

**Submission  
No 5**

**INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO  
STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR SPECIAL NEEDS**

**Name:** Ms Maya Verma

**Date received:** 15/12/2009

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Hello

I wish to make a brief comment on the Parliamentary Inquiry into the provision of education to students with a disability or special needs attending primary or secondary schools.

My name is Maya Verma and I am a Physical Disability Teacher for TAFE NSW. Due to my role the main contact I have with the target group is in the area of secondary students using the TVET programme, and secondary students who are looking at post school education options.

Every secondary school I go to that provides educational access for students with a disability is lacking in vital resources for the provision and support of assistive technology.

The technology has moved rapidly and is dramatically changing the lives and participation of people living with a physical disability.

For example, this can be seen with children who have cerebral palsy to the capacity that they are physically unable to speak and communicate (non-verbal.)

In 2010 there should now be no child with this level of cerebral palsy who does not have a communication device with voice output. This simple technology changes their life. It provides them the capacity to communicate with anyone and everyone.

Yet time and time again I go to schools to meet young adults with this level of cerebral palsy that cannot communicate with me as they do not have the technology.

Instead they may have hand drawn tables of letters and symbols on wheelchair trays. With these they can communicate very limited ideas to a very limited number of people (you have to know the person well to have any hope of understanding it.) This does not empower anyone and makes students dependant on teachers and staff that know them.

The above is only one example of many and I do not wish to submit a thesis. But I am begging and pleading that the parliamentary enquiry includes the provision of assistive technology resources and training in both primary and secondary schools. Not to have it is literally locking these children out of the education system and the wider environment.

Kind Regards  
Maya Verma