

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1676
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Dear Committee,

I am writing to express my concern about proposed changes in the **Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024**.

I do not personally have children in Home Education, but I do have family members who do. I have also in the past considered it myself.

After watching the briefing delivered last Monday, 18th March, I would like to make the following comments:

Australian Curriculum: As a parent with children who have and are still using this curriculum via 'school education' and 'distance education', I can attest to the fact that the workload on children and teachers is horrendous. It is an overloaded, over-politicised curriculum putting way too much focus on non-essential learning areas filled with political agendas. It is a cookie-cutter curriculum with limited at best, ways to accommodate different learning styles. There is less and less time to do 'hands-on learning' which is one of the best ways for a lot of students to learn.

'Individualised Learning Plans' in the school system generally, to my knowledge, are only used when students have diagnosed learning difficulties or gifts. The majority are stuck with the 'cookie-cutter' plan. Home-schooling parents are required to show how they have tailored their learning plan to suit each individual child. Higher quality education than schooling and 'in the best interest of the child'? YES!

Why would the government try to force Home Schooling parents to use a system of education which has not stood our youth in good stead for many years.

According to multiple news reports from 2017 to 2021, Australia's educational world ranking has been in a downward slide: '*Australia has been [ranked 39 out of 41 high- and middle-income countries](#) in achieving quality education*', ¹: '*In the early 2000s, Australia ranked fourth among OECD nations for reading, eighth for science and 11th in maths. In 2018, the country's rank fell to 16th in reading, 17th in science and 29th in maths.*'², '*In 2018, [Australian 15 years olds performed](#) more than a year below those in 2003 in maths, about a year lower in reading than those in 2000 and a year worse in science than those in 2006.*'³.

194% increase in Home Education from 2019-2023: Why is this the case? What is wrong with the state schooling system that there has been such an increase in recent years? Obviously, parents are looking for a better system of education for their children. Perhaps the government should be offering the HEU more staff to be better able to handle the influx instead of creating more work for home schooling parents in reporting requirements.

80% of registered home-schooling families chose NOT to use the Australian Curriculum: no matter how you try to emphasize that 20% of home educators use the Australian Curriculum, that is only one-fifth compared to **four-fifths who do not**.

'Best interest of the child' – 99.9% of the time it is parents who know what's best for their own children. The government is overstepping their role in trying to make parents prove that home-schooling is 'in the best interest of the child'. **Will parents of school-educated children also have to show that their enrolment choice 'is in the best interest of the child'?**

1 suicide- As mentioned in the briefing by Kathleen Forrester (DoE), a lot of these proposed changes have come about after recommendations from the Child Death Review Board report 2022-2023, due to the sad case of one 15yr old, home-schooled boy who committed suicide. What about the 19 which occurred among 'school-educated' students? Often, school-based education is a toxic place for many, and often **not in the best interest of the child**.

Removal of Provisional Legislation- There is no possible way that a parent can meet your supposed new changes of having an entire program planned before the parent /child qualifies for 'registration'. Will students be marked as 'truant' if they are removed from their current school while their parents work to provide the HEU with a full program?

Proof of educational progress: Again, a one-sided change meaning home educators need to provide proof that their child/ren are progressing, yet this seems not to be the case for teachers in the schooling system.

I ask you to consider is it not 'in the best interest of the child,' to receive an education tailored to their individual needs and gifts so they can flourish and achieve to the best of their potential, surrounded by those who love and care for them? Parents know their kids best and should have the freedom to choose what form of education their children receive.

Governments' place is not dictating these issues to parents, unless of course we are no longer a democratic society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Paula Draper

1. <https://www.smh.com.au/education/un-agency-ranks-australia-39-out-of-41-countries-for-quality-education-20170615-qwrt9u.html>

2. <https://www.3aw.com.au/the-chief-reason-why-australias-global-education-rankings-are-slipping/>

3. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-12-04/top-ranking-education-systems-in-world-arent-there-by-accident/11766042>