

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1736
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Publication: Making the submission public but withholding your name
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

Dear Committee Members, I have a number of concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the education bill that has recently been presented to parliament. As a home schooling parent, my main concerns are as follows. 1. The lack of genuine consultation with home schooling families in Queensland and representatives from within the community prior to formulating these amendments. The home schooling community is a steadily growing community in Queensland. There seems to be little research or attempt by government to understand WHY so many families are choosing an alternative way of learning. It is definitely NOT the easier option. Our family has chosen to forgo a second income and make significant lifestyle choices to facilitate this learning style. My wife spends much more time facilitating learning opportunities for our children than she would spend at work and my children get a much more immersive and individualised educational experience than they would get at school. We're happy to do so, because after careful consideration we've decided that home education is better aligned than mainstream school with our family values - values like physical health and wellbeing, spending time outdoors and in nature, learning practical life skills, spending time IN the community and contributing to it, fostering strong family relationships, making time for rest and creativity etc. But I encourage you to actually engage with the home schooling community to get a deeper understanding of why families are increasingly choosing this option. 2. I object to the inclusion of a guiding principle that calls into question my natural authority and instincts as a parent to make the best choices for my child. Home education is a viable, legal educational option in Australia. I have the right to choose my child's education. If a government official or doctor who does not understand home learning or my child decides that it is in the best interest of my child to attend school, then what power do I have to object to that? 3. I object to the inclusion of the Australian National curriculum as the only definition of a high quality education. Any legislative changes need to allow for learning and curriculums that are outside the Australian Curriculum box. The current legislation already requires families to submit a learning plan that provides a high quality education for their child and then report on how that plan was delivered at the end of the year. This allows for flexibility, family learning, following children's interests and abilities while also ticking the box of "high quality education". ACARA is not suitable for all families and all learners. I implore you to account for this in any changes to legislation. Thank you for your time. I look forward to increased collaboration and understanding in response to the genuine concerns of many home learning families on these issues.