

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1319
Submitted by: Nicole Anderson
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Submitter Comments:

I am a home educator of my three children, I wish to express my concerns regarding some of the proposed amendments to the Queensland education bill. Whilst I agree that changes do need to be made to reduce the risk to children of extremist type families who may use homeschooling as a method of isolating and controlling their children, I am concerned about these changes potentially disadvantaging another at risk group. Particularly I am concerned about the ways that clause 68 subsection 217 (5) (3a) referring to the requirement to align with ACARA, senior syllabus, or vocational education, may actually counter the points in clause 68 s217 (1a), which outlines that the educational program must be suitable for the child, having regard for their age, ability, aptitude, and development. My concerns around this relate to the ways that a requirement to align with the Australian curriculum may further disadvantage already disenfranchised groups such as my own children, one of whom is severely medically compromised, and 2 of whom have significant mental illness that make attending school unachievable for them. All of my children are home on medical advice, and all of them, if they had to follow the Australian curriculum would be unable to manage the quantity of work, and would become further disengaged. For kids like mine, homeschooling and the freedom to deliver content that is relevant, achievable, and needs based, means they are able to remain engaged in education and develop skills for lifelong learning. Should the Australian curriculum become a requirement for home education, I fear children like mine, particularly my eldest, would have no choice but to apply for medical exemption and leave the education system early, when they already had a program that was working well and keeping them engaged. Surely there must be an alternative to these changes that allows enough oversight of home educating families to keep as many children as possible, as safe as practicable, without compromising the population of kids who have already been shown to not cope in Australian curriculum based schooling. I imagine you may receive concerns from other homeschooling families, and thank you for your time in considering this matter. Most of us are just out here trying to do what's best for our children who don't quite fit in the system