



Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Ms Margaret Pollard  
Senior Council Officer  
Committee Office  
Legislative Council

Via:

Dear Ms Pollard

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence on Tuesday 23 April to the Inquiry into children and young people with disability in New South Wales education settings; and the further opportunity to provide supplementary information.

A list of potential recommendations can be found on the following page.

Please also find minor edits to be made to the transcript attached to this email and two papers prepared by Siblings Australia as supplementary materials. One of these papers reviews the Australian Disability Strategy in the context of siblings; the other considers siblings an integral foundational support.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Shannon Schedlich**  
Chief Executive



## **Siblings Australia proposed recommendations for the Inquiry into children and young people with disability in New South Wales education settings**

May 2024

To provide siblings with the recognition and support they need to be fully seen and supported, and to, in turn, be equipped to be effective education partners to their brothers or sisters, Siblings Australia would recommend:

- The development of a practice guide on siblings' needs to be created in concert with the Department of Education and Siblings Australia and made accessible to all education staff through the intranet or resource library (as applicable)
- Upskilling school staff on sibling issues through the mandatory participation in a program such as SibWise (or similar)
- Delivery of SibWorks within school settings where the school has a significant cohort of sibling children, ie those settings that have a dedicated supported education unit or similar
- Data collection on siblings and information sharing across schools as would happen for someone on an IEP in a Sibling Support Plan which assesses the needs of individual siblings (for example, extra time for homework, tired in class, difficulties making friends, etc)
- Schools to be encouraged to house a resource library that teachers, students and parents can access about sibling experiences
- Schools be made aware of and encouraged to share information on supports available through Siblings Australia as appropriate
- In special education settings, principals be encouraged to seek sibling input on school reports such as IEPs and other reporting mechanisms to families to utilise the knowledge of siblings in enhancing the learnings of their brothers and sisters.

