

**Submission  
No 63**

**INQUIRY INTO STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR  
SPECIAL NEEDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES SCHOOLS**

**Organisation:** Sussex Inlet Public School

**Date received:** 14 February 2017

---



As public school teachers and NSW Teachers Federation members we continue to campaign for the right of every student to receive a public education of the highest quality and for all students to become successful learners.

We are committed to equity and excellence for every student and in doing so assert, as was confirmed in The Review of Funding for Schooling (Gonski Review) that it costs more to deliver on these values for students with disability.

We will not stand by the currently inadequate provision of education to students with disability and the lifelong implications this inequity has.

The National Education Reform Agreement (NERA) and Australian Education Act 2013, acknowledge the requirement for, and commitment to additional funds for students with disability. The NSW government's unwavering commitment to the Gonski funding model paves the way for this investment to be realised.

We stand ready to work with our employer and NSW government in delivering equitable quality education but can only do so effectively when equipped with the necessary tools and supported by a system that is responsive to need.

We offer the following submission as an index of unmet need and a call for equity for every student.

#### **A) Equitable access to resources for students with a disability or special needs in regional and metropolitan areas.**

In our regional isolated school, we have services up to an hour away. A low SES background means parents do not have the financial support or means to get their children to these services. LAST support is limited and the high number of students needing support means some students are not receiving an equitable amount of assistance to meet their learning needs. Integration support is delayed at the beginning of the year for access requests to be filled out and the panel only meets twice a term - even though students are enrolling with diagnosed needs. Emergency funding has been reduced from 30 hours to 20, severely stretching the available time of teachers and massively impacting the learning outcomes of all students. The placement of a student in a support class is not practical for our parents as the support classes are located out of area. Students with high needs have received an offer of placement in a support class, but the parent has withdrawn permission and student remains in the school with no support funding. Our access to outside agencies is limited by lack of specialists available, distances and finances of our parents. Staff are not provided with time to plan and develop ILPs in consultation with all stakeholders. Every student is not provided with equitable access to teaching and learning programmes - teacher time is consumed by students with high needs. Lack of resources impacts upon the safety of our staff and students.

#### **B) The impact of the Government's 'Every Student Every School' policy on the provision of education to students with a disability or special needs in New South Wales public schools.**

The amalgamation of APLA and APB is ineffective as there has been an increase of students with high level learning and behaviour needs. Cuts in funding for IM, emergency funding and students with diagnosed needs means every student in every school is not being catered for. Online training is not as effective as working and talking and sharing with experts. LAST teachers are 'thrown in the deep

end' and do not have training in Spec. Ed and many are temporary teachers with on the job learning required. Specialist support is not available due to isolation and cost, e.g. speech therapist, OC, paediatrician etc.

**C) Developments since the 2010 inquiry by General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2 into the provision of education to students with a disability or special needs and the implementation of its recommendations.**

We believe the following have not been addressed: 1, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 20, 21, 22 ,25, 27, 28, 29, 31

**D) Complaint and review mechanisms within the school systems in New South Wales for parents and carers.**

We work to the best of our ability to work with parents through: ongoing conversations, LST meetings, class blogs, school apps, phone calls and newsletters - at the expense of quality learning time.

**E) Any other related matters.**

Positive parenting techniques delivered by the Australian Government. A preschool attached to isolated schools.

**Organisation** Sussex Inlet Public School