

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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I am writing to you with my concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the education bill that has recently been presented to parliament. As a home educating parent, I do not support some of these changes that have been introduced and I am worried about the impact that they will have on my family and the homeschooling community. As a parent to a child who has learning difficulties, in this case dyslexia and dyscalculia, I am extremely concerned about the desire to implement the Australian National Curriculum for every homeschooled child. The Australian Curriculum is an incredibly complex document that has been tailored to educate children in schools, and not neurodivergent children with specific needs or learning styles or challenges! I have spent hundreds of hours consulting with numerous specialists and allied health experts to determine how to best educate my child. Each moment of my child's learning is focused directly on her and her learning difficulties, in a way that allows her to learn, overcome and succeed at her learning journey. It's amazing to see how she progresses in leaps and bounds, with the right learning tools for her. I focus primarily on the areas of difficulty: literacy, numeracy, cursive handwriting, to name some. I say this is my main focus, because I use proven educational tools that cement knowledge for her and the next day are the foundational bases for the next step in her learning. I have found that we keep our lessons short, to the point and will take brain breaks in between these lessons. We will also mix up our learning subjects with all the rest of our "fun" learning subjects, which come easier for her (science, history, geography, art, music). We find my child's interests and passions and use these to spark interest and learn much more that could ever be taught in a school classroom where each child has different learning needs and difficulties. My experience (with 2 already graduated high school home schoolers) is that only this style of homeschooling is really a high quality education. I also have a son who was homeschooled for many years. If I had forced him to adhere his learning to be in line with the Australian Curriculum, he would have failed miserably in his educational learning. However, because we were free to use the best resources for his learning each year, today he has successfully integrated into a distance education school without any problem at all. Had I not spent hours figuring out the way "he learnt" ... but given him a standardized curriculum education, he would NEVER have been able to fill in those learning strategies/difficulties which nowadays allow him to choose to study through a distance education provider and slip right in where he can also guide other children in their studies. Not only does our homeschool learning ensure my child/children in the past can and will succeed in their individual learning areas, but we are also very active participants in our local homeschool community, where we participate regularly in multiage learning co-ops and group activities. We will capitalise on instruction and lessons from other parents, community members and experts in their fields. Some of the areas where this has been a huge blessing to our children's learning have been in areas of sport, science, life skills, drama, old fashioned values and character building! Enforcing the Australian Curriculum with severely limit this amazing learning and stifle the ability for us to form multi-age groups as the topics they will be investigating will be dictated according to their year level. This proposed bill directly affects my family as it is potentially discriminatory, against any neurodivergence, as well as learning styles, disabilities, and the freedom to help a child be brilliant and shine in their learning! Another serious concern is regarding the desire to enforce homeschoolers to report with evidence demonstrating educational progress on ALL subjects from the annual educational plan. This is crazy as it is impossible to document every single learning progress in a day's schooling. HEU would be receiving an entire book as each report. This is not the demonstration of a high quality education! It would

only create pointless hours of work for home educators that is inequitable and pointless if HEU don't intend to read all the paperwork in our progress reports. An increase in paperwork is not the way someone can assure that a high standard of education is being delivered. I'm concerned that the legislation has been introduced without proper consultation with current homeschooling families and I hope that you will take my feedback into consideration. For education to be inclusive of all students, I believe it is important to understand the reasoning behind the education decisions of the families who struggle the most to fit into mainstream education. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. It is my hope that, going forward, this legislation can suit the needs of all students across Queensland. I look forward to hearing your response about this important issue.