

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 883
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:

I am concerned that the “Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024”, seeks to dictate to Home educators, forcing them to stick to the national curriculum when the state school system is failing so many children itself. To do so is incredible arrogance.

In making this submission, I would like to point out some important considerations that I have noticed.

Firstly in relation to the changes to this bill and it’s insistence on the national curriculum.

Home educators who have spoken to me have been irritated by the fact that that though they are registered with the department they have only in few days before submissions are due been made aware of the proposed changes. Some have only heard second hand not, directly from the department of education or anyone associated with it. Busy parents who must do many things that other parents do and in many cases don’t do, do not have time to be trolling government websites to see what the government might be planning to impose on them without any notice or consultation whatsoever!!!!!!!!!!

Years ago when I took my children out of the public school system over concerns about incompetency of teachers and the low moral standards that were clearly stated would be imposed on children, I was visited by two department of education representatives who were satisfied with my concerns, and at a later stage there was a phone hook up for home educators and other interested people, and every one on that phone hook up was able to speak directly to the education minister at the time.

Contrast that with your total lack of adequate communication, consultation and your dictatorial demands of this present situation.

Over my own education period many long years ago where the teachers I had in my primary years failed to prepare me for high

school, and then issues with teachers in high school who were not able to properly explain what they should have been able to explain, then over a period of teaching religious education in schools, when that was a feasible option, in five different states where initially I was teaching grade four students who had very competent language skills to one of the last classes I taught where grade eleven students struggled to read and understand simple English I have observed an incredible lack of a desire by education authorities and teachers to meet the real learning needs of children and allow children to learn effectively. Consistently students and parents who question what is forced upon them by educational authorities as being the only thing you must believe are ostracised. Real education however should allow students to question and debate.

Over my lifetime I found that I used very little of what I learned at school after I left school. The courses I completed after I left school were far more useful than anything I learned at School. Many people I have spoken to have said the same thing. The most useful thing in our school was the school library, not the lessons. Once someone has learned to read and handle literature and has some basic maths they are then in a position to start specialising and that is what they should be doing. We live in a world that increasingly is crying out for those with specialist knowledge, and if you think that a wide ranging curriculum will cover all bases to start specialising then you are wearing blinkers and not seeing what the real world is all about. You don't need a wide knowledge to start specialising. You just need to concentrate on the field you have decided to follow. There are many things for which a lot of knowledge is out there but in most cases you need very little of that knowledge, e.g. When I first learned to use a computer a number of people I knew decided they needed to learn to use a computer so they paid out money they could ill afford, and took time out they could ill afford to travel distance and to undertake computer courses at the nearest TAFE college. All that happened was that they in the main became thoroughly bamboozled by the mass of information thrown at them and still had trouble doing basic things on their computers long after

the courses were over. I on the other hand knew a few people who used computers, and I just learned from them whatever I needed to know when I needed to know it and got on with using my computer. It wasn't long before those who I knew who had completed their computer courses were asking me how to do very basic things. There are a lot of things that I still don't know about computers. I just learn what I need to know when I need to know it, but I have helped a lot of people over the years in this area. The whole approach to teaching that computer course was obviously wrong as is your approach in throwing the national curriculum at every child.

Having worked with children and young people when I was younger I often asked children: "Do you enjoy school?" It is a good way to start a conversation with a child. No child that I asked directly ever said they liked school. There were a few times in classroom situations where I asked children to raise their hands if they enjoyed school and in those situations there were a few hands that went up but a small number only.

Over the years I have met some excellent teachers and particularly headmasters who were great to talk with, who shared similar frustrations about how education happened to what I do.

Some years back now my wife and I attended a conference at Emerald to do with the educational needs of remote and regional students. Most of those who spoke at the conference took more time than they were allowed and basically said little more than "We want more funding and resources for our pet project." By contrast I was only given four minutes to speak. I didn't take that much. But the thing that stood out at that conference and more particularly over the time we spent at the session for parents in an online session at the Capricornia school of distance education at Emerald, after the conference, was the concern coming from pretty much every parent who was game to speak was "My child is not getting a satisfactory education!" In short the education department is not doing it's job!!!!

During my time at this conference I spoke to the overall principal of the Capricornia school of distance education. His concern was the problem of obtaining and retaining satisfactory teachers. While I don't remember the exact numbers that he put to me they were along these lines. He had advertised for something like 24 new teachers received only about 11 applications of which only about 5 were acceptable. He also spoke of the better teachers being poached by private schools who could provide better pay and living conditions.

The interesting thing that came out of that conference, which was the trigger for me attending the conference in the first place was the work done on an experiment to provide vocational training for remote and regional children. Good work done but the lack of adequate resources in regional areas very much limited what could be achieved. Those who carried out this work were certainly resourceful in the way they went about things and I haven't followed up on what is happening further in that area, but I do believe that we do need to get away from a one type fits all education system that is failing so many children and frustrating so many parents. Those who properly looked into remote and regional education made it quite clear that the standard curriculum was inappropriate for most children.

Ultimately it should be parents who determine what their children are taught, how it is taught and by whom it is taught.

My view of education is that education should basically be for preparing children for employment and I am not alone in this. I also believe that much of the approach to education is outmoded because educationalists have through the education they received been brainwashed into thinking they have to teach as their teachers taught them. Few have what it takes to think outside the box they want to force everything into.

I come back to the need for children to start specialising early. In primary school they should be watching videos, and the school

should be inviting tradespeople, nurses, doctors and other medical staff, police, a whole range of people to speak to the children at a young age about the jobs they do. The sooner a child decides what they would like to be the sooner their studies should commence in the fields they have chosen. So that as many children as possible are working on different courses. Minimal in primary school but becoming more specific in high school. Under such a system you don't need many teachers in schools, you just need online specialist teachers with lower paid supervisors in schools.

One of the issues that arises with this is the need for equipment and resources as those who sort to provide training for remote and regional students found out, but I believe there is a solution to that.

One of the problems in rural areas is that there are limited jobs, apprenticeships etc in most areas, but I believe there are jobs available that may involve travelling but enough work around a given circuit to make things happen that aren't happening now, e.g. There is a shortage of locksmiths, but to become a locksmith in this country you have to take up an apprenticeship in one of the major cities, because the only courses available are in the major cities. Someone in America could do an on line course without becoming an apprentice, though I can't see why you can't have apprentices learning and working remotely. Anyway the point is this country is stuck in the past when it comes to education, and dictating that all schools and home educators must use one set, unwieldy curriculum for all, especially when it seems to me that material in this curriculum was put together by people who don't know their stuff, because they are educators living in the past instead of specialists in the practical side of the discipline concerned.

It is interesting that companies like NASA are keen to employ home educated people because these are far more inclined to think outside the box, and thinking outside the box is imperative when you are sending people into space and you want them to return safely. Yet educationists world wide constantly fight against home educators because they want to force everyone into the same rut as

themselves so as to control, and manipulate people and retard innovation!!!!

But re changes to the education act. I am very concerned that this incompetent government that clearly can't even handle it's own schools wants to impose "The national curriculum" on Home educators and is not even prepared to bother to consult with and definitely isn't prepared to listen to Home Educators!!!

There are a number of things that need to be considered when it comes to education department competency and their determination to dictate to Home educators who are doing so because they are far from impressed with what is and isn't happening in the government school situation.

1. The low numeracy and literacy skills from government schools in this country compared with other countries.
2. A recent statement in the media that 1 in 5 students do not feel safe in the school situation.
3. Parents who are seriously concerned about their children want if they can possibly afford it to send their children to private schools, and many parents are going without so much in these days to seek to get their children out of the state school system as a priority, in this situation where the government has forced up the cost of living.
4. One of the biggest concerns of those who choose to home educate their children is the social engineering that is forced on children in the state school system.

As to the National curriculum, which has come under much criticism from concerned parents and others over the years. I do not nor do many home educators have the time to go through it with a fine tooth comb to expose the problems associated with it especially in the small time frame given to busy people to even consider making a submission regarding the insistence on the use of this

curriculum as the only option. However I have had enough to do with educational bodies over the years to know that most are out of touch with reality.

On face value the curriculum is a lengthy, wordy / waffly unclear poorly cross referenced document, lacking in information that is far from being user friendly put together by educationalists who it would appear to me are out of touch with the real exercise of how the study works out in the exercise of these statements in the real situation.

As such it is a perfect example of the poor educational standard and understanding of senior educators!!!

As stated I do not have time to make comments on the whole document, however I will make a brief comment on one issue as an example.

In the science curriculum students are required to believe that the idea of evolution is something that has to be accepted and the proof of it lies in natural selection and other matters the curriculum suggests. That any of what the curriculum puts forward as proof of evolution is viable evidence that such a thing as “evolution” exists or has existed is a very debatable topic. It does not even appear that those who drew up the curriculum even know what evolution is meant to be.

Children should be permitted to debate this issue and be permitted to look at the the real science relating to this matter that is available. To be able if they wish, to show that the things the curriculum is putting forward as proof of evolution are not proof of evolution at all.

Over the years I have met adults who have commenced university courses only to find that the idea of evolution raises it's ugly head and when they put to their lecturers the actual facts as against the only things the lecturer wants to see they have been disqualified or have failed their courses, or told they will fail for raising the issues

they did, despite them knowing more than the lecturer. This bias against debate is totally unacceptable and bad educational practice. If a teacher or lecturer wants to uphold a position he /she needs to be well enough informed to debate anything to the contrary that is thrown at them.

You likewise have statements such as: “ The universe contains features including galaxies, stars and solar systems, and the Big Bang theory can be used to explain the origin of the universe.” Again equally questionable.

The curriculum is putting forward assumptions and failing to allow children to properly understand and assess the facts. To do so without allowing children the opportunity to access material and to allow visits to public schools by scientists who are able to explain what is really observable is nothing short of bias and brainwashing and should not be forced on children. Such policy is very bad educational practice.

On the matter of “evolution”, Millions of dollars are spent to promote this religion. People like Sir David Attenborough are paid by evolutionists to make expensive movies, and it is pushed through the media and the school system to promote it as fact yet it has never yet been shown to be fact. Sir David Attenborough is put forward by evolutionists as their champion. You would think that someone who was promoting a position as much and with as much backing as he is receiving ought to know his stuff!! He ought to be someone that knows his subject well, however. There was a time when Australian scientist Dr. John Mackay was debating in Scotland's premier St Andrew's University, and the head of the Geology dept Professor Iain Spence, asked Sir David Attenborough ‘If he was so convinced of evolution why didn't he debate people such as John Mackay? Sir David replied 'Because I would lose!’

I have heard that you won't allow Dr. John Mackay into state schools.

What are you afraid of??????

Such an attitude says you are afraid of debate and want to maintain what is in your curriculum and force it on children without your statements being open to proper scrutiny!!!!

I suspect that if other areas of your curriculum that you wish to force upon students were scrutinised by specialists such as Dr. John Mackay and others in the disciplines concerned there would be other matters that should be questioned.

It concerns me the way governments and government bodies want to dictate to the Australian people and are not prepared to listen to people's concerns. The media was even on the news pointing out how our Prime Minister is trying to avoid proper political process to try and force through what he wants. In a democracy governments should be servants of the people, democracy should be government for the people by the people not governments dictating to people. Throughout the whole world there are countries that are meant to be democracies but who are run by dictators. We have the situation where the two candidates for election in the USA speak of America as being a democracy, but 70% of Americans don't want either of the major candidates as president. Out here we have political parties who want to rule and when a party scrapes in with a minimal majority they claim a "Mandate" for what they want to force on the Australian people. It is clear they don't understand what a mandate is. All over the world there are protests and wars because dictators want to do their own thing without reference to the people of their country.

The other issue is that it has been an accusation laid at the feet of government schools over a long period that so much that is pushed on children through the school system is from the base of the religion of humanism, and such policy is damaging to young lives. We need freedom of religion in this country if we are to correct the damage done to so many in society in recent years. Christian schools need to be able to employ Christian teachers teaching Christian doctrine. Otherwise what is taught will not be

Christian. Many parents who home educate are Christians and do not want anti Christian teaching forced on their children.

I do not have time to address other matters but the matter of the curriculum and Government heavy handedness is what is and has been put to me over many years as the greatest problem standing in the way of parents wanting to give their children the best in education.

God designed and brought this world into being. He designed it and knows best how all things function. He has laid out the laws and rules that cause things to function best, but the rejection of Him and his ways cause a whole lot of unnecessary pain and sorrow.