

Submission  
No 68

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

**Name:** Mrs Isabella Hawthorne  
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The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

8 Feb 2010

As the parent of a child with Autism, I know personally the importance of learning support staff within the school environment. Early intervention and active learning support has allowed my son, now 10 years, to be mainstream educated and integrated into the education system.

Our current funding levels are just adequate and should be increased not decreased. The monies invested into special needs children now and especially in the primary school years, will produce a more self-sufficient and ultimately less government supported adult. The parents of special needs children are already under the financial burden of additional therapies often outside school staff capabilities and regular school hours. To decrease the support within the school environment will mean an increased financial expense to all families.

Many teaching staff undertake additional training and courses in their own time. We need to educate all staff and support these enormous efforts. Our children's future is in the hands of these teachers. We need to act now to maintain these excellent teaching standards

I ask that you consider these factors in your inquiry into the provision of education to students with special needs

Thanking You

Isabella Hawthorne