

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1379
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I am writing to express my deep concerns and strong opposition to the proposed changes in homeschooling legislation, in particular:

1. Requirement to prove that home education is in the best interest of a child. As a parent who has chosen homeschooling path for my children I strongly believe that home education should remain to be a valid and legal PARENTAL CHOICE OPTION in Australia. The proposed requirement for parents to justify their child's eligibility to homeschool is a government overreach and raises significant concerns. Who should decide what type of education is in my child's best interests? Somebody within the government authority who most likely has barely seen my child or has never met him indeed? To be forced to justify our choice and ask for permission to homeschool feels like a massive violation of our rights as parents. Furthermore, do parents who choose private schools have to justify their educational choices? We all, of course, know that they are not, so following the same logic, why not? Based on your discriminatory assumption that homeschooling is not a "proper" valid educational choice? Why homeschool option is going to be marginalised and discriminated versus private education option whether in fact homeschooling is the most expensive form of education for families because in most cases it requires one parent to sacrifice their full time income in order to deliver individualised, high quality learning with one on one support? This requirement is definitely unfair and unnecessary. If you are going ahead despite absolute majority of homeschooling parents in QLD opposing this proposed change, at least make it fair and equal for all parents in QLD, and request all parents in QLD who do not chose public schooling to justify their educational choices and request permission for their choices from the government.
2. Requirement to align with the Australian Curriculum. I am very disappointed that the government has failed to recognise that many, if not most of the families do choose homeschooling exactly because they find the Australian Curriculum inadequate for meeting the unique needs of their children, especially those who are advanced and gifted or have special needs, disability and/or neurodivergency. As a homeschooling parent, I deeply value the flexibility to tailor my child's education to suit their unique needs, strengths, interests, and learning styles. It is important for me as a parent to be able to choose homeschool materials and resources that are of the highest quality and not be limited to the particular rigid requirements. I am also deeply concerned, that while the government is trying to impose the Australian Curriculum on homeschooling families, it is again fails to do so in a fair, non-discriminating way. Schools that deliver the Australian Curriculum are eligible for state funding, and students are able to complete ATAR tests. Why are these changes not applied to homeschooling families? Why are you forcing homeschooling families to adhere to the Australian Curriculum at their own expenses? Why are you not allowing our children to participate in completing ATAR should they choose so? I believe if this requirement is implemented, you need to allocate funding for homeschooling educators for the Australian Curriculum related resources. Our children should also become eligible for state funding for the same experiences public students have access to as part of following the Australian Curriculum (excursions, swimming festivals, participating in sports and any other extracurricular activities available in public schools).
3. Excessive reporting requirements. A requirement to report on all subjects while only 10% of the reporting will be checked is simply humiliating and completely disrespectful of homeschooling parents' time and efforts. What is the true purpose of this? To make homeschooling a burden and impose unnecessary stress and workload on homeschooling families while no one will read 90% of our reports? The time spent compiling these reports will destruct us from valuable teaching and learning and does not add any value to our children's education. In conclusion, I strongly oppose

the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation and urge you to reconsider them in light of the overwhelming amount of concerns raised by the homeschooling community. Sincerely, Elena Tapia Cortez