

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1594
Submitted by: Sara Christie
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Submitter Comments:

I am writing to express my deep 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 to a neurodivergent child who has been homeschooling since 2022 after the school system failed him. The one-size-fits-all approach that schools are required to follow, does not recognise the needs of our diverse children nor is it in their best interest. I have witnessed this first hand, through my son's mental health. The proposed legislation raises several pressing concerns that I believe need to be addressed. Firstly, I oppose the inclusion of the definition of a 'high quality education' being limited to the Australian Curriculum. I find this restrictive and will make it difficult to be able to provide a high-quality education in the home learning environment, for my children with divergent needs. Conforming to the very same process that we saved my son from, will see a drastic decline in his mental health, his self-esteem, his behaviour, his confidence, his ability to retain information and his overall love of learning, just as it did when he was in school. Secondly, I oppose the increased reporting requirements included in the legislation. The information we already provide far exceeds the reporting required by Education Queensland teachers and to provide this information for every single subject is unreasonable. Including the provision to demonstrate educational progress for each subject also exceeds the requirements for schools and teachers in Queensland. The reports we received from his teachers were a simple tick stating if he was below average, average or above average in each subject. Now this legislation is asking us to provide more than what paid teachers are required to do, is just unacceptable and unfair. The workload on top of what we are already doing by educating our children will be substantially increased. Researching and facilitating home education takes a lot of time and energy, but we (my child, myself, my husband and our allied health professional's) have agreed that this path is in the best interest for our son. We collectively decided to follow this path with our child because he just doesn't respond to the Australian Curriculum. As a parent, it would be substantially easier to just enroll my child into distance education or a school but we have already discovered that this method of learning would be detrimental to my child and his mental health and well-being. Drawing on our experience with traditional schooling and learning methods, we would be unable to successfully follow the Australian Curriculum. As a homeschooling family, we have tried using the Australian Curriculum to educate our child, both at school and at home. It just doesn't work for our son. To this date, we have been fortunate to have the flexibility to choose how we provide a high-quality education for our child, and our once struggling and disengaged child is now thriving both in education and in his overall mental health. 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 prioritize 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.