

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

**Submission No:** 1082  
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**Publication:**  
**Attachments:** No attachment  
**Submitter Comments:**

**Subject: HOMESCHOOL LEGISLATION PROPOSAL FOR QUEENSLAND**

Dear Committee Members,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation. We oppose these proposed changes.

As stakeholders in the homeschooling community, it's imperative that we engage in a thorough examination of the real issues prompting families to opt for homeschooling rather than simply enforcing rigid curriculum requirements and reporting.

It has come to our attention that the proposed changes primarily focus on mandating adherence to a standardised curriculum without delving into the underlying reasons why many families choose homeschooling in the first place. This approach fails to address the core issues at hand and risks further alienating homeschooling families from the educational system.

According to recent research collected by the Home Education Unit (2022), two of three home educating families have chosen to do so because of an underlying disability or health issue. For these children, working the Australian Curriculum is not providing them a high-quality education or meeting their immediate needs. They have chosen this avenue because of the flexibility it affords. This enables families to educate and care for their children in a manner that suits their learning style. Most of these students have left mainstream schooling because they could not learn in a traditional learning style.

It's crucial to acknowledge that homeschooling is often chosen by families for a variety of reasons, including dissatisfaction with the traditional schooling system, concerns about safety and bullying, religious or philosophical beliefs, or a desire for more personalized and flexible learning experiences tailored to individual student needs.

Our child attended school from Prep until middle of Year 8, taking up home education since that time. For most of their attending high school years, they became increasingly crippled with anxiety about work volume, pace / rushed nature of teacher and content, behaviour management interruptions in the classroom, teacher expectations, and the general environment they were immersed in. Our child is well behaved and tried their best.

Despite making many learning adjustments and working with the school for nearly 18 months, we saw first-hand the detrimental impact of this pressure-cooker environment on their mental health and overall well-being. Over this time there was less engagement with learning due to disabling stress and increasing self-harm as a means to punish themselves for not being able to cope with the rigors of traditional school.

Being able to unregister with traditional school and obtain provisional registration with the HEU provided an excellent off ramp for our child and significantly decreased family stress. This gave us time as a family to plan and prepare for a successful start to homeschooling and to produce a sound learning plan to support full registration, and most importantly the autonomy to keep our child safe at home pending formal commencement of our home schooling.

Although we do adopt some of the ACARA curriculum, it's imperative to us as a home-schooling family to have the flexibility and choice in how we provide quality learning for our child. Since homeschooling, our child's wellbeing has substantially improved and their engagement with learning has mostly returned. How we raise our children, including their education and what is in their best interest, should always be a decision made by parents.

To offer our concerns in more precise terms:

- We don't want the Australian National Curriculum in our legislation, nor be forced to report and show education progress in every subject area.
- We don't want the implication that we need to prove homeschooling is in our child's best interest.
- We don't want the 60-day provisional registration removed from legislation.

Rather than imposing stricter regulations, we urge the committee to prioritise understanding and address the root causes of homeschooling trends. This entails listening to and considering the feedback from homeschooling parents, who are directly impacted by these legislative changes. Our insights and experiences are invaluable in shaping effective policies that support the diverse needs of families while ensuring the well-being and educational success of children.

In conclusion, we respectfully urge the committee to reconsider the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation and to engage in a collaborative dialogue with homeschooling stakeholders to identify and address the real issues driving this educational choice. By doing so, we can work towards a more inclusive and responsive educational system that respects the choices and concerns of all families.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bronwen and Damion Fauser [Homeschooling Parents]

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