

## Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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To whom it may concern

When I first had children, I thought homeschooling was for farmers and those of religious faith. I never considered it an option for my children until my son started Kindy. I could see how hard it was already to fit a model he didn't fit. So, I looked into options and started learning about homeschooling, I thought for later primary or maybe high school years. We attended prep interviews. I applied for all who accepted out of catchment so we could find the best fit. Not one cared about fitting my child, they just wanted to keep him still. They refused to discuss how he would still learn and get a quality education only talking about how to get him to stay still, not bother people and attend every day. They strongly told me I shouldn't take a therapy day/ rest day to help him transition. When I actually got yelled at for voicing safety concern about the environment and my son i.e. who would stop him climbing the external stairs at lunch. I knew we had to look elsewhere.

My son has thrived and gotten more dx as has his brother. They are both dyslexic. They both now read, for fun, everything, even resources designed for adults, they are 11 and 10.

I have been completing plans and reports for 6 and 5 years. Their progress is consistent for them not ACARA. They learn new things and are getting real life skills and great foundations for higher learning. It would be exceptionally difficult to align what we do with ACARA without it nearly being a complete fabrication. I know because I tried one year. I have a science degree, several certs, I write NDIS reports and plans and so many other things. And this plan near broke me. Usually, I enjoy the reports they are quiet reflection on how far we have come and excitement where I think we will go this coming year. But with ACARA I cried, I despaired it took me days, days I wasn't providing education for my children. I am not ACAR trained to say that all parents could do this is either to say teachers' education is redundant or that you need to put in supports for parents to comply like the NDIS do with LAC's.

I have been following the updates to the Education bill closely and whilst I agree with some of the changes I had questions about the others. On watching the committee briefing I became very concerned. The response from the Department of education Team not only conflicted with their published findings in stage 1 consultations their other responses skirted so many facts that they barely contained any truth and I believe they were **DELIBERATELY MISLEADING**.

So, I would like to present to you some facts from the stage 1 consultation published on the education Queensland website and some other well-known facts by stakeholders.

**61%** of home schoolers have a child with a disability or limiting health condition.

According to Australian statistics the general population has **7.4%** disability.

You can not directly compare these populations as was done at the committee hearing.

Disabled children are not doing well in schools with ACARA. **72%** of home schoolers started in mainstream, they have already been failed by acara once. ACARA is listed in the stage 1 findings for why parents left mainstream. I am also in many online support groups for parents of children with disabilities and every 3<sup>rd</sup> post is about school not working for their child. Parents are at breaking point. And they find support in these social media groups. Support that their child isn't broken, bad, or stupid that they aren't a terrible mum and that there are other options, and it is in this way that social media is influencing the growth of homeschooling.

**45%** of Homeschool families **NEVER EVER EVER** thought they would homeschool. They didn't believe in it until they had to as they had no other option. I didn't until my child started Kindy.

**77%** of Parents have above high school qualifications. Instead of worrying about how that other **23%** will be able to do it, I implore you to think about how bad things must be that they have to try. I see their posts in groups too. Petrified their child isn't getting an education at school and working out how they themselves can do better than those with formal qualifications letting them down.

Almost half of homeschooling parents have worked in a school in some capacity and have given up on it. **20%** of Homeschool parents are teachers and instead of seeing that as a goal please consider why even teachers are pulling their children out of ACARA.

The statement was also made that these changes will bring us into alignment with other states. Yet due to stakeholders apart of our conversation this is not true. Many people have moved states and been registered in both, and they do not concur that what is proposed in Queensland is what is occurring in other states. I would like to see actual comparisons between the 2.

They also stated ACARA is the best as 20% use it. People aren't using it for a reason. One plan does not fit all.

All of stage 1 finding were dismissed – no real reason given but an inference that there was a small sample size of only 10% ( I would like to see the statistical findings on this) which is significantly larger than the sample size of 0 in stage 2.

Stage 2 stakeholder were chosen and have not been publicly announced. We have managed to discern the following.

**HEA** - Does include home schoolers. But after a very public coop and legal battle many home schoolers don't acknowledge them, they are also National and may not actually understand qld policies.

**Wirraglen** are the only associations representing home schoolers **BUT** they are only 1 of many large organised homeschool communities across qld. In fact Amanda Bartly who runs one of these large groups was denied from contributing meaningfully.

Other groups in just my area that I am aware of are Ipswich homeschooled, southwest home schoolers, springfield home schoolers, BUSNL. There are so many I myself run a small tween group and am in the process of setting up a large early year's group for next year for my younger children.

**The Christian schools committee guy Terry.** Are they including home schoolers under the school banner? The majority of home schoolers are not religious.

Simple Homeschool – This is a for profit group, it's a business, its concerns are about money and not what home schoolers want.

Euka again another business.

Not one of these groups represent me. I made my voice heard in stage 1. Perhaps they should have followed up with these people as a representative group.

They need to listen to the real stake holders.

They have seen the pattern of growing homeschool community but still they don't seek to work out why.

If you see people fleeing a building you don't shove them back in, you work out why.

Kind Regards

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