

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitter Comments:

As a citizen in another state, I have been following the progress of these discussions with interest. While education may be state based, what happens in one state can impact another (as referenced in the public briefing when what other states are supposedly doing was used as evidence for why Queensland's changes are reasonable - to "bring them in line" with other states). We home educate out of necessity due to my child not coping in the school system. This resulted in him having significant trauma around learning and the need to be very creative around his learning moving forward as anything that looked like "school" would have him shut down. His time at school left him with significant gaps in his learning on top of his anxiety. If we had been required to adhere to the Australian Curriculum outcomes and onerous reporting, this would have added significant stress to an already difficult situation. Having the freedom to explore his interests helped return his joy for learning and his self confidence in general. I feel comments raised in the public briefing were misleading or misinformed given South Australia does not have specific legislation around homeschooling. While we are asked to cover the 8 learning areas of the Australian Curriculum, we have significant freedom around how we do this and are not bound by the specific educational outcomes of said curriculum. There are some guidelines to follow but we also have significant freedom to dive deeply into individual interests and not spend copious amounts of time trying to decipher the "educational language" used in the curriculum. I'm concerned legislating adhering to the Australian Curriculum could be restrictive on homeschooling families and lead to educational outcomes declining rather than improving. Legislation appears to be a much more significant step than simply "policy" which has room for flexibility and simple changes when required. While I acknowledge a small number of home educating families may not have their children's best interests at the forefront of their motivation, most parents absolutely do and home educating comes at a huge financial sacrifice, done because it absolutely IS in the best interest of our children. Highly regulating in a manner that does not serve our children well is likely to be counterproductive in the area of child protection. I urge you to consider further consultation with home educating parents and hear their valid concerns before making any final decisions on these changes. Many are willing to work with you on finding a solution that it is of benefit to all. All we truly want is the freedom to give our children the best education and necessary skills to help them succeed in life. For many, the Australian Curriculum simply does not achieve this.