

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 892
Submitted by: [REDACTED]
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Ms Farmer

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in our state. As a constituent, a concerned [insert relevant family member] and a member of the community, I believe it is crucial to voice my apprehensions about the potential impact of these changes on our grandchildren.

The proposed legislation raises several pressing concerns that I believe need to be addressed. Firstly, my primary concern will always be for the children. Children are being severely disadvantaged in the current education system, not to mention there is understaffing and overcrowding in our schools. You are kidding yourself if you truly believe that the only way to educate a child is by your set legislation in curriculum and being enclosed in four walls between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00 pm. I have not only had to teach my own children through Distance Education, but I was the daughter of a school Principal, am the sister of two teachers and sister-in-law of a teacher and the mother of a teacher not to mention a Grandmother to homeschooling children primarily due to being Geographically Isolated therefore, I believe I have the necessary credentials to comment.

The Australian Curriculum is an incredibly complex document that has been tailored to educate children in schools. Many schools employ curriculum specialists to interpret and implement this document. As a homeschooler, we don't have access to this level of expertise. In order to implement this, we would need to base our learning off over-simplified textbooks, rush through topics and stop the practical, hands-on nature of our learning. In a 1:1 setting, this is not a high-quality education.

The introduction of this curriculum whilst I was educating my six children through Distance Education made it extremely difficult to remain with Distance Education. We, who are Geographically Isolated, are also running business and households. This change meant I was in our school room from 7:30am-4:00pm trying to get everything covered that this so-called stream-lined joke of a curriculum supposedly offered. What a joke, I was in the 'classroom' longer than any Queensland Education Staff Member!!! I was not getting paid for my time, yet I was fulfilling that teacher role that was expected of me. It led me to choose a different educational platform for myself and my children that met not only our educational needs but allowed my time to do my 'paid' job and feed the country. And here we are nearly 10 years down the track, and you are pulling that same stupid stunt. You are now wanting to ask these Mum's to spend time away from their children and families to spend it filling out documentation to make you feel better when they could be using that time much more effectively actually educating their children.

Homeschooling in the formal sense, allows individual, tailor made programs to meet the needs of the students. It allows the flexibility needed when schooling from home but allows the time and effort to be expended in ways that individually fit the student. I have watched my grandsons go from kids who absolutely hated anything to do with school whilst following a Distance Educational model to kids that are keen not only to learn, but share with me what they've learnt. To say the learning is sub-standard is not only naïve, but stupid, to be blunt. Have you never heard that saying if kids are learning the way you teach, maybe you need to teach the way they learn. I have had three of my children that are dyslexic and being able to modify the way the learn would not have been afforded to them in the classroom so to have them in that environment would have been disastrous. For example, when they were in the early grades, one of the things we did was to go outside and draw letters in the dirt as the tactile stimulation helped them remember things as did writing in different coloured pens, being able to swing on a chair without disturbing their fellow classmates.

My own children are proof that if a child wants to learn and you put the time and effort in, they will achieve. We have done mainstream, Distance Education and Homeschooling, we have two that achieved University Degrees and four that now run a multimillion-dollar business. I can assure you that their success had little to do with your whiz, bang useless curriculum, but more with their wanting to learn and our ability to explore and learn together at our own pace and in the way that they needed to learn.

I'm concerned that the legislation has been introduced without proper consultation with current homeschooling families and I hope that you will take my feedback into consideration. In light of these concerns, I urge you to carefully reconsider the proposed education legislation and to prioritise the best interests of our students. For education to be inclusive of all students, I believe it is important to understand the reasoning behind the education decisions of the families who struggle the most to fit into mainstream education. Not only that, but remember those who do not have access to formal education such as the Geographically Isolated Children that for years have learned and excelled in the furthest of setting from formal school rooms.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. It is my hope that, going forward, this legislation can suit the needs of all students across Queensland. I look forward to hearing your response about this important issue.

Sincerely,

