

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 24 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.

Students with a disability require increased funding to access the curriculum in a meaningful way. Teachers require additional access to professional learning so that adjustments can be made. Regarding mental health, there is a severe lack of resources compared to the amount of need. Integration funding is an important aspect in supporting students with a disability however the lack of specialist resources and classroom e.g. Autism Classes with specialist teachers impacts on students who require more intensive support.

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.

Without the specialist support of specific teachers to support learning and behavioural difficulties, the more generalist role of the LaST has become overly stretched. Students with low level needs attracting less than \$6400 in Integration Funding can still have substantial needs that cannot always be met through other means (when there are a large number of students)

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.

That schools require a learning support team is a necessary requirement but the lack of training and support impacts on its effectiveness

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

Reviewing integration funding cases with parents as well as creating Learning Support Plans with parent involvement is hugely important however the lack of time and funding impacts on the frequency and detail that can be utilised.

E) Any other related matters.