

**Submission
No 264**

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

Organisation: Lesley Atfield

Date received: 23 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.

Our students, teachers and schools need the federal government to deliver additional funding through the Gonski Students with Disability Loading. With these funds we could:

- Give students with a disability access to professional help like occupational therapy, tuition in signing, speech therapy
- Better preparer upper primary students for high school by ensuring that they have the literacy and numeracy skills commensurate with their age and stage.
- Provide students with the one-to-one assistance required to bring them up to a level in literacy and numeracy where they can achieve in their stage classes without additional assistance.
- Give students the skills required to read at a functioning level.
- Assist students who have had a setback in their lives and are hence achieving well below their stage group. Intensive one-to-one assistance would go a long way towards assisting these students. In each of these cases, early intervention will prevent major difficulties in these students' upper primary and high school years. The Gonski Students with Disability Loading would enable our school to employ extra teachers and School Learning Support Officers so these students would get the consistent one-to-one, intensive help they require. It would also provide the resources necessary to support their intensive learning.

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.

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.

Name Lesley Atfield

I am a Teacher

This email was sent from the NSW Teachers Federation website.