

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

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**Submitted by:** [REDACTED]  
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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Concerns regarding the Proposed changes to Homeschooling in Queensland  
**Date:** Thursday, 21 March 2024 10:01:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [REDACTED]

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21/03/2023

To all I have addressed with this submission/email,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in our state. Being a constituent and member of the community, I believe it is crucial to voice my apprehensions about the potential impact of these changes on our education system.

My name is Jamie Irvine, and my daughter is [REDACTED], a 10-year-old girl who also happens to be on the spectrum, has sensory issues, severe anxiety, a speech impediment and ADHD.

We do not approve of the proposed changes and do not want to use the national curriculum because it doesn't suit my daughters learning or lifestyle.

We had a unique journey to home schooling. I was managing a Medical Practice in Brisbane city, and my daughter was attending a great public school. We were supported by my daughter's state school into home schooling as despite the help they offered, it wasn't enough, and they were about to lose funding to the HUB- their support unit which meant no more one on one support which was well documented she needed in the noisy sensory overwhelming classroom environment. I ended up leaving my job to become a full-time carer and educator to my daughter because she is my responsibility and if anyone can help her succeed in this life, it's myself and her family. Since we began home schooling my daughter has come alive in so many ways, creatively, musically, reading, her self-confidence is really building to the point she can tolerate most jokes thrown her way – [REDACTED] can be literal so this can present many challenges. A few years ago, my daughter wouldn't look people in the eye, now she confidently meets most people's gazes. We chose home schooling because of the freedom to help our daughter learn to be a wonderful, functioning and contributing member of society in her time and way. I feel forcing the children to all learn the same way, especially when she already knows she doesn't learn well like that: a great example is in reading, 2 years ago she struggled to read 1 sentence a page kid books to reading teen and some adult fantasy novels- supervised by myself, would be detrimental to her mental health. If we were to go back to that structured learning which doesn't suit her, no matter how

Home Education Program for: [REDACTED] Age 9, 2023.

### Educational and Personal Goals:

#### Short term: (this year)

This year we will continue to help [REDACTED] develop and improve her handwriting legibility and bring this up to grade level, at this point in time, [REDACTED] speech therapist and I are working on her comprehension skills which we hope will help her with her ability to write for longer periods of time. [REDACTED] reading has come a long way to the point we have her reading independently for fun! I am so happy to keep encouraging her in this area- we are compiling a book list and [REDACTED] has found a new love of book reporting – she loves telling me about the stories she reads, so I am challenging her to put it into words (report style) for me.

#### Long term: (future years)

I would love for [REDACTED] to continue developing her emotional regulation skills, to continue developing her self-care habits, expressive language set, and develop her physical and social skills more. She has a regular group of friends we meet with weekly and she has been able to build 2 really good friendships from this, they even started a club called “ The Rainbow Club”.

[REDACTED] has been working on her anxiety a bit by learning to deal with her younger brother. She has realised he copies everything she does, EVERYTHING! She told me it has made her aware of how she reacts to certain situations and reactions to others. We have been doing weekly yoga exercises and mindfulness tasks to help set the intention first, so she has the goal in mind already and can help bring about what she wants to try and achieve. It has been truly wonderful watching her develop and grow in this area. I will continue to support her exploration of emotions and how we each affect each others.

We will continue working on her life skills that we want her to use every day to help her get into the routine of life. I still feel this is such an important part to keep stably growing each year, as she grows older, so it's not so hard to transition and so that she can truly live, contribute to society and feel proud of herself and most of all, to be happy and content.

**Overview of my child** (the learner)-learning background and individual needs. I have just added a few things to last years overview that we noted.

[REDACTED] is an 9-year-old girl. She is smart, fun, kind and caring. [REDACTED] has struggled the last few years in mainstream school for many reasons. [REDACTED] is Autistic, has sensory processing disorder and severe anxiety with a speech impediment [REDACTED] has trouble processing multiple noises at once, especially whilst trying to concentrate (she says the classroom noise is too much for her to bear and this has proven true at school with her needing to be removed from class multiple times so as not to disrupt the others). [REDACTED] is an energetic child who has trouble sitting still for long periods of time – we can allow for this with a variety of supports we already have in place at our home to help her keep focused whilst moving. [REDACTED] also STIMS but as hers can be verbal not just physical (making non-word sounds/growls/yelling/shouting) she can come across as disruptive (sometimes scary to other children, even adults) but this not something she has any control over, and she often chooses not to go out for fear of ridicule for things beyond her control. At home, we can accommodate this for her and help her figure out how to not let it impact her life so much or how to handle the extra attention it may draw without the negative experience some children (and adults) unleash upon her.

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to know if they can help  
 we don't want to be the national champion  
 because it's a lot and my little school  
 would be a little class room with 30 more kids if not  
 with my teachers 15000  
 have about 7000 more kids than we have  
 that's a lot of kids - -  
 we are not going with the professor changes  
 I don't see how we can leave more than 1500  
 I think we should not

### **My child's learning style/s:**

■■■■ continues to love learning about her passions, and we let her self-direct most of her learning subjects/topics as this definitely helps keep her engaged for longer periods of time and she wants to genuinely come back and finish learning about something she is interested in.

■■■■ is very auditory and therefore tends to learn better by listening than reading, though her reading has improved in regards to reading for fun, ■■■■ still has work to do when it comes to researching for topics of interest and increasing her periods of stamina.

■■■■ sees her speech therapist weekly who always provides us with "at home" work so we can continue to provide you with copies of her what her learning encompasses and how far she has come already under her guidance.

### **Teaching strategies to support my child's individual needs and learning style/s:**

We will still use a blended strategy to help ■■■■ achieve her goals.

■■■■ learns best through play-based learning and everyday living, for example: through writing a menu for a meal herself, going through the items we have and what she needs and what her budget might be.

■■■■ has done a lot of cooking this and last year, her favourite meal to cook for is breakfast and her skills so far include: scrambled eggs, soupy eggs and soldiers, fried eggs on toast, pancakes from scratch, seasonal (and picked fresh from our orchards where we can) fruit salad platters and nut and biscuit trays.

We grow a lot of our own fruit and vegetables so this plays a major role in her learning-all our learning. ■■■■ helps us plant, sow, harvest and she has begun helping us with our swail system to help catch and direct natural water flow.

■■■■ has helped build our chicken coop which will be ready for chicken within the next month, and we are excited to get started with them and add that to our daily routine.

■■■■ still isn't a crowd person, she prefers solitude or more one on one time, which at this point in her life, is not a big drama for her to avoid, so we haven't had any anxiety issues arise in the last year in regards to this- she has even managed a few trips to our local markets and should the need arise, we will deal with it then.

**Description of home learning environment:** eg: private/shared study spaces, light, ventilation, display areas, storage, IT access, indoor/outdoor facilities.

■■■■ has a computer/study area, but she still prefers to sit outside under the trampoline on a picnic blanket whilst reading, or sitting on the different cool areas throughout the place to type. ■■■■ has also become a fan of hanging at the library, mostly by herself – there is a kids corner, and usually occupied by younger kids so ■■■■ finds her self reading to them, or doing puppet shows through the stage area and puzzles.

■■■■ does have access to multiple areas throughout the day – indoor and outdoor, each have a space dedicated for learning for her laptop, iPad, books, writing materials etc... We have a wifi printer inside.

We have access to wifi internet from inside and outside our home which will allow us to move between the 2 depending on her sensory needs for the day/at the time.

In summer and winter ■■■■ has access to a pool we use for exercising and teaching her more confidence and she and her brother completed their first swim classes with a teacher this year and have both been excelling- ■■■■ has been fortunate enough to have a one on one class teacher and her confidence and abilities have gone through the roof!

We live on 20 acres on property so we have access to many different areas within our property and we also live so close to town with parklands, public pools, skating rink, local swim areas and hikes to help us get out and about.

**Social Opportunities:** Peer and other interactions; friends, home education groups, sporting clubs/associations, religious activities, classes, travel/excursions

Since moving out here we have found a group of home schoolers and we meet every week – rain/hail or shine (there's undercover areas for rainy days) and through that we have found our tribe. We have been to dairy farm visits, bike trail walks, prospecting and [REDACTED] now does Muay Thai 2 times weekly and is loving it, she is also incidentally learning a bit of the Indonesian language and that has been fun to watch.

**Curriculum Information:**

General Curriculum information can be found on the Australian Curriculum and <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/>

**English:**

We will be doing lots of projects again, this seems to be how [REDACTED] learns best at the moment and she enjoys presenting the information in a structured way which we will work on. [REDACTED] presents some of these orally to our family at meal times when she is especially excited about something she has learnt/completed. [REDACTED] wants to continue building on a story she began last year, this year I would like to focus on what goes in a story, how to pick and choose relevant parts (she likes to include every detail, no matter how trivial, write a story this year, I will be able to keep a track of her progress: writing/comprehension/grammar/punctuation etc... through this also and her speech and occupational therapists have worksheets that we will be able to provide as evidence of her ongoing learning.

[REDACTED] loves books if they are audio still but is finally enjoying reading on her own (and to small children) so will keep exploring themes/topics that are relevant to her.

[REDACTED] has a personal email and so far this has been suffice for what we need and are doing.

**Maths:**

[REDACTED] enjoys maths and her work books so we will continue to use/include a large amount of maths bookwork from The Australian Curriculum books. We use learning in our everyday experiences such as, budgeting – through weekly menu planning/shopping, cooking, banking, farming/gardening plus we will also be able to include worksheets from various Australian Curriculum approved book sources-Excel Basic Skills: English and Mathematics year 3 and 4 Australian Curriculum Edition and online websites. So far [REDACTED] is enjoying; [www.abcya.com](http://www.abcya.com), Apps: Math games for kids, fourth grade learning games. Toca Poca, Roblox (supervised – and I made my own avatar so we hang out – while she still thinks I'm cool.lol) She also has a group strictly for her and her home school friends where they chat, hang out virtually once a week too.

I still encourage [REDACTED] to take notes (something she struggles with as she feels she can't keep up with her mind ever, so it's still a struggle but she understands she needs patience to overcome it, she said she just has trouble finding patience...) and document findings in her own writing/words. We will also supply her with homemade (and probably online versions) templates to help break things down. I would like [REDACTED] to be able to create such documents herself in the future. Having these in place will help us pinpoint problem areas and help us track her comprehension and understanding.

**Science, Health and Technology:**

[REDACTED] continues to show a keen interest in gardening and animals – we have 2 new puppies- cattle dogs Red and Blue, and [REDACTED] has primary caring control for these guys. We want to address multiple areas of the sciences through gardening, from Plant knowledge to nutrition and the importance of a balanced diet and exercise.

[REDACTED] loves learning about the body and how it works, and the why of things. She has learnt a great deal about her body this past year and we want to continue expanding on that knowledge.

[REDACTED] still also loves to have some days where we can let her sit with a booklet/ worksheet to feel like she's achieving something like what she would do at school. (Excel Basic Skills, Science and

Technology book-Australian Curriculum edition. Petter Clutterbuck.) She also enjoys doing maths and science games online.

■■■■ also has a series of puzzles on the solar system, the human body, animals, plants, minerals, rocks, crystals, earth and more. She has also taken an interest in biblical studies which I feel crosses over in to the sciences so we are looking forward to tackling something of a biblical nature.

#### **History and Languages:**

■■■■ wants to learn about our local area where she is growing up now. This is our new family story and she wants to learn about this town and has discovered it was the 4<sup>th</sup> place settled in Queensland. And as mentioned earlier, she wants to start exploring the biblical side of where do we come from... I feel this will take us through the ages and then some.

#### **The Arts:**

■■■■ has a great passion for the arts and has asked this year to learn how to sing and dance, but our dance school in town performs for grading so ■■■■ is reluctant to continue, we are working on that. We have also reached out to a music school as ■■■■ has expressed an interest in playing piano.

■■■■ loves drawing, especially her emotions when words escape her. We have been using nature to help express emotions by making nature mandalas, nature windchimes, dried leaves/flowers bouquets and more. It's great fun and a colourful and expressive way to communicate our feelings and generate talk about hearing each other out. Drawing is still a great outlet for ■■■■, she enjoys expressing through her art and learning about the texture of things and the depth of things, we have an art studio just around the corner from us, we want to try a class when she's ready.

■■■■ is fortunate that she has access to 2 great artists at home who are more than happy to share their knowledge and experiences, her Pop – ex-tattooist and current painter (not as scary as it might sound 😊) and her Aunty – current high school art teacher. We are so lucky to have their influence and guidance to all things artsy.

#### **Assessment and Recording:**

Dated work samples will be kept for all learning areas and photographic evidence will be recorded. I will use this to help assess levels of comprehension in what we are working on and hopefully this will help us target trouble areas as they arise. There are parent portals in the apps/programs we are also using that I can use to monitor progress and gauge problem areas and ALL of her workbooks are age-appropriate Australian Curriculum Editions with marking grids to track progress and problem areas.

I have a private email set up for ■■■■ that I have been using to send photos/videos of things we have done so far and will continue to add works here for references and so we have everything in a centralised space that can be accessed easily.

hard we tried, it would be a giant step backwards for my girl and all the progress we have made.

I am worried about the lack of transparency and public consultation surrounding these changes. As a stakeholder in our education system, I believe it is imperative for the voices of educators, parents, students, and community members to be heard and considered in any decision-making process that impacts our schools. Considering these concerns, I urge you to carefully reconsider the proposed education legislation and to prioritise the best interests of our students, teachers and schools. I implore you to advocate for a more inclusive and collaborative approach to policymaking that values input from all stakeholders and ensures the integrity and quality of our education system.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter – I tried to keep it short and to the point- and my concerns. I look forward to your response and to further dialogue on this important issue.

Please leave home schooling alone, we do not agree to the proposed changes and do not want to use the national curriculum.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED] daytime contact number

Email: [REDACTED]

**PS: I have also attached a copy of my daughters letter regarding the proposed changes and her Plan from last year that was accepted by the HEU so you can gain some insight into why it is important we are able to teach our children in the way we know suits them.**