

To the Panel for the Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System,

My son attends the Steiner (Waldorf) stream at [REDACTED] Primary School in [REDACTED]. The school is quite unique as it is a public school offering 3 streams; Mainstream, Steiner Stream and a Disability Unit.

We selected a Steiner education for our son, who is now in Class 3, as we wanted to offer him an alternative to the run of the mill education where all children's learning experiences are treated the same.

From our experience, children (from a very young age) are placed under great pressure to conform to an old education system which applies a lot of rote learning methodologies, puts a lot of pressure on young children to complete homework at an early age and tests, and teaches educational units and themes at stages of their lives that is not supported by research to suggest they are ready to learn and retain that information.

The Steiner education is a wonderfully holistic approach. It considers children's age and developmental stages when delivering their education. Obviously, the Australian curriculum is taught, but it is delivered in such a way that the students are ready to receive and retain the information.

This education integrates arts in all learning, and integrates the subjects themselves; as in the real-world things do not happen independently of others.

From what I have seen, with an education full of rich language and imagery, the students develop a real love and excitement for their education. The teachers are supportive, nurturing and are able to think outside of the box as needed.

The students themselves grow to be supportive of each other. They develop a sense of community as well as an understanding of their responsibility to the community. Isn't that what we want from our citizens?

They develop skills in communication, language and lateral thinking; again, these are skills greatly lost amongst the masses.

The universities themselves greatly value this education and the skills taught; providing separate entry for the students.

In regards to the younger years, I have seen more schools apply some of the basics of the Steiner approach; recognising its value.

When I discuss the Steiner education with other parents, they all show great interest, and lament at the lack of access and information about it. Many people don't know that there are alternatives to mainstream education.

I strongly believe this review should consider the Steiner education, its approach and its philosophies. It should also consider how these are widely valued around the world. Australia's education system does not fare well when compared to those of Europe, UK and Asia and we must look to alternatives.

We need to offer more Steiner streams (R-12) through public schools so that it is accessible and affordable for all. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The educating department should consider the great benefits, interest and demand, and provide R-12 streams in more public schools. At present, only R-6 is available; meaning the majority of the students will have to endure mainstream education for high school.

Please consider the wonderful benefits of this type of education.

Kind regards

Daniella [REDACTED]