

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I have a significant commitment to the equitable provision of quality education to students with disability. It is unacceptable that so many of our students with disability face discrimination and miss out on the lifelong benefits of schooling. Too often, as a teacher, I feel systemically unsupported and have to continually appeal for additional resources to cater for the diverse and complex needs of students in our schools.

Last year alone, in my mainstream Kindergarten class I had 6 students diagnosed with ASD, 3 students with speech problems and 2 with a borderline intellectual impairment. Not one of these students qualified for ANY additional support or funding. As a mainstream teacher with a class of 20 little individuals I find it extremely difficult to cater to all the diverse needs of all these very different little people. Despite appealing for additional support, I am constantly being told that students aren't ticking all the necessary boxes to qualify. The process for Integration Funding is so restrictive that students with confirmed disabilities are being denied access and therefore do not have equitable access to education and improved learning outcomes.

We need:

- a) The implementation of the full six years of the Gonski funding agreement including urgent and overdue implementation of an improved disability loading;
- b) Improved training, professional development and support for teachers;
- c) Greater transparency in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on Students with Disability (NCCD); and
- d) an ongoing awareness of the importance of early childhood education for children with disability.