

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1436
Submitted by: Rachel Brown
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Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes in homeschooling legislation, particularly the requirement to follow a specific curriculum. As a former homeschooling parent and now a homeschooling grandparent currently supporting my daughter and grandchildren I firmly believe that these changes would undermine the very reasons why many families, including mine, have chosen homeschooling as the preferred mode of education for our children. The reasons homeschoolers choose this way of education are many and varied.... I began homeschooling when my 3rd child was in primary school. He was an academic child and did well consistently achieving above expectations but was overwhelmed and exhausted socially which led to school refusal. We first chose Distance Ed but that didn't work well for him and he became disengaged from the curriculum. We then moved to homeschooling and the change in him was dramatic. He relished the autonomy to pursue education in a way that best suited his interests and needs. It was illuminating to see his self driven passion and deep dive into many and varied subjects compared to his older siblings who had both completed traditional school. In year 10 he chose to enrol in an accelerated English and maths program as he wanted to see where he fitted amongst his peers and graduated with distinctions. There are many pathways to University that homeschooled children can choose. His was to successfully complete a tertiary prep program and gain entry into his chosen university course and is continuing to study with a Grade Point Average of 6. My grandchildren are thriving in their homeschool environment with the variety of educational classes and social opportunities that they take part in weekly within their very active homeschooling community. The very core nature of homeschooling lies in the freedom it affords children to learn in a manner that aligns with their individual interests, abilities, and learning styles. By imposing a mandated curriculum, these proposed changes would have impeded my child and now my grandchildren's autonomy to pursue education in a way that best suits their needs. One of the primary motivations for homeschooling is to provide our children with a personalized learning experience that fosters their intellectual curiosity and allows them to learn at their own pace. These new regulations threaten to restrict this flexibility and stifle their natural inclination to explore and discover the world around them. Furthermore, enforcing a standardized curriculum fails to recognize the diverse interests and talents of homeschooling students. It overlooks the fact that every child is unique and may thrive in different subject areas or learning environments. By imposing rigid educational requirements, we risk depriving our children of the opportunity to pursue their passions and develop their full potential. As a homeschooling parent and now grandparent deeply invested in my children/grandchildren's education, I urge the committee to table that all reference to home schooling be removed from this bill apart from raising the age to 18 and allow the department to actually undertake rigorous, genuine consultation with stakeholders as it should be clear by this point that it hasn't happened. Please focus on supporting families in providing a rich and diverse educational experience tailored to the needs of each child. Thank you for considering my concerns. Sincerely, Rachel Brown [Homeschooling Parent/Granny]