

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 333
Submitted by: [REDACTED]
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Submitter Comments:

As a previous homeschooling parent, soon to be distance education parent and a registered teacher in Queensland I firmly believe that these changes would undermine the very reasons why many families, including mine, have chosen homeschooling as the preferred mode of education for our children. The essence of homeschooling lies in the freedom it affords children to learn in a manner that aligns with their individual interests, abilities, and learning styles. By imposing a mandated curriculum, these proposed changes would impede all children's autonomy and hinder their ability to pursue education in a way that best suits their needs. Some parents like myself took their children out of school to help them catch up. If your child can't read they will never make a positive impact in society. Reading is an absolute fundamental life skill. If I had to conform to the Australian curriculum I would never have been able to help my child catch up. When I removed my daughter from school she was in year 4 but reading at a year 1-2 level. I had tried numerous tutors and programs, but whilst still at school it was putting an enormous amount of pressure on a young child. Whilst in year 2 a tutor refused to continue tutoring my daughter until we addressed her working memory issues as she could see very little progress or retention of information. In year 3 we started a cognitive program specifically for cognitive deficits individually prescribed according to an individual neurological cognitive assessment. My daughter was lucky that she had a school that supported her and allowed her to attend school late as she did her exercises online from 6.30am until 9.30am. However when she got home she had another hours work to do. The results were life changing, but it became apparent that she would burn out if we continued on this dual school and cognitive pathway. We were fortunate in year 4 that by Homeschooling and not having the pressures of the curriculum we could focus on getting our child where she needed to be. By year 6 our child was reading at close to year level. I knew there were still cognitive weaknesses that needed more work before she could fit in a classroom. However our daughter decided she wanted to try a small independent school, and she thrived. Sadly once she started high school this year it became painfully apparent to her that even though we managed to get her reading at year level she still finds the pace of the classroom to fast to be accessible to her. She has requested to return to her home education environment where she can concentrate and learn at a speed accessible to her. We are actually going to try Distance Ed, so we will be abiding by the Australian Curriculum. I am not sure if this will work, but we are going to try. However had we not been able to take two years away from the Australian Curriculum to concentrate on the most important fundamental skill of reading and writing, we would have made no progress, in fact she would be further behind. One of the primary motivations for homeschooling is to provide our children with a personalized learning experience that fosters their intellectual curiosity and allows them to learn at their own pace. Another is that many of these children have specific learning, behavioural and/or environmental needs. These new regulations threaten to restrict this flexibility and stifle their natural inclination to explore and discover the world around them. Furthermore, enforcing a standardized curriculum fails to recognize the diverse interests and talents of homeschooling students. It overlooks the fact that every child is unique and may thrive in different subject areas or learning environments. By imposing rigid educational requirements, we risk depriving our children of the opportunity to pursue their passions and develop their full potential. I personally do not understand why the Queensland Government would want to enforce an already broken system on children whom are thriving. The school system is bleeding students because it is not working. Instead of addressing the short falls of the education system you are trying to make it close to impossible for parents to home educate. The Home school community is area you are trying to use the emotive story of ONE child whom was

home educated and took their life. However lets compare that to the number of children in the school systems that are sadly ending their own lives. Many parents remove their child from the school system because they do not want their child to be another statistic in the failing system. It is no secret that the home school community has exploded since COVID and lock downs. As a teacher I always knew once parents saw how little and the content their children were learning in school, many would choose to move away from a failing system. Australia has some of the worst learning and academic outcomes in the world and yet Hon. Dianne Farmer is proposing to force this failing system on even more students. I have seen first hand the move from accessible educational materials to inaccessible learning resources in State Schools. Text books were literally thrown away as many moved to digital format, however unless you can afford for every child in your household to have their own laptop from year four upwards, your child will not be able to access learning material. Those who cannot afford this are being left behind, some schools do not have any computers these children can access however others that do, the parents need to be able to afford SRS fees to access the internet at school. I find it disgusting the deliberate attempt to restrict the learning opportunities of those who cannot afford such luxuries as multiple laptops in one household. So much for the Melbourne Declaration! I understand that it is very hard for the committee to understand and empathise with families who cannot afford SRS fees or a laptop, however it is not a minor problem. When I was teaching in state schools, more often than not more than 25% of the class could not access the learning material. Now this may not seem relevant as I write to oppose the changes to Home School requirements. However my point is look at the current school system, address why you are loosing so many students to the homeschooling community, instead of trying to make Home School as inaccessible as the classroom resources. In essence, these proposed changes would not only undermine the fundamental principles of homeschooling but also limit my child's ability to learn and grow in a way that honors her individuality and creativity. As a homeschooling parent deeply invested in my child's education, I urge the committee to reconsider these restrictive measures and instead focus on supporting families in providing a rich and diverse educational experience tailored to the needs of each child. I also implore you to take more interest in the learning opportunities for those children in State schools who are unable to access school resources due to financial pressure. Thank you for considering my concerns.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)
Subject: Submission for proposed educational reforms
Date: Tuesday, 19 March 2024 2:32:17 PM

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I do not approve of the proposed changes to the Homeschool legislation. I do not want to plan or report to the national curriculum, I do not want to "demonstrate progress" in all subjects every year, and do not agree to the guiding principle that homeschooling must be proven to be in the best interests of my child. My child is exactly that, mine, she is not yours, I get to decide what is in her best interests not you or anyone else who knows nothing about her needs.

If I had not removed my daughter from school when she was already more than two years behind on her reading level, research shows she would now be closer to 4 years behind, however she is now close to her year level. My daughter has done what is impossible in the school system, she has caught up. She has tried returning to school, however has found she works much better and achieves so much more at home, that she wants to return to working at home.

Please take on board the input the Home School Community who give so much time to their children's education and welfare. We are not faceless people we are living caring parents, fighting for our children for their best outcomes in life.