

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 879
Submitted by: [REDACTED]
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Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in our state. As a constituent and a member of the community, I believe it is crucial to voice my objections to the potential impact of these changes on our education system. I am the primary parent of two primary-age children who are both neurodivergent. I am home educating after mainstream school proved unable to provide a positive learning experience or promote a safe and supportive learning environment for them. The proposed legislation raises several pressing concerns that I believe need to be addressed. Most importantly, I am concerned about the limitation imposed by the change that the educational program used for the child's home education must be consistent with the Australian Curriculum. My children are diagnosed with disabilities and neurodivergence. The one-size-fits-all approach of the Australian Curriculum does not recognise the individual unique needs of my children, nor is it in their best interests. I feel these changes would be discriminatory against families with diagnosed neurodivergent disabilities, ie. autism spectrum disorder and generalised anxiety disorder. My children receive a high-quality education because I take the time and effort to deliver a highly individualised educational program that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and development. Home educating in a one-to-one setting allows me much more flexibility to tailor the education to my children's specific needs, interests, and learning styles. I also involve my children in the planning of their own individualised education, which is teaching them how to find their own methods of learning that work for them, as well as encouraging self-reliance. Enforcing an approved program that does not take my children's needs into account would remove or severely limit these benefits that the current legislation allows. Being required to follow the Australian Curriculum would introduce additional challenges that would hinder the progress of my children in several ways. My time as the home educator would be impacted as I would have a substantially increased workload and reporting requirements. This would take time away from my hands-on teaching and support of my children on a day-to-day basis. My children's time would be impacted as they would have less time to invest in their individualised education that follows their interests and passions. It is within these interests that they are making the most educational, emotional, social, and developmental progress. Lastly, being restricted to the one-size-fits-all approach of the Australian Curriculum which does not recognise the individual unique needs of my children, would negatively affect my children in the areas of their education, mental health/wellbeing, and development. As a parent of a neurodivergent child, I have spent hundreds of hours consulting with specialists and allied health experts to determine how to best educate my children. I have been working closely with my children's developmental paediatrician, psychologist, and occupational therapist for the last 5+ years. These professionals know my children and my family well, and have extensive knowledge and expertise in my children's specific disabilities and neurodivergence. They have all independently advised me to tailor a unique educational program specific to each of my children's abilities and development. This enables my children to become deeply immersed in an area of interest and this will often cross at least 5 key learning areas. This has proven successful over the last two years and my children have made significant progress. I would like to continue to have the right to follow individual, professional advice that has proven to be successful for my children, rather than be limited to following a curriculum that does not benefit my children and has proven to be unsuccessful for them.

Moreover, 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 ability to educate our children to the highest standard. In light of these concerns, I urge you to carefully reconsider the proposed education legislation and to prioritize the best interests of our rapidly growing and proactive home educating community. 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.