

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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From: [REDACTED]
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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to state that I do not agree with the proposed changes to homeschooling. Currently I homeschool my 8 year old son. He has ADHD, ASD and PDA. School was so challenging for him and as a result after 3 years he ended up with severe anxiety to the point he could not leave the house and did not want to be alive. This was not the schools' fault. They really did try to offer support to my son but no matter what support they offered the plan was always to get him back into the classroom which was too much for him and then break time came and he is sent out on a huge oval by himself to try to deal with social dynamics which he does not have the skills for. My daughter still goes to the school and is doing great.

I needed the provisional registration to give us a few weeks to take stock and plan for how we could best homeschool him. I am a trained secondary teacher so I am aware of the curriculum requirements and lesson planning but the plan took me a long time. As a homeschool parent we want to create goals and plans that will best suit our child. This is going to take a long time and definitely not something I could do while my child was so stressed and anxious or while I was battling school refusal. I know how long it takes a teacher to plan so I think expecting a parent to do this in a shorter period is ridiculous. Also you need a trail to ensure this is the right thing for your child. 3 months gives you time to work out programs or provisions for your child.

Again with the reporting process by asking parents to report on all areas of the curriculum you are asking them to do something they have not trained for 4 years to do. I am sure you are not employing more staff to look over the reports so why make them so much bigger. This causes more stress for the parent and subsequently the child without there sufficient benefit to the learning of the child. If you actually looked at how much time a child in school is doing for some subjects it is so minimal I can guarantee you the homeschool child is doing more but it may look different.

I am concerned about the guiding principle of proving homeschool is best for the child. Unless you are observing the child in a school situation and then what the fall out at home is for that child when they attend how can we fill out a form that demonstrates the need for them to be homeschooled. There are so many unseen reasons. It would have been dangerous for my child to continue to attend school, I am sad to say I am not sure we would all be here as it was having such a profound impact on the family. I am lucky we have a great GP that supported us but if I did not how do I prove our pain?

Rather than making homeschool more difficult I would spend time asking why has there been such a huge increase in homeschoolers. Homeschooling is not an easy option, dropping a child at school and picking them up in the afternoon is much easier. Speak to schools and review the system on why so many kids and especially neurodivergent ones are finding the system impossible to fit into. It does not work to just have more support staff; the school system was not created with students that are not neurotypical or 'average' in other ways. This is why so many struggle. The school system has not changed in decades and decades but society has changed greatly.

Kind Regards
Becky Arbon