

**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.**

This is not the case. Diagnostic services do not exist in the regions. I have taught in several regions around the state , country and indeed world. There is not enough funding support to support students with a disability in NSW. This is the case in cities and in the country. As an example, some areas have access to an IM class for placement and students with a mild disability can access this service. Other places have no classes and cannot get them, no matter the need. What a silly system.

**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 has drained resources from our District and regional offices. It used to be the case that a district office might have a team of behaviour specialists to help schools. This is no longer the case. There used to be specialised knowledge and experience a teacher could call on for support in schools. This is no longer the case. This has led to a thinning out of services available in our schools. Teachers are less able to respond effectively to a variety of learning needs. Good teachers are going further afield ( to private organisations) to gain that knowledge. This is a disgrace.

**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 am horrified that my local high school, Vincentia High School has 12 integrated support classes. That is absurd. There is CLEARLY need for a Special School in the area. There are 8 intellectual

classes and 4 ED/BD classes. A specialist support facility would much better meet the needs of the High Schools population, not to mention the 6 schools that feed the High School that manage 7 classes and many more individuals in mainstream with disabilities. The Bay and Basin area send more than 15 students with severe needs North, to Haven Lee Special School in Nowra (30-40 minutes) and South to Budawang SSP (another 40-50 minutes)...costing the DET an absurd amount in transportation fee's. A local SSP would relieve stresses on the High School and the local Primary Schools, as well as prevent many many hundreds of kilometres of school child kilometres.

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

Many parents concerns go unmet because there is a lack of resource in NSW DET. Many parents do not realise that their children can access support. Many children deserving of that support do not get it. A clearing house in Sydney randomly supporting requests for funding and rejecting others, based on local precedent rather than need. Services across the NSW Government need to work together better to ensure that students with disabilities are better supported.

**E) Any other related matters.**

yes. I am horrified that ERN and the Access Request process drives my workload to a major extent. The system is old and pedantic. It is cumbersome and involves FAR too many people in a process more involved with shelving responsibility to a clearinghouse in Sydney, than actually providing a service. It is a joke. It must be thrown out and a new system of referral and placement be developed that is concerned with placement. District office is struggling to provide support in this system that is sooo incredibly time consuming. As staff in District offices are not replaced, or moved to somewhere else, there is a skeleton staff at District Offices left to manage this process. If anyone disagrees with this, ask them to comment on page 12 that asks for a history of RSSSP fnding. What does RSSSP stand for? Nobody knows!!

This email was sent from the NSW Teachers Federation website.