

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 930
Submitted by: Elizabeth Onofia
Publication:
Attachments: No attachment
Submitter Comments:

Kelly Tremlett

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 19 March 2024 6:49 PM
To: Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee
Cc: hello@arighttolearn.com.au
Subject: Submission on the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Attn: Committee Secretary - Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee

Dear Committee Secretary

I write to make a submission on the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024.

As a mother of a student with disability and a former teacher aide who worked specifically with disabled students, I want to share with the Committee my experiences and why I believe that all students with disability deserve access to a fair and equal education.

As a teacher aide working with disabled students in Queensland schools, I saw first-hand the impact suspensions had on a child's learning. They would often have so much time off that they would miss important learning and would find it hard to catch up, particularly in the early years from prep to grade 3.

For students who are consistently suspended, I saw them lose connection with their peers and often take on a sense of shame. This meant they were singled out as "the naughty kids", which makes them withdraw even more. Simply put, suspensions don't work.

Suspensions were often unjustified as nine times out of ten it was the child's disability that led to the offending behaviour, not poor performance or failing to follow instructions. Instead of punishment, what these students needed was support to meet their disability needs.

If disabled students got the support they needed they would feel a part of the school community and it would help build a sense of belonging that is too often missing for kids with disabilities.

These experiences have led me to support the A Right to Learn campaign, which is focused on keeping disabled students in the classroom.

In particular, I want to single out the multi tiered layers of support model as I believe providing all students with more support is the best way to reduce suspensions and expulsions, but also lead to greater education outcomes for kids. In particular, I think it is vital that we are ensuring early intervention for students with disabilities, so they are not having to wait until they are in years 3 or 4 with a formal diagnosis to get the support they need.

I strongly endorse the campaign's five asks in response to the Bill, including:

1: Using suspension as a last resort. I agree with the Disability Royal Commission recommendation that school suspensions should be a last resort or to prevent 'serious harm'.

2: Currently, the Bill only allows an appeal when a student has been suspended for 11 days or more in a year. I believe that there should be appeal rights for all suspensions, regardless of the number of days.

3: The implementation of a multi-tiered support system. Children experiencing multiple suspensions require support through a multi-tiered system to address their needs effectively.

4: I support the need for increased transparency and accountability in schools regarding efforts to reduce suspensions, such as submitting an annual report to Parliament, establishing a Board to oversee suspensions, and implementing scorecards for schools.

5: To include a Students Rights section in the Bill to enshrine the right to learn for all Queensland students.

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to make a submission on the Bill.

Yours sincerely,
Elizabeth Onofia

This email was sent by Elizabeth Onofia via Do Gooder, a website that allows people to contact you regarding issues they consider important. In accordance with web protocol RFC 3834 we have set the FROM field of this email to our generic no-reply address at campaigns@good.do, however Elizabeth provided an email address [REDACTED] which we included in the REPLY-TO field.

Please reply to Elizabeth Onofia at [REDACTED]

To learn more about Do Gooder visit

<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dogooder.co%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ceetsc%40parliament.qld.gov.au%7Cc0055ff625f049bc2c0908dc47f17cb2%7C234f33c1f5a34c5d8628a50c061ce055%7C0%7C0%7C638464349717946846%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=YxGJSELHOKD9oS6ZCyLFftvg6vgEOfEwH5Q09EZEizY%3D&reserved=0>

To learn more about web protocol RFC 3834 visit:

<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftools.ietf.org%2Fhtml%2Frfc3834&data=05%7C02%7Ceetsc%40parliament.qld.gov.au%7Cc0055ff625f049bc2c0908dc47f17cb2%7C234f33c1f5a34c5d8628a50c061ce055%7C0%7C0%7C638464349717954449%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=JROaOxnZBR%2BOQOh0hQONFw5oY7St%2FLOM2ShJfYBPxIQ%3D&reserved=0>