

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1282
Submitted by: Jeremy Schierer
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Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of our laws and educational framework for Queensland. The vision we have for the education of our children is not only to develop a wide scope of academic competency and intellectual capacity, but also the character and wisdom to use their education in service to humanity.

I graduated second in my field of study at a highly competitive university. My wife, while not choosing a tertiary education, finished at the top of her Year 12 class. We both appreciate and understand the costs and benefits of a robust education and its importance in fostering communities in which we all want to live.

Our children have been home educated since Prep, and we are now in our 8th year of home education. My wife is the primary teacher of our children and home education has been of enormous benefit to our family. I am a fulltime volunteer for an international charity and my work regularly takes me overseas for extended periods. Home education has allowed my family to travel with me, facilitating for our children invaluable life experiences alongside formal learning.

My wife puts extensive effort into planning a high-quality education program for our children and her plans and reports have been consistently validated by the QLD Home Education Unit. While requiring a significant commitment of time and attention, the freedom to home school our children gives us the opportunity to ensure that core educational competencies are mastered alongside a breadth of learning outcomes tailored to the interests of each of our children. The opportunity for our children to collaborate in crafting their educational experience and to learn at a pace adapted to their expanding aptitudes encourages them to remain enthusiastic about learning.

One of my concerns with the proposed changes to home education policies is the requirement that we follow the Australian National Curriculum. Our children are first-generation Australians, each with three passports. I originate from America and my wife from Canada. We appreciate our current freedom to choose curricula that suits our family and the interests of our children. We value the educational space to incorporate learning about and from our home nations alongside the history and heritage of Australia, the amazing nation in which our children were born.

Should these educational policy changes be implemented, my wife will be required to report to the HEU annually on *every* learning area in the Australian National Curriculum for each of our two children. She already puts in a great deal of effort each year just to report as required on three learning areas for each child. Coordinating appropriate comparative samples in *every* learning area, plus compiling annotations and general notes on the year, will be an enormous added burden deducting from the time available for school. Not only will this impact all home-schooling families, but the HEU will have more than twice as much paperwork to process for each child. We embrace accountability for the education of our children, but do not understand the value of this increased reporting burden for thousands of families across Queensland and the Home Education Unit who will be inundated with so much more paperwork.

I am also concerned that the proposed changes to home education policies may lead to inappropriate government overreach. Government should encourage families to be as successful as possible without compounding the already challenging responsibility of raising children. My wife and I chose to bring our children into the world and it is our responsibility as parents to decide what

is in the best interest of our children. My wife and I know them, their needs, and our family situation better than anyone else. We love them dearly and that love is not something the government, despite its best efforts, can replace. We also love each of the communities in which we have had the opportunity to live. In gratitude to each of those communities, we are fully committed to preparing our children to be excellent participants in every society in which they choose to engage for the rest of their lives.

It is because of this love and commitment to our children and to our neighbours that we request that changes increasing the burden on families and restricting the educational scope available to home-educated children be removed from the proposed amendments to the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jeremy Schierer