

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 708
Submitted by: Amelia Gale
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Submitter Comments:

I am writing in response to the proposed changes which will affect homeschoolers in Queensland. I am currently in the middle of writing my homeschool plans for the coming year and reporting on the past year. This is already thorough and time consuming, and serves its purpose ensuring that homeschooled children are accounted for and are receiving a high quality education. I decided to homeschool my children after training as a primary school teacher in the UK (we now live in QLD) and realising that my children would not 'fit' the school system. My children are neurodivergent, and would struggle with the demands of mainstream school on many levels. They learn primarily through meaningful, interest-based projects, and I have found that this enables them to meet and in some areas exceed expected levels for their ages. We follow their interests and I support them to 'deep dive' into their chosen topics, facilitating visits and access to appropriate resources which extends their learning. Due to the freedom that home education offers us, my children, and all of their friends, benefit from a deeply rich and highly adaptable education, personally suited to their individual needs. If we were forced to follow the national curriculum, my children would become disengaged with learning, and I'm sure they would feel unfulfilled with the surface-level learning that it offers. I know from experience that the national curriculum serves a purpose in schools, but it would be stifling and inappropriate to expect most homeschoolers to follow it in its entirety. In addition to the ways that this would affect us as a family, I feel there are several other problems with the changes proposed. Firstly, by reducing the provisional registration requirements placed on new homeschoolers, you will be placing families under a huge amount of stress in addition to the reason they are leaving school. Often this is due to severe bullying or other traumatic events, and to expect families to write up a plan immediately would be extremely unfair. I also wonder if you have allocated additional funding for the HEU staff who will have to review our plans and reports, now that they will become much longer in length. Or whether you have considered that new homeschoolers are now much more likely to stay unregistered, therefore remaining unaccounted for and unmonitored. I implore you to listen to this very large community within the state that you serve. This is about to change the lives of our children, and we are unhappy that you have not properly consulted us about this.