

**INQUIRY INTO TRANSITION SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS
WITH ADDITIONAL OR COMPLEX NEEDS AND THEIR
FAMILIES**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

Submission to NSW Legislative Council

Inquiry into transition support for students with additional or complex needs and their families

This submission adds to that made by the NSW SSP Principals' Network submission, of which we are a part, but includes some issues contributed by my staff and unique to our school context students with moderate / severe / multiple intellectual disabilities in and some of my staff also work in a transition outreach model to other schools in the area.

Re School to Post School Placement:

Although the dates for filling in paperwork for post school ADHAC funding has changed, it is still late notification for parents and staff and then we are transitioning our students from school at a busy time of the year for us and feel there is not enough time to support the transition.

We are concerned about the large gap in time from end of transition in term 4 to starting after summer holidays. We should build in a transition with staff in the early days of placement so that it is more supportive for our students.

As the post school program is a private arrangement between parents and providers we have the situation where not enough placements and therefore no choice or limited choice is available. There is a lack of service providers in the and transport is also an inhibiting factor in enabling our students to access perhaps a more appropriate service in adjoining areas.

We are concerned about the variation in leavers from year to year.

There does not seem to be avenues to forward plan and identify trends in leavers. For instance in recent years we have had 2 or 3 leavers each year, but in 2013 we anticipate 8 and 2014 9 leavers, then probably returning back to only a couple per year.

This strain on local services in 2013 / 14 will be significant and that is just from our school.

In regard to the current Transition to Work funding provided under ADHC we concerned about the length of the

funding. Each student receives two years under this programme and of course the services want to keep them for the full two years for the full funding. Staff have seen students who, while in the TTW programme, have completed a TAFE course which lasts one year. At the end of that one year these students are very ready, willing and able to be employed. But the services hold them back, this is not something they want to talk about of course but we know this does happen. We believe the funding should perhaps be a one year with a review for a second year.

Year 6 transition from Support classes in regular schools to special schools:

Our experience has shown that a significant number of students whose educational and welfare needs are met in a support class in a regular school often have great difficulty coping with a high school setting. Often the transition support available to high school is minimal and consequently we find that a number of students do not cope with the size and business of a high school and need to return, due to behaviour or depression / low self esteem, to a special school setting. Often, unfortunately we need to do a considerable amount of work to turn round negative attitudes to school and learning when these situations occur.

We also are concerned about transition for our students in and out of private school settings to DEC schools as there often is not a corresponding transmission of vital information or reports which hampers our ability to design an appropriate behaviour / communication and learning program.

General:

There are many students in the IM range sitting in NSW DET High Schools unknown to the Support Teachers. Transition due to the fact they are no longer funded under the current funding support. They no longer require a Disability Confirmation Sheet and therefore, are not coming up under any information we would have had in the past. These students once they leave school would be entitled to assistance at TAFE for example. Instead they go and enrol and often fail, as their disability is unknown to the TAFE.