

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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I was certainly not an advocate of homeschooling until my son was. He was 26 weeks premature and a miracle! The first day of kindy I was called up to the office to see the principal about funding and was heavily pushed to have diagnoses other than just global delay for more funding. I dragged him from pediatricians, to physios, occupational therapists, to speech therapists and to psychologists. I was finally given a diagnosis of asd/adhd/dyslexia/dyscalculia and dysgraphia. Has this helped him? No but the kindy was happy. When he started prep he was bullied from day 1 and began to withdraw, lose his speech, confidence and to self harm. Weekly meetings at the school turned into daily meetings and I was often counselled to keep him at home. He had extensive psychology visits and counselling. After trying 3 schools, both public and private, and being shunted between teachers, principals, head of grades and committees I gave up after he was talking about serious self harm. 3 years of schooling and my son was a broken shell. I have a bachelor of nursing and also a certificate 4 of education support (I am a qualified teacher aide specialising in autism). When we began home schooling last year my son's previous school had been working on him recognising numbers 1-5 and he was using a scribe. He now is writing small books, writing numbers up to 100 and has thrived! He has an amazing friendship with another homeschool family, he has learned auslan and is now doing woodwork, roller skating and loving life. Not only am I amazed by his academic aptitude, but also his ability to move past his school trauma. We have a very supportive pediatrician, gp and counsellor and he no longer needs psychologist intervention. We use the read 3 program, specialist classes and a tutor. All of which is very expensive, plus I no longer have the ability to work outside of the home. I have given my all and the results are my son is flourishing. I didn't chose to home school, it was a last resort but I would never return my precious son to a school system that let him down for 3 years. I do all of the paperwork, follow the rules and registered my son with heu within 24 hours of removing him from my local state school. Tell me why he should be punished into following a curriculum that does not suit his specialised needs? We do excursions, having recently been to Abbey to participate in the dig it course, attended the Dr Graham's big bang science show and are going to St Helena Island and attending Dr Kee's coding and robotics next term. My son is receiving the highest level of support and education, why would you take this away from him? Education is not one size fits all, how is a child who cannot stand any noise, has been physically bullied to the point of self harming and was not reading or writing until I began educating him supposed to flourish following the curriculum? Why should I have to put our story into the public sphere to stop this travesty? Having a 'in the best interest of the child' clause is a joke. No school has ever looked out for his best interest like I do and will continue to. You are punishing parents and disabled children if you pass this bill.