

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date received:** 28 February 2017

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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.**

Our funding for students with a disability or learning difficulty is tied to personnel. Therefore, resources needed are purchased or borrowed by the support teachers. Resources include; spelling programs, Rainbow Readers program, Multi Lit, Bug Club, etc. There is a huge need for sensory resources at our school that we currently do not have.

#### **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.**

The 'Every Student, Every School' policy had an overall positive impact with our LAST teacher working with students, staff and parents to improve student outcomes. However, our qualified and experienced LAST teacher is only funded for 2.5 days when our needs could justify 5 days of work. There is one negative aspect with the model which is the expectation that one LAST teacher is required to meet all the different needs of all students. This model lost the ability to call on a specialist eg. hearing, behaviour, learning, autism, etc. Our school relies on parents to access external allied health services like speech therapy, occupational therapists, etc. This creates difficulties due to collaboration concerns. However, if these services were available in schools then more effective communication between all adults who support the child would be more beneficial.

#### **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.**

Regarding NCCD: The majority of our students in the highest categories (Supplementary and Substantial) are NOT accessing funding.

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

Many parents contact the Learning and Wellbeing Unit in Macquarie Park directly. Parents speak with our Principal who has a good understanding of these issues. Principal organises meetings with the parents and the LAST teacher in order to develop positive strategies for the needs of students with disabilities. Strong partnerships are developed in our school.

**E) Any other related matters.**