

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 387
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the education bill that have recently been presented to parliament. As a home educating parent, I do not support the changes that have been introduced and am worried about how they will affect my family and the Queensland homeschooling population at large. My primary concern is with the proposal to enforce conformation with the Australian National Curriculum (ACARA). The Australian Curriculum is a complex document that was developed for professionals who have been trained to interpret and implement specific pedagogical theory and application. It has been tailored to educate children in schools, and many schools actually employ curriculum specialists to assist in the application of this document due to its complexity. Homeschoolers do not have access to this level of expertise and it is folly to expect them to implement it in their homes. It would place a burden on individuals and their children, and in a one-to-one setting this is not conducive to a high-quality education. As a parent of two neurodivergent children, I have spent hundreds of hours over 8 years of homeschooling researching and trialling different curriculums and teaching methods, in order to tailor my children's learning experience for their specific needs. We have made amazing progress at home when the school system failed us, as my children do not learn best within the constraints of the Australian Curriculum. They are thriving at home where they are able to learn in ways that suit them best. Researching and facilitating home education takes a lot of time and energy, and it would be substantially easier to simply enrol my child into school and ignore their specific needs (to the detriment of their wellbeing). But homeschooling parents choose this path because we care deeply about the social, emotional, and educational needs of our children that are not being met in the school system. The freedom to educate according to our individual family needs is a freedom that we deeply cherish. I am concerned that the legislation has been introduced without proper consultation with current homeschooling families and I hope that you will take my feedback seriously. For education to be inclusive of all students, I believe it is vital to understand the reasoning behind the educational decisions of families who struggle to fit into mainstream education. I respectfully urge you to reconsider the proposed changes to the legislation and engage in a collaborative dialogue with homeschooling stakeholders to identify and address the real issues driving this educational choice. It is imperative that we work towards a more inclusive and responsive educational system that respects the choices and concerns of all families. Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns. It is my hope that this legislation can be adapted to suit the needs of all students across Queensland. I look forward to hearing your response about this important issue. Sincerely, J L B