

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

Name: Name suppressed (PC)

Date received: 23 February 2017

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.

The ability of a school to apply for FS depends on the DGO/SPE signing off on Disability Confirmation Sheets. There is a huge difference in what may or may not be signed off and no real "appeal" process. As a past DGO I am aware of several DGOs who refuse to sign off disabilities even though the criteria are clearly met when considered by other DGOs. DET personnel, e.g., regional staff seem unwilling to manage these few DGO's or to step in and ask for independent advice. Perhaps have a look at the _____ and speak to principals there - that DGO is out of control and no-one seems to care that students who would be eligible for FS in other areas, e.g. the metropolitan area in which I work, are not receiving FS.

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 change-over to BER funding has impacted significantly on the amount of direct support we are able to give students on FS. E.g. Our student with a moderate intellectual disability was receiving about 11 hours of SLSO support, worked out by calculating a 40 week costing, but this year we have been told by school executive that the school has to cover the cost of the SLSO (Temporary) over a 52 week year and cover their holiday salary. That means the student receives about 25% less face-to-face support, now receiving less than 8 hours support. Sneaky way of DET saving on FS costing. This impacts on our ability to attract quality SLSO support also, because of the uncertainty of what FS is available from year to year means that SLSO are not guaranteed continuity of work - our two SLSO who have been working Temp for the last few years have now been told they only have four day/week from next term.

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.

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

E) Any other related matters.