

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

**Submission No:** 644  
**Submitted by:** Kim Crystal  
**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public  
**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

To the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee, I am writing to object to the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Bill 2024 in the current form. I have specific concerns with the implications of Clauses 18, 64 & 68 and I am in support of the Free2homeschool Movement. This will have a direct impact on a lot of Homeschooling (not Distance Education) families whose children do not respond well to standardised structured learning, and if forced to cover a set curriculum, these children may be negatively affected. Our first goal as educators needs to be that of fostering a positive & safe learning environment for children where they are also encouraged and inspired to learn. A state wide standardised curriculum which is designed to be rolled out and delivered at a rate not responsive to an individual child's needs (and which is primarily designed to be suitable for delivery to groups of children within a schooling system, be it a physical school situation or a distance education institution) - IS not practical or suitable outside of a structured school group learning environment. And proper consultation with the Homeschooling Community (not Distance Education) would be able to demonstrate and further elucidate this. Before the discussion of enforcing a curriculum within Homeschooling Communities can commence, the Homeschooling community needs to be properly consulted - any consultation thus far appears to have merely been for procedural benefit, or with Distance Education affiliated Representatives (not Homeschooling Representatives) and has not truly been used or included within the decision making process which appears to be a failure to the protective intent of our Democratic Government process. I have had personal experience with delivering the Queensland State Curriculum and I was overwhelmed by the huge amount of work involved of WHICH: most seemed unnecessarily repetitive; out dated; at times not responsive to the child's actual level of development or understanding; unnecessary busy work; boring, not of interest to the child; non-complementary to the child's learning. Further to this the delivery, measurement & reporting took up a HUGE amount of my time which took away from the time I could have been delivering the most relevant, up-to-date, useful and tailored education which is more effective for the child's learning outcomes, whilst maintaining a love of learning in the child. In my view, a closed-minded approach to enforcing a single Standardised Curriculum across all children (including Homeschooling) is going to create an increased rate of school refusal and increase mental health problems for children who do not fit this paradigm. Forcing a child to have to work through a Standardised Curriculum which is delivered at a Time Frame Delivery method rather than at the rate at which a child is coping or engaged with the workload in my opinion could deteriorate some children's natural desire to learn and can further lead to a shut-down in school / learning participation. Not being able to "keep up", focus, achieve results, sit still for the long periods of time required to participate in the curriculum, do homework, memorise, understand, falling behind, not being a natural at it, a comparison of "grades" creating a base for comparison and not being considered "smart" can even lead to depression, low self-esteem and mental health problems. And to them, a curriculum simply becomes "busy work". I've worked in two schools and the large percentage of the children falling behind or "falling through the cracks" was heart breaking & revealing. I witnessed: early teen pregnancies of enrolled state school students; a high number of students being suspended & expelled; enrolled students absent from school & no one following it up; enrolled students regularly spending long hours sitting at the admin office so that they are not a "problem" to the other students in class; enrolled students regularly attending school without any form of lunch and no access to food, no programs in place to support these children; enrolled students who would attend school in dirty uniforms (their clothes would not be washed for long periods of time); theft of personal items and money from students & staff

whilst on school grounds, items stolen by enrolled students; incidents of violence, bullying (by students, parents of students, as well as teachers and Admin staff being the perpetrators), ostracization; crimes committed against the school by recently expelled students; enrolled students regularly leaving the school grounds during school hours without school permission. All of these children formerly mentioned were enrolled full time in a Qld State School and receiving an education based on a curriculum which was being delivered by Qualified Education Professionals. Following a curriculum will not ensure that all children will learn what they are being taught, nor will it ensure a safe learning environment or support to their mental health and well being. With reference to the information contained in the report - "Deaths of Children and Young People Qld 2022-2023" - which this recent Homeschooling regulation review has been triggered by the suicide of an child enrolled in HEU, and appears to be based on a board recommendation to consider regulatory oversight of and support for children registered for Home Education in Queensland - whilst absolutely tragic, it is extremely shortsighted and prejudicial to use this as a reflection of the Homeschooling community and it's functioning to deliver a safe environment and quality education outcomes - while completely overlooking the absolute systemic failure of other state govt departments which did not act within a reasonable time as per the report and who should have acted to prevent this occurrence. This justification is offensive to the Homeschooling Community and some what threatening in it's maligned focus. Considering this recommendation we would like to highlight that imposing curriculum is not what this recommendation is making. There are other ways to support the wellbeing of Homeschooled children rather than enforcing curriculum onto them.

Overall: There is no substantial level of evidence that the enforcement of a state wide standardised curriculum, which is designed to be rolled out and delivered at a rate not responsive to an individual child's needs - will ensure or create a positive & safe learning environment for children where they are encouraged and inspired to learn. This is also detrimental and non inclusive to the diverse individual needs of every child. A single Standardised Curriculum will be restricting families in their freedom of choice when it comes to educating their children. The proposed changes will impose reporting/compliance requirements which will further diminish time resources of the parent who is delivering the curriculum. It also seeks to impose a form of confinement to a learning system which could actually detract from quality education. It is questionable as to the level of evidence to support whether the adherence to a State Curriculum will prove to protect children from suicide, mental health illnesses, and other detrimental effects, or ensure a high level of education on enrolled School children across the state. Nor is there any substantial evidence to confirm that these issues are currently higher in the Homeschooling Community - which it also appears that proper and fair consultation with the Homeschooling community has been not been properly executed, with key stake holders (not Distance Education Representatives but real Homeschooling Representatives) not being properly included in the process of consultation around these proposed amendments which is not fair or inclusive, it is discriminatory and prejudicial, it does not demonstrate equity and it is not within the spirit of democracy. Kind regards, K. Cryst