

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 2050
Submitted by: [REDACTED]
Publication: Making the submission public but withholding your name
Attachments: No attachment
Submitter Comments:

For the Attention of The Committee:

We wish to make a submission objecting to the proposed changes in the Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislations Amendment Bill 2024.

As parents, our paramount goal is to provide the best life, health and education for our children. We are very concerned that the proposed changes to home educating in Queensland will disadvantage our family.

Our high-achieving, well-behaved children suffered physical and mental health conditions and educational setbacks as a result of negative primary school experiences. We are thankful that the option of homeschooling was open to us.

Since changing their educational environment to homeschool, both of our children have measurably improved physical and mental health and educational competency.

This amendment raises two issues of great concern to us:

Firstly, we are alarmed by the requirement to provide home education in a way that is “in the best interests of the child”. There is no clarity as to who decides this or how it is decided.

Numerous medical professionals have expressed agreement with our decision to homeschool our children. Would this be enough to allow us to homeschool under the proposed legislation? Would a government administrator with a KPI quota remove our freedom to care appropriately for our children? Would expensive, wait-listed medical appointments be required, creating barriers and delays to help our children?

These amendments would have vastly increased the stress of caring for our sick, unhappy children, who begged daily to stay home from school and were collected from the sick bay when they did attend. My children were not learning at school and each day saw a decline in their health. Would that be enough evidence to prove that school attendance was not in their “best interests”? These are our children, and we care deeply about their well-being.

Secondly, we are very concerned about the proposed requirement that home education align with the Australian Curriculum. This would severely affect our family.

One of our children did not follow a set curriculum when we started homeschooling, as we focussed on improving phonemic awareness (identified by specialists as problematic due to poor teaching methods at their former primary school). When this child enrolled in DE last year, their academic results were of a high standard. Previous years of not following the curriculum had no negative effects. This child is currently homeschooled according to the Australian Curriculum and is happy, confident and achieving.

My other (formerly high achieving, perfectionist) child was so badly affected by their primary school experience that they refused to engage in any form of education whatsoever. After some false starts using various versions of the Australian Curriculum, homeschooling this child was successfully achieved using a different approach.

We removed educational “box-ticking” pressures and encouraged and supported this child to follow their own interests. This immediately increased their confidence and well-being. We selected family entertainment (movies, television programs, computer games) that segued into learning opportunities. Our child naturally developed interests that led to further research and investigation

and, ultimately, a high-quality education. They are now healthier, more confident and employed part-time in a well-paid job where their skills are recognised and in demand, as they continue homeschooling. Their academic success and improved mental health is evidenced by achievement in recent BKSB assessments. It has been a difficult road and one that could not have been achieved if we had been required to continue unsuccessfully and inappropriately forcing a standard curriculum.

Our children have differing learning needs and, as their parents, we are sensitive to this. We are extremely concerned that our ability to provide a safe and nurturing environment and an appropriate education will be negatively impacted by this amendment, to the detriment of their physical and mental health, their learning potential and their long-term life goals.

Thank you for considering our perspective and we hope that the needs of children and families are given the utmost consideration before changes are made that will profoundly affect our lives and our children's futures.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact details]

(Please redact our names and contact details from publication)