

Submission  
No 72

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

**Name:** Mr Wayne Reeve

**Date received:** 11/02/2010

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Partially Confidential

2 February 2010

The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir or Madam

Please accept my submission to the inquiry into the provision of education to Students with a disability or special needs.

My daughter \_\_\_\_\_ attends Allambie Heights Public School on Sydney's Northern Beaches. In 2010 \_\_\_\_\_ commenced Year 1.

\_\_\_\_\_ has had difficulties with hearing, speech, fine & gross motor skills development and learning that were first identified in 2007-8, and then formally diagnosed in late 2009. \_\_\_\_\_ suffers from both Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), and is classed as being severely effected.

\_\_\_\_\_ is a happy young girl who enjoys school and tries extremely hard to keep up with the requirements of her class. She has weekly sessions with an Occupational Therapist, a Speech Therapist and a Special Education Teacher, who all work on their respective areas of expertise to assist in \_\_\_\_\_ development and to support her in her schooling.

In general terms, \_\_\_\_\_ 2 disabilities effect her ability to:

- interpret information in lessons
- Read & comprehend
- follow instructions
- adequately function in class to a similar or average standard to her classmates
- anticipate
- maintain attention
- develop language and sequence sounds
- maintain spatial awareness
- maintain correct pencil grip & learn basic movement patterns for copying words & shapes
- balance & move in controlled sequences
- remember and repeat instructions or actions
- perform basic actions like cutting using scissors, doing up buttons, brushing her hair, using a-knife and fork etc.

Allambie Heights Public School has applied to the NSW Education Department for funding for a Teachers Aide to assist & support [redacted] in class. The application for funding was unsuccessful on the basis that the Department of Education believes that [redacted] ability to "access the curriculum" is not inhibited enough by her disability to require her to need extra assistance. This decision is despite a formal diagnosis from a Paediatric Specialist which is supported by 3 different professionals who currently assist [redacted]. In addition, the Specialist Behavioural Paediatrician and the Occupational Therapist have determined that [redacted] disability is in the severe category. Documentation has been supplied to the Education Department in support of this but has had no effect on the outcome of the application.

This outcome exposes a serious and significant floor in the current system of assessing students with disabilities and special needs for extra funding in that, it has no respect for the opinion of medical professionals who provide detailed information outlining the severity of disabilities and the effect they have on a students ability to cope at school.

I implore the Committee to recognise this floor and find a way to change the system so that Doctors, Specialists and Therapists, in consultation with Teachers and School Counsellors, make the decisions about the degree of need of each student and their functioning ability, rather than Education Department bureaucrats who, through their lack of experience, both medical and/or therapeutic, cannot possibly have an adequate appreciation of what it means for these children to cope unassisted and attempt to maintain development at school, making a decision based purely on types of disabilities.

In addition, I will be happy to provide all documentation referenced above at any time if requested to do so.

Thanks you for taking the time to consider my submission.

Yours sincerely,

Wayne Reeve J.P.