

**Submission  
No 339**

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

**Organisation:** Parkes High School

**Date received:** 24 February 2017

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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.**

Lack of access to, or non existent, specialist schools in regional areas and specialist supports services such as mental health practitioners, occupational therapists, out of home care. NDIS will not overcome the lack of support services parents and clients have limited choice. Complex disabilities are left to be managed in inadequately resourced schools Access request process is cumbersome, slow does not cater for who may have disabilities that are in the process of being diagnosed Access requests are often returned due to minor errors in form filling. Not enough specialist to deal with the student requiring assistance Lack of transitional classes to cater for students who may have temporary difficulties dealing with mainstream settings

#### **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.**

Disappearance of specialist literacy teachers, curriculum support taken from the department of education. Lack of funding/resources for students with less significant disabilities. Conflict between the ever growing standardization of curriculum delivery and assessment as opposed to the social/emotional needs of students with disabilities or temporary illness. The system does not recognise how disabling mental health issues may be.

#### **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.**

Special education faculty in this area have more than doubled in size, executive positions/support have been maintained at HT for 3 classes in secondary schools regardless if the number of classes greatly exceeds this

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

Complaints are not investigated with fairness and impartiality. lack of fair complaint system for teachers who may be working under extreme stress

**E) Any other related matters.**

Increasing and ridiculous administrative overload to satisfy bureaucratic demands prevent specialist teacher working with students with disabilities