

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1340
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Submitter Comments:

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent education legislation changes that have been proposed in our state. As a constituent and a member of the community, I believe it is crucial to voice my apprehensions about the potential impact of these changes on our education system. My name is Sarina Hargreaves and I have a background in teaching. As someone who studied Early Childhood Education many years ago I remember learning the importance of tailoring education to a child's interests. We recently withdrew our grade seven boy from Mansfield State High School because he was completely disinterested in all aspects of school. He was deeply unhappy and we were worried about his welfare. A few short weeks later and he is absolutely thriving with learning at home, in homeschooling co-ops and with activities that are tailored to his particular areas of interests. The proposed legislation raises several pressing concerns that I believe need to be addressed. Firstly, as an active participant in the homeschool community, we participate regularly in multiage learning co-ops and group activities. We regularly capitalise on instruction and lessons from other parents, community members and experts in their fields. Sometimes, this sparks interests and passions within our children and we are able to go away and deeply explore an area of interest. Enforcing the Australian Curriculum will severely limit this opportunistic learning and stifle the ability for us to form multi-age groups as the topics they will be investigating would be dictated according to their year level. The Australian Curriculum is an incredibly complex document that has been tailored to educate children in schools. Many schools employ curriculum specialists to interpret and implement this document. As a homeschooler, we don't have access to this level of expertise. In order to implement this, we would need to base our learning off over-simplified text books, rush through topics and stop the practical, hands-on nature of our learning. In a 1:1 setting, this is not a high quality education. Moreover, I am worried about the lack of transparency and public consultation surrounding these changes. As a stakeholder in our education system, I believe it is imperative for the voices of educators, parents, students, and community members to be heard and considered in any decision-making process that impacts our schools. In light of these concerns, I urge you to carefully reconsider the proposed education legislation and to prioritize the best interests of our students, teachers, and schools. I implore you to advocate for a more inclusive and collaborative approach to policymaking that values input from all stakeholders and ensures the integrity and quality of our education system. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and for considering my concerns. I look forward to your response and to further dialogue on this important issue. Sincerely, Sarina Hargreaves