

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 152
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Submitter Comments:

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. The Australian Curriculum is an incredibly complex document that has been tailored to educate children in schools. Many schools employ curriculum specialists to interpret and implement this document. I myself am a trained teacher and am still completely overwhelmed by the demands of reading, knowing, understanding, following, implementing and reporting the way it is demanded. One of the reasons I left my job within Education Queensland was that I felt that the paperwork and bureaucracy hampered my time and ability to meet the actual needs of my individual students and be the best teacher I could be. Most homeschoolers don't have access to this level of expertise. In order to implement this, we would need to base our learning off over-simplified textbooks, rush through topics and stop the practical, hands-on nature of our learning. In a 1:1 setting, this is not a high-quality education. That's not even considering the reporting that will be required on ALL subjects, not simply the current three and the huge time-sink that is, taking us away from the learning and time with our children that is actually beneficial to them. This is too much work for both parents and HEU. If HEU don't intend to read all our paperwork, which was suggested in consultation, that is very inequitable and creates pointless hours of work for homeschooling parents. As a parent of a neurodivergent child, what my child requires is not able to be achieved by a school. My child learns best with a project-led learning style. This enables him to become deeply immersed in an area of interest and this will often cross at least 5 key learning areas. Adhering to the Australian Curriculum would render this impossible for my child, and to this date, has been the only learning style that he has successfully engaged in. I am also greatly concerned that there will no longer be a certificate to show that I am a homeschooling parent to my child. Will the newly named "notice", equivalent to our yearly approval letters, be equally accepted by Centrelink? They will be able to see any conditions imposed on registration, and may only grant temporary exemption from looking for work because of this. This exemption allows my family to receive Child Care Subsidy for my youngest child so I have the time to spend educating my older child. This time is already limited as it is, let alone imposing additional reporting challenges.

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. Sincerely, Danielle Smith