

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

I am the Principal of a NSW Government SSP. The following is my submission for the Inquiry into Students with a disability or special needs in New South Wales schools. The following is a summary of significant funding issues as seen by myself, staff and colleagues.

Historical staffing models and new funding models associated with the Department of Education's reform agenda is increasingly disadvantaging SSPs compared to primary and high schools, for example

- Secondary aged students in SSPs remain funded as primary students despite their age and requirement to access secondary curriculum.
- Quality Teaching Successful Students staffing allocation (a primary school initiative) only applies to the K-6 enrolment in my SSP, despite the whole teaching staff (K-10) requiring the professional learning anticipated through this funding. SSPs do not have secondary teacher release conditions for the assistant principals/ expert teachers to support teachers in years 7-12. The funding was allocated with a loading of '3', 3 x number of K-6 students. A more equitable way to allocate QTSS across NSW would have been to use a formula based on each schools' number of classes, rather than number of enrolments, or employ a variable for 'factor of need'. This current loading does not give equitable funding for teachers K-6 in an SSP compared to primary schools. Teachers 7-12 in SSPs get no support through QTSS to improve quality teaching.
- Professional learning funds allocated on teacher numbers only, does not take into account the professional learning costs of an SSP where over half the staff are SASS. The introduction of Performance and Development Plans (PDPs) for SASS will result in over 10 additional PDPs in this school without any additional resources (funding to buy time) to support their development or subsequent professional learning.
- The School Budget Allocation does not provide individual "Targeted" funding (above the existing staffing entitlement) for students with disabilities with complex behaviour and health care needs. This means that these students are not getting mandatory hours of access to curriculum and students and staff are facing unreasonable health and safety risks.

#### Suggested Response

- Fund secondary aged students in SSPs as secondary students or utilise the Central/Community School funding model
- Use total SSP student enrolment based on each student's factor of need, to allocate Quality Teaching Successful Students staffing allocation
- Provide Professional Learning funds based on total staff allocation
- Provide targeted funding above the staffing entitlement in the school budget allocation to support the long-term learning and wellbeing/safety needs of students with complex behaviours and or healthcare conditions.