

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Submitter Comments:

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 21 March 2024 9:21 AM
To: Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee

Dear Committee Members,

As a grandparent to seven home schooled grandchildren, I am writing to express my concern at the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024.

Two of my daughters (with previous careers in physiotherapy and teaching) have successfully home schooled their children - one starting in 2008 and one in 2015. One daughter now has three graduates from their home school, all gainfully employed or involved in further study. Four children are still being home schooled and receiving what I would call a deep and diverse education.

The new education bill proposed by the Minister for Education seems to me to have the potential to negatively impact on this high quality education my daughters are providing for their children.

I have been involved in my home educated grandchildren's learning in a number of ways over the past 16 years, including: teaching them mosaics for art class, watching them perform in plays and an orchestra, attending excursions with them, overseeing their local show art competition entries, spectating at sporting events (including national soccer titles), listening to them read and reading to them, playing board games with them, coaching them in sewing projects, attending live performances with them and more. None of these ways of learning, nor the hundreds of other ways these children have learned over the years, were directly linked to my daughters' following the Australian National Curriculum and showed me that a wonderful education can be gained without the rigid and restrictive approach that having to follow a particular curriculum would dictate. To now say that my daughters will have to write learning programs and reports based on the National School Curriculum seems to be an insult to them – implying that what they have done previously is 'less than' what the curriculum offers. Having interacted with my grandchildren, I know this is not true. The creativity of my grandchildren, their engagement with activities in their home schools, their success in further education and their confidence and competence as young people and adults, all indicate that the ACARA standards are not required in home schools, and in many cases, would be detrimental to both the children and the parents.

Secondly, the choice to home school should remain an option for all Queensland families and should not have to be proven in any way except for the parents' making that decision and following current legislation of registration through the HEU. If I had an option of home education when my own four children were growing up, perhaps I would have chosen to do so, especially for my highly academic child who was frequently harassed at her local state high school. I do not think evidence other than a parent's decision for what is in the best interest of their family and child/ren is required and am concerned that the bill states that proof will be required.

Finally, the work load I have seen my daughters carrying over their years of home education has been huge. They not only home school their children, but are (or have been) involved in co-operatives, offer classes in their own homes, support their children in learning in other places such as classes, clubs, library sessions, World Science Festival programs, Readers' Cup, Kids in Action

Environmental Conference, literary festivals, fundraising events for charities, etc... That this new legislation would add to this by requiring them to write more complex annual plans for submission to HEU and more detailed reporting of educational progress strikes me as being beyond what teachers in Qld schools are being asked to do for each individual student in their classrooms. It also seems to me that it will have additional cost for the government as they will need more staff to assess home educators, training for parents to use the curriculum and more investigations by staff as families may choose to unregister to avoid these new regulations.

One of the great advantages of home education – that the mother (or father) and child/ren with a 1 to 2 ratio (as my daughter's currently have) can enjoy an individualised learning program where anything is possible and where training for life happens. Forcing them to follow a strict academic-focussed curriculum would rob them of this opportunity and certainly impact their enjoyment of and benefits associated with home education as it currently is.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission and giving it consideration.

Jan Litzow

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