

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

**Submission No:** 712  
**Submitted by:** [REDACTED]  
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The Committee  
Education, Employment, Training and Skills  
1 Williams St  
Brisbane, Qld, 4000

20<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my concern about the recent proposed education legislation that was introduced to the Queensland parliament on the 6th of March 2024.

As a home educating parent of over 10 years, and an active member of the home education community, I respectfully ask that you reject the proposed Bill seeking to change home education. Our children are excelling, well-adjusted and accomplished individuals who do not need the government imposing its outdated curriculum on them. Many home-educated children have been damaged by the traditional school system that is unable to support and protect them. We have chosen to take our children's education into our own hands because the curriculum does not suit every child and the schools are unable to support variations to the curriculum. The Australian Curriculum lacks in individuality, creativity, critical thinking and real-world skills. We walked away from traditional institutionalised schooling 10 years ago because our child was told that she would have to wait for the rest of the class to catch up (dozens of times), using the Australian Curriculum, she was not given an education that was suited to her level, pace and interests.

Queensland boasts a substantial thriving home educating community, who are usually content to comply with the HEU as we quietly go about the business of educating our children. Home education requires significant sacrifices from parents both financially and physically and we receive no government funding, financial support or even a tax deduction for our home educating expenses. We home educate because we believe that we can achieve better outcomes for our children by providing them with an individualised learning plan. In my humble opinion, the ability to tailor an education to a child's abilities, interests and strengths surpasses the constraints of an institutionalised education system with a ridged curriculum.

We have a large family and have seen our older children complete their education seamlessly in the system using the Australian National Curriculum. Unfortunately, we have also been in the challenging and heart-breaking position where our teenager was bullied at school which required us as parents to make the decision to immediately remove him from the school system for safety reasons. To remove the "60-day provisional home education registration" is extremely dangerous. For vulnerable children who are being bullied at school or are struggling mentally and emotionally, being forced to remain in the school system until registration is approved will only inflict further damage.

Instead of making the home education registration process more convoluted, to deter parents from turning to home education, perhaps simplify the registration process, support parents, fund families who take responsibility for their own child's learning. Too many parents are unaware that home education is an option for them. Parents are usually desperate to find a solution for their child when they finally find home education. At home during the "60-day provisional registration", many children like my son are finding safety and healing at home; for these children it is critical that their parents have the freedom to make decisions regarding their own child's education, health and wellbeing. These parents need to have time to put together a plan for home education approval and their child should not be

forced to remain at school until someone decides that “home education is in the best interests of the child.” Do not remove the “60 day provisional registration”, parents need to be able to remove their child immediately from school if they decide that it is in the best interests of their child.

We all want children to be safe, have access to quality education and grow to be well rounded members of society. I fully support legislation that ensures home educated children are safe. I believe that we all want educational decisions for every child to be in their best interest, but with this new legislation, who decides and by what criteria? The government can never replace the love and concern of an engaged parent, allowing the government to decide what is in the best interest of a child instead of the parent is dangerous to the free world as well as to the wellbeing of children. These proposed changes unfortunately go beyond the scope of government jurisdiction and are not in the best interest of the parents and most importantly the children they are supposed to be helping.

As active stakeholders in the education system in a democratic country, it is imperative that the voices of educators, parents, students and community be heard and taken seriously when any significant decisions are made that impacts the education of children. I have serious doubt that any formal research or consultation was undertaken with the key stakeholders who are going to be adversely affected by these proposed changes. The proposed changes are a dangerous overstretch of the government’s power that leads to invasive oversight, excessive regulations and loss of personal choice. Please show me the research.

The Home Education Network’s recommendations for the legislation review are:

1. That reference to the Australian Curriculum be removed from the draft legislation, and replaced with covering the eight key learning areas, which will bring the legislation in line with the majority of other Australian jurisdictions;
2. That reference to a ‘high quality education’ be removed from the draft legislation;
3. That provisional registration is maintained, and that the time frames unchanged from current regulations;
4. That reference to ‘best interests of the child’ be removed from the draft legislation;
5. That a parent representative body similar to VHEAC in Victoria be formed so that Queensland home educators are able to collaborate with the HEU and Department of Education to formulate a workable and realistic legislative and regulatory framework

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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