

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 388
Submitted by: Gemma Wood
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

I DO NOT SUPPORT the current amendments to the legislation regarding home education being put forward before parliament because: I do not support the amendment for all home schoolers to be required to plan and report on all subjects under ACARA. Successful homeschooling looks incredibly different to classroom teaching. There are many factors that influence this such as multi-age teaching, concepts or projects that cross many different subject areas and children who have differing learning speeds and styles within the same family. Not to mention the large number of parents who are successfully homeschooling children with special needs. ACARA aligned resources, methods and expectations are written for qualified teachers, who teach a large number of children at a time. They mostly do not make sense in a 1:1 or a small group learning environment and are not suitable for many children with learning disabilities. Many homeschooling families follow an interest or project lead learning style. This enables deep learning in areas of particular interest and learning to a much higher level than ACARA age restricted levels. This will be impossible to achieve if the requirement to cover all the Australian Curriculum is approved. Many homeschooled children do not attend school because they are neurodivergent and do not learn best in a traditional way. Most have already tried the Australian Curriculum and it just doesn't work for these learners. As parents of these children, we are doing everything we can to ensure we are already providing a high quality education (that has already been approved by the HEU) that is adapted to suit the learning styles of our children. Forcing families who have individualised learning plans for their children to revert to the Australian Curriculum is a huge step backward in the quality of education for these students.

My daughter has thrived academically since starting home schooling 3 years ago - she has ADHD and a Learning Disability. Her learning experience at school under ACARA was very concerning - she did not comprehend any information in the classroom environment, coming home with no idea of what was taught. Now, in the home education environment, she is able to learn in a productive way that suits her needs and her specific capabilities across each subject. She has a much, much richer education now, with a specially designed education plan, than when she was required to learn under a cookie-cutter approach. I also do not support the amendment to provisional registration being removed. There are many situations where the removal of a student from mainstream schooling is urgent and in the best interest of the child. I do not support the amendment that parents will be required to 'prove' that homeschooling is in the best interest of their child. This is an over-reach of government - it is a parent's choice how their children will be educated. If parents are required to 'prove' this, I believe schools should also 'prove' that their teaching strategies and curriculum are also in the best interest of each individual student before they are enrolled in mainstream schools. Parents are already required to show evidence of a rich education including teaching strategies, educational content and progress in order to be approved. This is sufficient. Finally, these changes will create serious overload of administrative tasks for the Home Education Unit.