

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Committee Secretary
Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Committee Members,

I strongly oppose the proposed changes in homeschooling legislation, particularly the requirement to follow a specific curriculum. Families know their children better than any other person or system and should have the right to choose the education they consider best for their child/ren. The enforcement of a standardised curriculum overlooks the fact that every child is unique and may thrive in different subject areas or learning environments. By imposing rigid educational requirements, children are deprived of the opportunity to pursue their passions and develop their full potential.

I am the grandmother of homeschooled children (now young adults), and a former teacher of children from early childhood to young teenage in school settings. The home education experiences of our grandchildren and many other young people I know have opened my eyes to the enormous potential and value of homeschooling.

One example is our grandson who experienced so much trauma early in his first year of (State) school that his parents had no option but to choose an alternative education opportunity by mid-way through that year. His whole being was transformed and the mental anguish he had suffered was dispelled when his homeschooling commenced, supported by a wonderful homeschooling support community. That was the beginning of an exciting, challenging and productive homeschooling journey, chosen and experienced also by his siblings. Each child in this family has very different interests, learning styles and needs from each of the others. These were very well catered for by their mother with support and encouragement by the said support centre. They have all excelled, from a very scientifically minded high achiever to a neurodivergent sibling.

Together with numerous families, I am deeply concerned about the creeping influence of external agendas and governmental overreach, which may not align with family values and beliefs as parents. Education should focus on the basics—providing a solid foundation in literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking—without subjecting children to unnecessary indoctrination or ideological agendas.

Families choose home-schooling 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. An effective and vibrant learning environment should be adaptable and flexible, allowing time for content to be processed and understood, even applied. Allowing home-schoolers this opportunity takes the pressure off teachers and schools, where classrooms are overflowing and knowing each child individually to cater for their particular needs can be well-nigh impossible..

When children are encouraged to follow their own learning interests and to set goals tailored to their personal futures, they are empowered to take ownership of their education and chart a course that aligns with their unique talents and ambitions. The personalised approach of homeschooling fosters a sense of personal value and worth, agency and confidence in themselves to control their behaviour, exert influence over their environments and persevere in pursuit of their particular goals. These skills and opportunities are often lacking in traditional school settings, where children may feel constrained by rigid structures and standardised expectations.

I implore the committee to listen to the voices of homeschooling families and to respect their autonomy in crafting educational experiences that truly benefit their children. Please reject the imposition of the national curriculum and instead support policies that promote flexibility, innovation, and parental choice in homeschooling.

Sincerely,

Beverley Schneider

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