

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

**Organisation:** Eastern Suburbs Teachers Association

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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.**

Students need additional support, including adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment activities: ºstudents are not receiving adequate and timely access to this support ºteachers feel ill-equipped, not confident and unsupported to provide this support ºinsufficient funding is inhibiting and disabling access to this support

#### **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.**

There has been a negative impact resulting from the initiatives introduced via Every School, Every Student. For example; ºInadequate specialist support for students with disability ºInadequate resources for students with high or complex additional learning and support needs ºInadequate expert support nor consistent, reliable information for school leaders, teachers and parents about identifying and supporting the educational needs of students with disability

#### **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.**

The 31 recommendations made by the 2010 Inquiry have not all been implemented or implemented fully.

#### **D) Complaint and review mechanisms within the school systems in New South Wales**

**for parents and carers.**

Schools do not have the capacity and resources to adequately and in a timely fashion: °establish meaningful relationships with parents/carers of students with disability °work with and consult with parents/carers of students with disability °respond to concerns and complaints raised by parents/carers of students with disability

**E) Any other related matters.**

Schools are not able to efficiently and safely evacuate special needs students and their Learning Support Officers and/or carers from buildings in times of emergencies.

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**Authorised by**

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