

## Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

**Submission No:** 569  
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**Publication:**  
**Attachments:** No attachment  
**Submitter Comments:**

Committee Secretary  
Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

Renae Johansen  
[REDACTED]

20 March 2024

Dear Committee Secretary

I am writing this letter to express my concerns over the proposed amendments to the Education Bill.

My name is Renae Johansen and I have been a local school teacher in Mackay for twenty years. I currently do supply teaching and run a free community group called Bush Kids for homeschooling children of all ages. We meet once a week at our local community garden where I teach them about our local flora and fauna. I offer them an outdoor, fun, hands-on experience that revolves around our local climate, planting season and local festivals and activities we can contribute to. For example, we are currently planting seedlings to grow and sell at a local festival in June. We are also creating an artistic display to be showcased at another community event in May.

The proposed legislation does concern me as it will bring about more restrictions to homeschooling families. The beautiful part of the homeschooling network is the freedom for the entire family to engage in real life activities as they are happening in our community. The connection to community cannot be denied and I worry this and learning flexibility could be lost as parents begin to worry about conforming to the National Curriculum instead.

I see first hand how children of different ages and abilities find passion in the large variety of activities we do at the gardens. They have the luxury of exploring these passions in more detail and the opportunity to engage with various community members to learn even more. For example a couple of children were interested in all the seed pods scattered around the trees. This then led to an engaging science lesson on seeds and the structure of a plant. A local father with an abundance of knowledge was able to identify the different plants and seeds associated with them. The older children were able to crack open the seed pods and pass around seeds to the younger children to explore. Some children felt arty and painted the seed pods. It's through these spontaneous, hands-on experiences that children's curiosity and interest can be sparked and that's what makes learning fun! To add to this, it's important to note that the parents are not on time restrictions or content restrictions, so they can just flow with the learning that takes place as it happens at the gardens. This type of learning will be limited and possibly lost if children are stuck following the Australian Curriculum which stipulates different learning topics and outcomes for different ages. As an educator I would also feel restricted in running these sessions trying to adhere to the learning outcomes for all age levels. It would be impractical and extra work for me.

I really believe it would be a crime to take this flexibility away from homeschooling families and their children who have a desire to learn about things of interest to them and in a way that works for them.

Thank you for taking the time to understand my experience as an educator of homeschooling children. I really hope you can consider that all families and children are unique and have different needs.

Kind regards

Renae Johansen  
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