

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1612
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:

To the Queensland Parliament Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my dismay upon hearing of the proposed Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. To say that I strongly oppose your amendments, would be an understatement.

I would also like to express my disgust that the Home Educating Community were not consulted adequately and in fact, I am still meeting families who have not received notice from HEU about this proposed Legislation. As a result of this failure in communication, they are completely unaware that they have an opportunity to express their opposition.

After not being consulted adequately, we have been given just 2 weeks to notify our community ourselves. Regardless of how many submissions you receive, there will still be an under representation of our level of disapproval, so I urge you to take that into consideration.

I worked in the school system, (using the National Curriculum) for 20yrs. I have been home educating for the past 2.5yrs. From my experience, the National Curriculum is not the Gold Standard in education.

- My children were above average at school according to their report cards.

After removing them from school and assessing where they were academically, I discovered HUGE holes in their education. I was appalled!

My grade 8 child was unable to understand simple grade 4 math concepts, yet she had been receiving an above average grade at school for years. It became very apparent that the curriculum had simply steamrolled over her and kept going.

I am now educating her with a homeschooling program that gives me access to all grade levels. She works according to her actual abilities in each concept, not what an arbitrary timeline dictates. While we are fixing the holes in her math education (left by the National Curriculum and the broken school system), she is a gifted musician and at the age of 15 is doing her first Cert 3 course and thriving!! I don't recognise her compared to the child I knew just 3 short years ago! Her teacher is amazed at what an avid learner she is. He told her that she stands out above the other students in his class (who are all school children).

In addition to TAFE and her at home studies, she is also interning with the Principal of a Performing Arts Academy, as she hopes to own and run her own performing arts academy one day. She attends classes there, teaches younger students and has begun writing scripts and composing musical scores!

She attends a teen co-op that is run by another ex-teacher. It is run with no more than 10 teens and utilises hands on learning and real-world experiences. They cover the subjects of English, History, Geography, Science and Economics. Her retention of information and as a result, her education, is unrecognisable from what she achieved, under the National Curriculum.

If these amendments go through and we are forced to reduce her education down to what the National Curriculum dictates, she will go back to receiving a sub-par education, instead of being free to excel and thrive in her current high-quality education.

- As I mentioned before, I've worked for decades in the school system and well know that you need to do things a certain way, purely because you have 30 children in your class. It is absolutely impossible to treat them all as individuals and tailor their learning to exactly what each individual needs. This is why we have a National Curriculum, to make sure that there is some sort of way for teachers to manage. It was NEVER designed to be used by untrained parents. Nor should it need to be.

The other thing that I was appalled by, when I worked in schools, is the sheer volume of paperwork that was required. More time is spent filling out paperwork or working to regurgitate facts for an exam, than actual teaching time! It's so wrong!

Requiring parents to complete even more paperwork than we already do, is ridiculous. I don't have time for that. I'm too busy tailoring an individualised education for my children. Your new amendments would be detrimental to our Home Education standards.

- Requiring parents to report on all 8 subject areas is asking them for more than trained teachers are required to do. Teachers give a paragraph of information for only two subjects, twice a year! In fact, with our desire to constantly assess how our children are going academically in order to make the necessary changes in real time, we already do more to educate our children than teachers do.

When I worked in the Education Sector, I thought I was doing what was best for the children. I had no idea what Homeschooling was all about and nor did I care to. I thought they were all freaks and weirdos.

I WAS SO WRONG. I am ashamed of my past ignorance, now that I have seen the standard of education these amazing parents have been providing for their children.

I feel sorry for all the children left in schools.

- I saw them lose their individuality with every demand for conformity. Cookie-cutter education, turns out look-alike workers, all taught to think the exact same way.
- They are wasting precious years, that could be better used to pursue their career or entrepreneurial aspirations.
- I watched them lose their love of learning, with every moment spent in their classrooms.
- I watched their mental health deteriorate, with many children suffering from depression, anxiety, self-loathing and even suicidal thoughts.

If our country truly values individuality, innovation, inclusion, diversity and excellence, then we ought to be investing in the Homeschooling community. Home Educating families are forced to still pay our taxes, which go towards State Education, yet we get zero benefit from that.

Up until now, we have gone about our very important business of educating our children despite the financial hardship that it causes. Perhaps you should look at how the Government could spend our tax money on helping us cover the expense of the classes our children take or the curriculum we need to source.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Educational Advocate and Home Educating Parent