

Submission  
No 51

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

**Organisation:** Department of Education, Training and the Arts  
Queensland Government

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**Queensland  
Government**

Department of  
**Education, Training and the Arts**

9 JAN 2010

The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2  
Legislative Council of NSW  
[gpscno2@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gpscno2@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find attached the Queensland Department of Education and Training submission to the NSW Legislative Council's General Purpose Standing Committee No 2 *Inquiry into the provisions of education to students with a disability or special needs*.

Please feel free to contact Ms Suzanne Rothwell, Director Disability Policy Student Services Branch, on telephone (07) 3405 6349 or by email at [Suzanne.Rothwell@deta.qld.gov.au](mailto:Suzanne.Rothwell@deta.qld.gov.au) if you require additional information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Grantham', written over a horizontal line.

Julie Grantham  
**Director-General**

Enc

Ref: 10/15950

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Queensland Department of Education and Training response to:

NSW Legislative Council

General Purpose Standing Committee No 2

Inquiry into the provision of education to students with a disability or special needs

<p>The nature, level and adequacy of funding for the education of children with a disability</p>	<p>The Queensland Department of Education and Training (DET) allocated \$608.1 million as part of the 2009–10 budget to support students with disabilities in state primary, secondary and special schools to provide them with opportunities to achieve quality educational outcomes.</p>
<p>Best practice approaches in determining the allocation of funding to children with a disability, particularly whether allocation should be focused on a student's functioning capacity rather than their disability</p>	<p>The Queensland Department of Education and Training provides a range of support services and resources to assist teachers to meet the diverse educational needs of all students, including those with educational support needs for example students who are underachieving with literacy and/or numeracy, those who require behaviour support, students who have recently arrived in Australia as refugees, those who have English as a second language, or students with disabilities.</p> <p>The <i>Education (General Provisions) Act 2006</i> requires the Minister to approve a policy outlining criteria for determining if a person is a person with a disability. This approved policy is based on the disability definition provided in the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> and adopted in the <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i>.</p> <p>DET provides an array of programs and services to support students with disabilities in primary, secondary and special schools. Additional resourcing is allocated to regions and schools to support this array of programs and services either through enrolment of all students or through targeted resourcing provided through the Department's Education Adjustment Program (EAP).</p> <p>The EAP is a process for identifying and responding to the educational needs of students with disabilities. Adjustments are made for students with disabilities to enable them to access the curriculum, achieve curriculum outcomes and participate in school life. The EAP supports schools to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify students (from Prep to Year 12) who meet criteria for one of six EAP disability categories</li> <li>• report the education adjustments they are providing to meet the teaching and learning needs of these students.</li> </ul> <p>For the purposes of identifying students with disabilities for the EAP, the definition of disability encompasses both the impairment and the activity limitations and participation restrictions for an individual in one or more of the six EAP disability categories of autism spectrum disorder, hearing impairment,</p>

	<p>intellectual impairment, physical impairment, speech-language impairment and vision impairment. Criteria for verification of a disability through EAP requires a diagnosis and evidence of significant educational support needs.</p> <p>Students who do not access additional resourcing through the EAP, but who have a disability as defined by the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>, are supported through the full array of student support services allocated to regions and schools. This may include guidance support, speech-language therapy support, behaviour support and learning support.</p> <p>Further information regarding EAP can be found online at: <a href="http://education.qld.gov.au/students/disabilities/adjustment/">http://education.qld.gov.au/students/disabilities/adjustment/</a></p> <p>The DET enrolment policy outlines that students with disabilities can enrol on the same basis as other students in alignment with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).</p> <p>The DET, through each of its regions, monitor the need for programs and services to support students with disabilities in state schools. Regions ensure that there are sufficient programs strategically located and review their provision of special education programs and services on an annual basis taking into account local needs, factors and arising issues.</p>
<p>The level and adequacy of current special education places within the education system</p>	<p>In Queensland state schools specialist support staff work with class teachers to support students with disabilities through an education team approach.</p> <p>Specialist support staff include advisory visiting teachers, specialist teachers, guidance officers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech-language pathologists.</p> <p>The <i>P-12 Curriculum Framework</i> for Queensland State Schools is the key reference for schools in setting goals, planning and monitoring progress for all students. This can be found online at: <a href="http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/framework/p-12/">http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/framework/p-12/</a></p> <p>It maps the necessary considerations for Queensland State Schools in planning and implementing their curriculum from Prep – Year 12. It challenges schools to generate excellence and equity in student learning outcomes.</p> <p>The <i>P-12 Curriculum Framework</i> promotes a curriculum that maximises the learning of all students and as such, is a curriculum that recognises and celebrates diversity and engages all students in intellectually challenging learning experiences.</p> <p>The framework is supported by a series of guidelines including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curriculum planning guidelines</li> </ul>
<p>The adequacy of integrated support services for children with a disability in mainstream settings, such as school classrooms</p>	
<p>The provision of a suitable curriculum for intellectually disabled and conduct disordered students</p>	

- Pedagogy guidelines
- Guidelines for students with disabilities

These guidelines assist teachers and administrators to translate the Framework into practice for all students, including those with diverse learning needs.

Policy statements in the *P-12 Curriculum Framework* articulate the expectations that schools and teachers enable all students, including students with disabilities, to access and achieve the learning described in the mandated curriculum documents:

- Early Years Curriculum Guidelines for preparatory year
- Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework Essential Learnings and Standards for Years 1-9
- Queensland Studies Authorities Senior Syllabuses, nationally endorsed training packages, nationally accredited vocational education.

The *P-12 Curriculum Framework* requires that the curriculum is designed for flexibility and supports teachers to be responsive to students' educational needs in a proactive way.

A curriculum for all demonstrates a commitment to enabling all students to access, participate and progress their learning and achievement within the intended curriculum. It promotes both excellence and equity in student learning outcomes. To achieve equitable outcomes, targeted supports for groups and individuals may be required.

The intended curriculum for all students is drawn from the mandated curriculum — for some students with disabilities, their intended curriculum will encompass the mandated curriculum plus individual learning goals and adjustments that maximise their access and participation to the mandated curriculum.

For students who have been identified as having significant educational support needs, planning is required for the identified adjustments that need to be documented and then implemented. Teachers may access input from specialist support staff in developing and implementing their student's educational programs. Adjustments to support the learning of all students with disabilities include all actions which increase the capacity of a student to access, participate in and achieve their intended learning goal. Schools must explicitly plan and provide the support required for students.

Planning for students with disabilities needs to be explicit with respect to how the required concepts, knowledge and skills will be appropriately introduced and built upon with increasing sophistication. This will ensure that students will develop, and be able to demonstrate, the breadth and depth of their level of knowledge and understanding of the intended curriculum.

	<p>Planning to support the learning of students with disabilities ensures that they engage with, and have multiple opportunities for, learning across a range of contexts and that they develop the ways of working and capabilities necessary for school and beyond.</p> <p>Curriculum planning at the whole-school level considers the learning sequence and learning experiences for all students across year levels, including the needs of students with disabilities.</p> <p>Further information regarding Curriculum can be found online at: <a href="http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/index.html">http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/index.html</a></p>
<p>Student and family access to professional support and services, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and school counsellors</p>	<p>The provision of therapy services to children, young people and their families in Queensland is a shared responsibility across Government departments, community agencies and private practitioners. The role and scope of services available from each provider varies in accordance with the agency's role and the target group for service delivery.</p> <p>The DET employs occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech-language pathologists to provide services in schools.</p> <p>Occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language therapy services provided by the Department support the educational needs of students, where their disability or other special needs in communication impacts on their access to, participation in or achievement at school. These services are delivered as a component of educational programs by embedding strategies in curriculum activities and classroom routines. The focus of therapy services is on enhancing education programs and outcomes for students.</p>
<p>The provision of adequate teaching training, both in terms of pre-service and ongoing professional training</p>	<p>The DET Inclusive Education Policy states that teachers will provide all students with teaching and learning that they need for success in school and beyond, and there is an expectation that schools will utilise funds from their professional development budget to ensure that classroom teachers have adequate knowledge and expertise to plan and manage for the educational outcomes for students with disabilities and special needs in their classes.</p> <p>The Department provides over 2,000 teachers to directly support students with disabilities in primary and secondary schools. In addition, there are approximately 700 teachers in special schools.</p> <p>On occasions, initiatives such as scholarship programs are used to increase the number of teachers with specialist knowledge. In 2008, for example, DET awarded 86 scholarships to currently employed teachers to undertake a Graduate Certificate in Special Education at a Queensland higher education institution.</p> <p>Ongoing liaison with university faculties is designed to ensure that the ongoing supply of teachers with expertise in these areas remains adequate.</p>