

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential



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.

As a teacher in a large Western Sydney public school I can attest that students with a disability or a special need do not receive equitable access to resources. On many occasions support for my students with special needs has been diverted to other students with a needs to cover a short fall of support. In my 15 years of teaching in a variety of schools it has become evident that only students in crisis or those with a severe mental health diagnosis receive any 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.

I have witnessed students with significant needs being left behind as a result of 'Every Student Every School'. This policy left my school without access to highly effective Itinerant Support Teachers. These specialists supported teachers working with and students with severe behaviour, vision and hearing issues. The loss of these specialist has a dramatic and detrimental impact on my students ability to access the curriculum.

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.

I have yet to see (or have it pointed out to me) how any of the 31 recommendations have been actualised in a way that benefits any of my students with special needs or disabilities.

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

Complaint and review mechanisms are achieved only via a teachers' and school's compassion for their students. The relationships my school and I have cultivated with parents has come out of our own time and resources.

E) Any other related matters.

I worked with a student who was diagnosed with a mild intellectual disability. After 3 years of individual programs and heavily modified lessons the student had not yet achieved kindergarten outcomes. As the student was diagnosed as a mild disability they attracted no funding, the school counsellor was over loaded and during learning support meetings dismissed the student because we would never get support for them. It took 3 and a half years and the hard work of the staff championing the cause to get the student support needed to access the curriculum. Our system is so overloaded with need and so crippled by lack of support it is failing our students who need it most.