

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

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**To:** [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)  
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Dear Committee, Di Farmer - Minister for Education, Christian Rowan - Shadow Education Minister, Steven Miles - Qld Premier and Shane Knuth - local MP.

My name is Diane Abbott, I home education 3 of my grandchildren, aged 12, 10 and 7yrs. I have been homeschooling for 2 years, my homeschooling journey began because my youngest grandchild insisted, from the first day of prep, that he wanted to be homeschooled. His insistence, tears and pleading for 6 months is the reason I embarked on the homeschooling journey.

It is for the above reason I object to the proposals in Education Bill 2024.

Firstly, I would like to say the proposal to remove provisional approval, will be to the detriment of many children and parents. I was persistent in trying to 'force' my grandson to remain in the education system. Firstly, because I did not believe I had the choice to homeschool (I sent my own five (5) children to school). And, secondly because I did not think I had the knowledge to homeschool. How wrong I was on both levels.

Due to the ongoing tears and persistency of my grandson, I finally made the decision to homeschool. At the time, my then 10 yr old grandson decided he also wanted to be homeschooled. If I had been forced, to force my grandson to school whilst awaiting approval, it would have been to the detriment of my grandsons emotional wellbeing. I had allowed ample time to 'see' how things would go, they didn't work out so I made the decision to remove him from formal education and began the homeschooling journey. He was already traumatised from being at school and after six months I did think I had provided enough time to make a decision based on his emotional wellbeing. Removing the provisional approval process, is saying that parents are not willing or able to assess their own children's needs or what is in their best interest. I assessed, I persisted and I held discussions with the teachers, removing the provisional approval will only add further grief, unnecessarily.

Initially I applied joined up with EUKA, thinking that mainstream education was the answer, however I quickly established that the main school curriculum, was not a good fit as my youngest grandson was resistant to much of the curriculum. Fortunately I was able to adapt his learning, to a more relaxed way of learning. Both grandsons have excelled since being homeschooled, they have a better relationship together and they know that learning is not to be rushed, but rather something that can progress at a level they are comfortable with. Less than six months ago my granddaughter also requested to be homeschooled.

With regard to Educational progress and proof of EVERY level (8 subjects), I strongly

appose such a regimented expectation at home. My granddaughter was kept down in grade one due to concerns about her level of understanding. Although she was a trier, she struggled, and I was concerned, that one day, she will stop trying and her focus will turn to behaviours which will be counter productive for her and the classroom. Initially the school was apposed to me keeping her down, however within the first term on the following year, all professionals involved confirmed the idea to repeat grade one was a good idea.

Prior to my granddaughter being homeschooled I had received her midyear report which suggested she was doing well at school and at her expected year level. However once at home I quickly realised that she was still struggling with both math and English. Whilst she was almost at the end of year 4 she was unable to complete simply math of that year level, I had to return to year 3 Math, which although a challenge was achievable with one on one support. Support she did not and would not receive at school. Further to this her English was clearly way behind what was suggested in her report card, when I did question how she had previously answered / completed work in her book in the past, she responded: "the teacher just writes it on the board". This is not a style of learning, in fact it did not help her to learn at all.

Although, I myself, hold a University degree I was not sure I would have the necessary skills and knowledge to teacher my grandchildren. It has been a learning for both them and myself, I have read up on homeschooling, I have gathered resources for learning from stores where schools purchase resources for learning and I have joined up with the many other homeschooling parents in my area.

I am concerned that the decision to change the 'rules' around home schooling is based on a knee jerk reaction to an incident which, compared to the benefits of homeschooling such a response is unnecessary and counter productive. It is well known by anyone in society that the Child Protection System has failed children for many, many years, the education system is not a safe secure environment for our children and IT IS LITERALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE SYSTEM TO KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE.

Since homeschooling my grandchildren I have been horrified of the stories they have told me, stories they did not disclose whilst at school. Bullying is out of control, and the teachers and staff are NOT able to prevent it. One story my grandson told me: he wouldn't use the toilets at school [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for fear of the door getting kicked open by other boys. This is highly concerning, even more so that this went on for years without my knowledge. In reality, even if he told me and I spoke to the school about it, HOW would they prevent this from happening? Schools are under staffed already, there is a lack of resources right across the board, Education, Health and Child Protection.

Our children are our future, if we don't look after them who will. The State has failed to provide a safe place for our children, and parents should have the right to make decisions based on what they think is the best for their children. I would rather see children grow up with confidence and self esteem, instead of anxiety driven behaviours which destroy the

essence of who they truly are.

The State need to stop trying to control our children and our lives, WE are the experts on our children's needs, WE care for them and provide for their every need, so why does the State think it is their role to dictate how WE education our children? If schools were better resourced and more focus placed on individual learning rather than a 'one size fits all' then maybe more people would trust the state to educate our children. Currently the level of trust in the Education System able to protect our children and their Mental Health, Confidence and Self Esteem is almost a ZERO. If I may have a suggestion: place more focus on amending the Education Systems style of learning, look at the research and spend money and focus on resources to make schools a safer place. The number of suicides by school aged children is insane, and soooo many due to bullying issues IN THE SCHOOL.

Not all parents are cruel and cause harm, most homeschoolers homeschool because they want what is best for their children. Have you ever taken the time to talk to children who are homeschooled and what they think? Have you ever asked parents why they homeschool? I've spoken with teachers who, themselves say, if they didn't have a Mortgage to pay they would homeschool themselves (and that is not just one teacher, there are many).

Please reconsider the changes to homeschoolers. Let parents who want to make a difference for their children's lives do so. If parents are so concerned about their children and want to homeschool - The State should be more focused on making it possible for all parents to have a choice FOR THE BEST INTEREST OF THEIR CHILDREN.

My only regret is that I didn't know what I know now. I would have homeschooled my own children. School had a negative impact on 2 of my 5 children, and had I known back then, that it was possible to homeschool, I may have been able to avoid 2 of my children suffering the negative impact of the ongoing bullying. And they would likely NOT have the anxiety they experience today, some 15 years on. The school system can be extremely damaging for so many, caring parents are only trying to assist their children in learning in a safe and unpressured environment.

Thank you for your time.

Diane Abbott

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