

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1356
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:

Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Changes to Homeschooling Legislation

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to you with my concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the education bill that has recently been presented to parliament. As a home educating parent, I do not support some of these changes that have been introduced and I am worried about the impact that they will have on my family and the homeschooling community.

I am particularly concerned about who exactly can determine if it is in the best interests of my children to be home educated and the requirements to report evidence demonstrating educational progress on all subject areas of the ACRC in our Plan.

As a Neurodiverse family, our brains learn best when we are developmentally ready for a subject and more importantly, are interested in a subject. Due to the neurodiversities in our family and how they present in our members, the decision to homeschool was the logical choice, our youngest members are not suited to conventional learning environments. While we do have some health professionals that agree with our choice, others do not. So, the question is who would be qualified to determine if home education is in the best interest of our family members? Is it the GP we see for 5 minutes a few times a year? Is it one of the therapists we see weekly? Will we have to send our children to school and have mental health or behavioural problems develop before homeschool is deemed best by a teacher or principal at the school? Will these people actually have the best interest of my children in mind or be prejudiced against homeschool due to their own misunderstanding of what homeschool is?

Choosing homeschool is not an easy choice, it requires vast amounts of time researching, learning and facilitating on the caregivers part, not to mention the financial burden of often losing a second income for the family. Writing a report on all 8 subject areas would be an overwhelming endeavour. Frankly, I'm already overwhelmed at the thought of spending hours writing a thorough report on 3 subjects including examples from different times. Especially since it may not actually be read by anyone.

Instead of being ridiculed and bullied for being different, we spend our days learning about our interests and playing with friends that accept us as we are. Instead of being forced to do worksheets we draw scenes from our favourite stories and reenact them. Our children are learning because they love learning, not memorising something to pass a test. Forcing them to follow the ACRC will stifle their learning, not improve it.

I'm also concerned that the legislation has been introduced without proper consultation with current homeschooling families and I hope that you will take my feedback into consideration. For education to be inclusive of all students, I believe it

is important to understand the reasoning behind the education decisions of the families who struggle the most to fit into mainstream education.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. It is my hope that, going forward, this legislation can suit the needs of all students across Queensland. I look forward to hearing your response about this important issue.

Sincerely,

A Homeschooling Parent of Two Neurodiverse Children