

## Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

**Submission No:** 977  
**Submitted by:** Brigid Duncanson  
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## Kelly Tremlett

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 21 March 2024 11:27 AM  
**To:** Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**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 PARENT WITH A DISABLED STUDENT 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.

My son [REDACTED] has been a student at a Brisbane Catholic Education high school on the Sunshine Coast since he started year 7 there at the beginning of 2022.

Due to his disabilities [REDACTED] struggles at school academically and socially. As parents we have worked hard with both his primary and secondary schools. Since starting high school [REDACTED] has been suspended a total of 6 times.

I have written on 2 occasions to the principal about my concerns around a suspension being used as a consequence for [REDACTED]. I do not understand why academically [REDACTED] work is adjusted but behaviourally there is no adjustment made. In all the situations that [REDACTED] has been suspended there have been other kids involved. [REDACTED] socially is behind the other children. In addition, his ability to communicate effectively is at a much lower level than his peers. We believe that he on several occasions has been set up by others. Not saying that he hasn't done the wrong thing, but we believe that he has been treated unfairly and his disability has not been seriously taken in account.

These suspensions have had a huge detrimental effect on [REDACTED]. As a child who struggles academically at school it has meant he has fallen even further behind his peers. Socially he feels like he is not part of the school and is isolated. We have struggled to get him back to school after his suspensions. He has been significantly distressed and there has been an impact on his mental health. As a family we have struggled as given his disabilities [REDACTED] must have a parent with him. This has meant either my husband or I have had to take time off work. I have ended up having my hours reduced in my workplace due to the time I have had to take off to support [REDACTED].

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

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,  
Brigid Duncanson

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