

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Dear Minister of Education and Queensland Parliament Committee for Education,

Proposed changes to Home Schooling legislation

I am writing to you to express my concerns around the proposed changes to QLD Homeschooling legislation – changes that are dubbed to be in the best interests of homeschooling children and the families that deliver this form of education. I could not disagree more strongly with this sentiment.

My story

As a medically retired Military veteran, I understand the importance of rules and why things may be done in certain ways – however, homeschooling is not one of these realms. Our almost 12 months of Homeschooling experience has allowed my daughter to become a more diverse and self-motivated learner. We began our journey using the Euka program, but quickly learned this method of delivery was not for us. We have now evolved into a book based and Khan Academy supported syllabus. My daughter has developed an interest in coding and computer programming, film making and Lego model creation with view to create her own remote controlled Lego models – STEM topics my daughter barely had exposure to whilst contained within the school curriculum. She is allowed to use her imagination and follow her interests as they arise. This is not a possibility within the rigid school curriculum.

The very much child led curriculum I deliver in a one-on-one environment is second to none for my daughter's education. I dare say my daughter's passion for learning would be extinguished if forced to follow topics that barely hold her interest, whereas, supported within her own curiosity her worldly knowledge is ever growing and being built upon through her day to day exposure to a variety of real world experiences as she follows my journey of health management, property ownership, paying taxes and surviving in and observing real world topics and scenarios. We also have plans to travel abroad in the coming years, locations such as Greece – birthplace of democracy and cradle of civilisation – we are already tying knowledge of the region to our schooling experiences.

Our freedom to explore her interests as they develop and show her in real world scenarios, without the condemnations of peers (my daughter was picked on at school for her academic and athletic achievements – who knew this would be something we would face). She is free to develop at her own pace whilst exploring the topics that she loves most, in her own time.

Our story is not an isolated one, it could be said that homeschooling is a privileged existence as many parents could not afford to support themselves whilst devoting so much time and energy to their child's education. I am so very glad to have chosen this path – for both myself and my daughter, losing my career has allowed me this opportunity. My point here being, many homeschooling parents take the responsibility of tailored education for their children with great seriousness and passion, this role is no mild undertaking – it is a lifestyle choice. I don't get days off, I don't actually get paid to educate my child and I must solve any problems I encounter through the support of the fantastic network of parents within the online homeschool community.

Lack of consultation

It has also come to my attention that the suggested implementation of this new legislation has failed to take into consideration the circumstances with which many children homeschool and the real time delivery of the homeschooling experience. Perspectives of homeschooling families has gone completely unheard, this is easily seen across the various social media platforms shared within the homeschool community in QLD and across Australia.

With that being said, I implore you – you need to strongly consider the impact of attempting to impose curriculum on the QLD homeschool community. Homeschooling is a flexible, functional educational CHOICE for 10 000 children in QLD, these children are happy, thriving, and actually have far better chances to reach their full potential and will no doubt become some of the most functional adults and leaders in our society of the future. Many of these children are directly involved with designing their own curriculum and often begin university education before many of their peers – these children are being nurtured by supportive, motivated parents – parents who wish for their children to seek their passions and achieve to their full potential in their adult lives.

Forced legislation changes to the EGPA of homeschooling in QLD serves no purpose to the best interests of homeschooled children.

Sincerely,

Naomi McManus

Veteran

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