

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 330
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I have been supporting homeschooling families in Redland City, South Brisbane, Ipswich and Logan for the past 5 years. I have several concerns regarding the proposal to increase the control that the government has over home education. Firstly, I believe that one of the core principles of home education is to acknowledge that parents know their own children's needs better than anyone else. I do not believe that the government should push new regulations on families when there are so many success stories from homeschoolers in Queensland and worldwide. Secondly, as a teacher with experience in primary, secondary, state, private, mainstream and alternative programs, I believe that the Australian Curriculum is too crowded and too broad to support individualised learning. The families that I have worked with have come to me because their children were burnt out from the academic stress of a crowded curriculum and assessment schedule. Many have had ADHD or ASD and were not academically inclined in the direction that the curriculum forces the majority to go. Especially in their first year of home education, I believe that families should be offered support and freedom to have a very open schedule with plenty of available time for psychologist appointments, therapies, relationship building in the family and gaining an understanding of what interests and approaches work best for the child. Thirdly, I believe that this new legislation will dramatically increase the burden of paperwork on parents due to planning and reporting requirements. I draw your attention to this point on page 8 of the Explanatory Notes: "the amendments enhance the regulation of home education and streamline aspects of the home education registration process by...removing the certificate of registration and associated obligations to reduce unnecessary regulatory burden for parents". However, teachers are required to go through years of training in order to understand the incredibly lengthy and complex Australian Curriculum, essentially pressuring parents to enrol in Distance Education through an online school (which is certainly not a suitable option for many ADHD learners that I have worked with) or to undertake the workload of a university qualified teacher. Furthermore, the Australian Curriculum is unnecessarily specific regarding nuances such as at what age a student learns complex sentences or similes or the Cartesian Plane. Many homeschoolers have particular interests that they focus on, such as art or science or technology or life skills. There is not enough time for both rich, real-world life learning as well as the overcrowded, complex and unnecessarily broad curriculum. If there must be some adjustment to the approved definition of an "approved education and training program," I believe this should be restricted to literacy and numeracy with the bare minimum of skills required in everyday life, such as reading and being able to handle money. The wonderful thing about homeschooling is exactly what you would be taking away with this legislation: freedom to explore individuality. In conclusion, I call upon the committee to truly "reduce unnecessary regulatory burden for parents" and instead ensure that legislation allows full freedom for the incredibly individualised learning that home education is so perfectly positioned for. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Sincerely, Amy Damant Bachelor of Education Founder of Celebrate Learning