

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitter Comments:

As a mother of 3 (soon to be 4) children, 2 of whom are in school and both of whom are diagnosed Autistic, I see the need for continuing to make home education accessible and manageable for families who are already struggling emotionally and functionally. Home education has an extremely high uptake amongst the neurodiverse community, specifically for the reason that these children need an educational environment that is tailored to their individual needs and learning styles. The proposed bill will make this significantly more difficult for these families, as outlined in the following points: 1. The definition of a 'high quality education' is being limited to the Australian Curriculum. This is restrictive and will make it difficult to be able to provide a high quality education in the home learning environment, for children with divergent needs and differing learning styles. 2. Changes in the guiding principles of the legislation that state that 'parents have the responsibility for choosing a suitable education environment for their children' and that home education should be provided in a way that 'is in the best interests of the child'. The bill doesn't address who decides what is in the child's best interests and is open to interpretation. We believe this takes away a Queenslanders' right to homeschool and puts onus on the parent to prove they can home educate. 3. Provisional registration has been removed in the legislation. Provisional registration allows families to remove their children from school immediately and gives them 60 days to submit their homeschooling plan. We believe that provisional registration is a measure to protect families leaving the school in an emergency situation and it is unreasonable for children to stay in potentially dangerous or damaging circumstances until a full plan is written. 4. There are increased reporting requirements included in the legislation. The information already provided by home educators far exceeds the reporting required by Education Queensland teachers and to provide this information for every single subject is unreasonable. Including the provision to demonstrate educational progress for each subject also exceeds the requirements for schools and teachers in Queensland and is unacceptable.