

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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To the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee,

I would like to express my regret and frustration at the planned reforms to the Education Act, which I read about here:

<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-Committees/Committees/Committee-Details?cid=251&id=4389>

I **DO NOT** support the EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISIONS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024.

Attention to Critical Pedagogies

I am a qualified teacher, having completed a Bachelor of Learning Design with Central Queensland University. Through my university study, I have come to the conclusion that the current Australian Curriculum does not reflect the current best approaches to pedagogy. In fact, it is markedly outdated.

This is why my wife (also an ex-teacher, Bachelor of Learning Management at CQU) and I choose alternative approaches to education, which focus on self-directed learning. Any self-directed curriculum is, by definition, unable to meet Australian Curriculum (or any predesign curriculum) standards.

While I don't wish to be didactic about which curriculum or learning framework should be chosen by homeschool families (having the freedom to choose is kind of the whole point), we have substantial evidence that homeschool students have *better* learning outcomes.

- Eric J. Isenberg (2007) What Have We Learned About Homeschooling?, Peabody Journal of Education, 82:2-3, 387-409, DOI: 10.1080/01619560701312996
- Bowen Liu, et. al (2023) Effects of self-directed learning behaviors on creative performance in design education context. Thinking Skills and Creativity, 49. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1871187123001165>

Policy Considerations

This Act is being received by homeschool families as confrontational and antagonistic, deepening an already considerable distrust of government run schooling. I would urge you to consider a radically different approach to home education, based on building trust and providing support. This could include:

- Consultation with minority and marginalised groups
- Offering educational and behavioural support services, especially for special needs children
- Funding more homeschool research
- Proactive collaboration with school-based resources, such as
 - School councillors
 - Sporting facilities
 - Lesson plans
 - Computer labs

Negative Influences of State Schooling

I'd like to include three personal anecdotes which explain why our family chose to take our children out of the local State School.

1. **Cultural Heritage:** We are a Jewish family, and wish to ensure that our children receive a sound Jewish education. Since the only Jewish school in QLD is two hours away, it's not possible for our children to learn their Jewish language, history, and culture without learning at home. In fact, at school (despite its theoretically secular nature) our children were exposed to Christian songs and stories, regardless of our firm insistence to the contrary.

Please consider the following studies:

- Ingraham, C. L. (2000). Consultation through a multicultural lens: Multi-cultural and cross-cultural consultation in schools. *School Psychology Review*, 29, 320–343.
- McDowell, S. A., Sanchez, A. R., & Jones, S. S. (2000). Participation and perception: Looking at home schooling through a multicultural lens. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 75, 124–146. http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/S15327930PJE751&2_8

2. **Lack of Access to Support:** One of our daughters is diagnosed with level 2 Autism and ADHD. She was not able to receive anywhere near the support she needed at

school, and her results were lagging far behind her class. With access to resources like speech therapy, behavioural therapy, and more during the school day, combined with the one-on-one attention that we could afford her at home, her reading, writing, and comprehension have sky-rocketed.

3. **Bullying:** Our children were subjected to truly awful bullying in schools, including direct, unfiltered anti-semitism. It left permanent mental scars and bitter memories.

Burden of Regulatory Compliance

Should the reforms to the Education Act pass, our family would become subject to onerous regulations that not only conflict with our (qualified) pedagogical preferences, but also create colossal amounts of compliance paperwork.

Proving outcome alignments with the Australian Curriculum for our five children would be an enormous, and frankly, impossible task. I suspect this is true for most homeschooling families, who (like us) are time-poor due to the amount of hard-work they put into their children's education.

One proof of this is the ratio of "registered" to "unregistered" home education students. The registration and ongoing upkeep of the *existing* requirements is already too much of a burden for many, resulting in a considerable number of unregistered homeschool students.

Summary

In summary, If the EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISIONS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024 were to pass, it would become impossible to maintain our home education plans, and we would be forced to send our children back to school. This would mean that:

1. Our children will learn far less about their cultural heritage and history
2. Our children will miss out on the high levels of support that their neurodiversity requires
3. Our children will be subjected to bullying and antisemitism

Not everybody is able or privileged enough to homeschool. Those are the people who need the help of this committee – the students who are suffering through years of schooling with:

- A severe lack of EDI training
- A lack of resources for rising levels of neurodiversity
- The cruel bullying that exists in our schools

I ask that you refocus your attention on the children who need your support the most.

Your truly,

Saadia Carbis