


Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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24/03/2024

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re:Submission in response to the Educational General Provisions Act Review, the 'Bill'.

Thank you for taking time to read my submission to the committee. I am writing in relation to my experience encountered regarding education for our family. I am a wife and mother of 2 children (son aged 14years, and daughter aged 12 years). We have chosen to Homeschool our children via the Home Education Unit option in Queensland. Prior to 3 years ago, we chose to send our children to a school in the local area that provided what we believed to be a reasonable quality education that our children could be a part of. From that decision, we quickly gained a wide and varied experience and impressions of our children attending school and not at all what we had anticipated when we first begun the journey. Our son did well academically for his age/ability level, and did not encounter bullying issues while at the school. He was/is a curious child, and we discovered while at school, there was a lack of adequate supervision toward students viewing content online. School and Parent controlling expectations on electronic devices were vague, and children were more concerned about they 'could get away with' when learning online.

While at the school, we also discovered that our son and daughter didn't receive a reasonable amount of the basic core curriculum, (eg. Maths and English). The curriculum offered at the school was overloaded with extra curricula additions which we realised was a total distraction from basic learning. As a family it was decided to take our children out of school. We opted for Homeschool and registered with the Home Education Unit. Care and attention has gone into the Education plan for each of our children, and after it was submitted to the Home Education Unit, was satisfied that the criteria was met as a reasonable and quality Education plan. This year, my son (year 9) has begun a TAFE Queensland maths Unilearn course meeting his maths requirements at a Year 9 level. He has demonstrated the acumen and interest in using skills and interests in the field of Engineering. He has part-time employment, and has demonstrated a level of independence for learning. Our daughter (year 7) has expressed an interest working in the field of Nursing when she finishes school. These are very useful skills that our children have communicated, and their desire is genuine to be useful citizens when they begin their working life. **As parents of children who are home educated, we primarily don't want to plan or report to the national curriculum** as what is recommended in the 'Bill'. The children are able to currently access a quality education from the options provided without overloading their learning in subjects that have minimal to no relevance.

I strongly believe that if we had kept our children in the school setting, we as a family would have been experiencing issues such as bullying, technology abuse (eg. being distracted with how to bypass school restrictions, and find interest levels that we understood to be exposure to sensitive adult inappropriate material online). Children are still children who don't have the ability or self control to block out such material, and the

school our son attended, we felt were not up to a reasonable standard of online protection for students. The school insisted that parents needed to include and supply technology for school learning purposes, however, it was up to parents to 'parent control' the technology. We found this an impossible task, as we learned how each school family had a varying standard in what to reasonably guard as safe.

As a matter of conscience, our family decided there was too much at stake if we had continued to go down the path of sending our children to the local school. We had higher hopes and expectations for our children than the reasonable standard and hopes the school had for them. The schools implementation of curriculum was not demonstrated as a quality education enough from our observations, and experiences with it.

From my background, I was educated partly in New South Wales and in partly in Queensland for my Primary and Secondary schooling years. I understand that teaching and learning outcomes are vastly different in standards and implementation for both states. What is a reasonable quality education in New South Wales is vastly different than what is a reasonable quality education in Queensland.

Finally, I am a teacher of 30 years. My parents made sure I had a complete education through my schooling, and I chose to be a Teacher after graduating from High School. I come from a non-english speaking migrant family background. Since having a Teaching Degree, I have taught in remote Aboriginal schools in outback Queensland, Migrant Community State schools where the students come from a non-English speaking family background, I have taught in schools with a high level of LGBTQI+ student attendance, State schools from low Socio-Economic background families, State Special Schools and Units, Hospital schools, and State High Special Education. I understand diversity and challenges in implementing curriculum in education and there must be flexibility to demonstrate and implement a quality education for the child coming from a teaching and parent perspective. With homeschooling , **I don't want to demonstrate progress in all subjects every year as a portion of them are not relevant, or reasonable for a quality education.**

On a personal level, when our family chose education for our children, we wanted to pursue quality learning so that they would be of value to society, and have useful lives as adult citizens with reasonable and quality outcomes. As a teacher, and parent, I understand the constraints of the education system. I understand how children are full packages of skills and abilities, and one curriculum directive cannot directly meet the needs of each individual child but must demonstrate a flexibility so that the child can thrive in the person that they are to become. The current education "Bill" tabled in Parliament is very relevant to the overall education of children in Queensland. It must provide flexibility to give children a chance at quality education for where they're at. **We as a family, don't approve of the proposed changes to the current Education model in Queensland. We don't agree to the guiding principle that homeschooling must be proven to be in the best interest of our child/ren.**

Thank you for your interest this matter. *I request for my name to be withheld from your published submission.*

Regards

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