

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1515
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Submitter Comments:

Dear EGPA Committee Members,

I am writing to express my 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 objections to the potential impact of these changes on our education system.

I am a mother of a 10yo daughter who has ASD Level 1, ADHD and DCD. I have been homeschooling her since January 2022. I was homeschooled for most of my school career and went on to study at TAFE and then to university where I obtained a Diploma of Travel and Tourism.

The proposed legislation raises several pressing concerns that I believe need to be addressed.

Firstly, I would like to say that it would be much easier for me to send my daughter to public school for her education as I am not a trained qualified teacher, so I have to work hard to ensure my daughter is learning what she needs to become an educated member of society. However, she was not progressing in her learning at school. After 3 years in the public school system, she had not learnt to read even basic words and her math skills were nowhere near the level they should be. I had a child that was not learning isolated socially and would refuse to even get ready for school let alone get in the car and go. I tried everything I could think of to try and help her, but nothing worked. Reluctantly I decided to try homeschooling and have seen a marked improvement in her reading and math skills. I am able to teach her in a way that makes sense to her and use her interests to encourage learning.

Secondly, I would like to say that making legislation that dictates that all home educated children must be taught following the ACARA model reduces the flexibility that is what homeschooling is mostly about. One of the biggest reasons I chose to homeschool was that the curriculum being taught in the school was not conducive to the way my daughter learns and only works for children who learn in a certain way.

Thirdly, I feel that the legislation is worded in such a way as to infringe on parental rights and ultimately the parent of the child knows what's best for the child and homeschooling parents are interested in ensuring that our children receive the best education possible for our children. This can be achieved through many different ways and methods of education and saying that we must follow specific curriculum undermines the rights of parents to choose what is best for their children.

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 ability to educate our children to the highest standard.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to carefully reconsider the proposed education legislation and to prioritise the best interests of our rapidly growing and proactive home educating community. 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 on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Martin