required to do this every year for more than one or two children, however I completely understand the need for the monitoring. Every home educated child should be expected to demonstrate progress each year. But reporting on every subject is unreasonable and unnecessary. I have had issues with attachments size when emailing reports with only 6 attachments during reporting. Reporting takes so much time away from my family already, and it takes a lot of time for the HEU staff to process the plans and reports as it is. These proposed amendments will increase everybody's workload hugely. I have had an absolute pleasure working

with the HEU over the time I've been homeschooling. The staff have been friendly and I have gradually become more comfortable and confident when corresponding with them. Home schooling is scary, and when I started I was so afraid of getting into trouble, like the HEU were out to get me. But I am now so thankful for them! I am always honest in my reports and plans, and I love that they want to know how my children are actually doing and what is actually best for them! These proposed changes risk changing that for every single homeschooling family. May I please suggest that rather than entirely overhauling these perimeters by changing definitions and meanings, the committee could look at raising the standards of the existing processes. Instead of asking every home schooler to be consistent with the ACARA and report on all 8 learning areas, please allow some diversity so that we in turn, can provide our students with the absolute best quality education, tailored especially to them uniquely, and demonstrate their abilities in a thorough, but flexible way. Our time is better spent teaching our children. Please don't penalise us all because of the few who do the wrong thing, but rather target those dishonest people and allow the rest of us to continue doing what has always worked just fine for us and our children. I sincerely hope that you are willing to hear our concerns and give the amendments due consideration and consider alternatives, because some of the changes are far reaching and gravely consequential to honest and diligent people like myself. Please don't take this matter lightly, that's all I ask. Thank you for your time, and for the care and concern you have for the children of Queensland. Kind regards, Janine.