EDUCATION ACT REVIEW
Goals of New Education Act

1. Support our education system to provide the best possible outcomes for all learners.
2. Provide a contemporary, flexible and enduring legislative framework that meets the needs of learners now and into the future.
3. Provide for greater national consistency, where this increases social and economic opportunities for Tasmanians, whilst responding to the local needs and circumstances of the State.
4. Support Tasmania’s educational, social and economic prosperity.
Education Act Review

Summary of Submissions
Executive Summary

Number of submissions

230 submissions were received; of these, 113 related specifically to keeping the status quo with regards to religion in state schools.
Executive Summary

Submissions were received from:
- members of the public
- non-government organisations
- academics
- school associations
- home educators
- unions
- other school sectors
- businesses
Executive Summary

Submissions reflected:

• timeliness of the review
• appreciation for the opportunity to comment
• need for tri-partisan support
• consistency and collaboration between the school sectors
Executive Summary

Look to other jurisdictions and countries for best practice

Finland
Denmark
Singapore
Shanghai

Other Acts to consider:

Northern Territory
Australian Capital Territory
New South Wales
South Australia
Executive Summary

Themes
The majority of submissions supported the themes outlined in the discussion paper.
Strong support for additional themes:
• Early childhood education and care
• Children with special needs and abilities
• Teacher quality and training
• Student engagement and flexible alternative education provision
• Parent engagement
• VET and subsuming Guaranteeing Futures legislation into the new Act.
Executive Summary

Principles

The majority of submissions supported the principles outlined in the paper.

Strong support for:

• the rights of the child
• principles reflected in the Melbourne Declaration
• equity of access to education and education outcomes
• respectful relationships, acknowledging and embracing diversity
• freedom of choice
• Values: innovation, trust, creativity, excellence, inquiry, respect, integrity, diversity
Executive Summary

Raising the value of education
It’s everyone’s business

• engage in partnerships
• enlist local champions and advocates
• promote education as the responsibility of the whole community
• raise parental expectations
• increase the leaving age; make Year 12 compulsory
• improve access to education
• provide flexible learning options
• review teacher training pathways
• investigate new models to deal with misbehaviour
Executive Summary

Key Points

In general strong support for:

• Raising the **leaving age** of students [G & N-G]
• Compulsory **Year 12** [G & N-G]
• **Educational partnerships** with business, industry and community [G & N-G]
• Greater **accountability** of all education sectors to the community as well as to the Minister [G & N-G]
• Improved models to deal with **unacceptable student and adult behaviour** [G]
• **Access to student data** prior to an enrolment across the school sectors [G & N-G]
• Access to **Year 13** [G]
• **Universal minimum of instructional hours** across the school sectors (with flexibility for schools to set their own times) [G & N-G]

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools
Executive Summary

Key Points

Lowering the starting age [G & N-G]

In general respondents agreed to lowering the starting age to align with the rest of Australia; however, any decision should be based on evidence and research that this would improve learning outcomes for students.

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools
Executive Summary

Key Points

Improving attendance [G & N-G]

Suggestions to improve attendance include:

• Working more with families and engaging parents in their child’s education
• Flexible starting and finishing times in schools to suit local needs
• Provision of flexible and alternative learning programs
• Opportunities for dual enrolment
• Flow through to Centrelink so funding for students is impacted by attendance

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools
Executive Summary

Key Points
Dealing with unacceptable behaviour [G]

• improve parental engagement and support
• look to other models for discipline such as restorative justice approaches
• provide more flexible learning options
• provide more professional learning for teachers to understand issues behind unacceptable behaviour such as trauma, neglect, abuse or impairment

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools
Executive Summary

Key Points

**Equity [G & N-G]**

Call for:

- equity of access to high quality appropriate education irrespective of barriers including location
- clear commitment to address educational disadvantage (refer to the Finnish system)
- schools to adhere to the *Disability Education Standards 2005*
- consideration of the rights and needs of students with disability
- differentiated provision to cater for the needs of learners
- value the histories and traditions of all people in a non-discriminatory way; ensure students’ identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and learning needs addressed
- support for schools with need, transparency of all funding to all schools
Executive Summary

Key Points

Apolitical education [*G*]

- The vast majority of the feedback was that education should be apolitical but students should be taught about politics in schools through the curriculum

- Call for tri-partisan approach to education

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools
Executive Summary

Key Points

Religion in education [G]
113 submissions were received supporting government schools providing education about religion in schools. These generally had the same content regarding the teachings of Christianity.

Neutrality of religious education
Approximately 60% of other respondents supported the neutrality of religious education in schools, religious education being taught through the curriculum and/or the teaching of ethics and values education.

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools
Executive Summary

Key Points

Inclusion of Kindergarten and early learning programs in the Act [G & N-G]

The vast majority of respondents agree that Kindergarten and early learning programs should be appropriately recognised in the Act.

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools
Executive Summary

Key Points

Home Education

- The majority of the 40 respondents did not support a change to the current system and any further regulation would only impede the scope and depth of learning that occurs through Home Education.
- Approximately 42% of respondents supported the current monitoring arrangement where monitoring officers only need to have an understanding of home education.
- Approximately 35% of respondents supported monitoring officers having an educational background (along with some understanding of home education).

Some call for:

- THEAC to be defined in the Act
- access to part-time and dual enrolment
- required areas of study for home educated students and alignment with the Australian Curriculum
- equivalent standards and obligations as for government schools
- more specific educational and monitoring requirements
- underlying principles outlined for home education
Executive Summary

Key Points

Other Areas of Reform

Suggestions include:

- Legislative [G & N-G]
- Out of area [G]
- Staffing [G]
- Teacher training [G]
- Disability [G & N-G]
- School closures/amalgamation [G]
- Curriculum [G]
- Chaplains [G]
- School structures [G]

G = applies to government schools, N-G = applies to non-government schools