

**Submission
No 106**

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

Organisation: Chris Hauritz

Date received: 20 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.

I am a school principal currently on leave/workers compensation as a direct result of issues arising from inadequate provision of resources to support the needs of students with disabilities. My rural school has three support units and a considerable number of students with disabilities in mainstream classes. Provision of staffing is inadequate to meet the emotional, learning and behavioural needs of these students. The staff in my school go above and beyond what is expected of them but still cannot meet all the needs of students. Issues related to violent student behaviour, regular lockdowns, high staff turnover, inadequate time to meet accountability requirements, work with other agencies, meet with parents, develop and update learning and risk management plans and access the resources students are all significant factors.

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.

This policy has not provided the resources students need. The rhetoric does not translate into action for students and the reality of the situation in schools. Lack of access to specialist support and reduction in staffing and funding has led to: * increased staff stress and staff needing to take extended leave as they were scared to teach in certain classes. * parent ministerial complaints resulting from concerns that the school could not provide the services they needed for their children. * high staff turnover * students with disabilities in mainstream classes receiving inadequate support.

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.

There have been few significant developments. Staff in schools still bear the brunt of working with inadequate resources and students suffer as a result. Staff that remain in area offices cannot meet the needs of schools.

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

There are many conflicting areas around complaints, the disability discrimination act and workers health and safety. Discipline and welfare procedures when dealing with students with disabilities is particularly challenging for all involved.

E) Any other related matters.

There needs to be a review of support for schools with support units. These units are often district resources that attempt to cater for children whose needs cannot be met in other schools. They need real support to be effective and meet the needs of these students.

Name Chris Hauritz

I am a Principal