

Submission
No 395

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

Name: Name suppressed

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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.

Students who need access to in school specialist support suffer because of the lack of time allocated to having a school counsellor in the school. Our school would benefit from a full time counsellor, at present our counsellor is stretched between several schools. Integration funding allocated to students is way below what is required. How can a student have their needs met when they are allocated only enough funds for 15minutes a day!!!!!! Support placement is a long drawn out procedure, placement depends on people who have not met the child or understand at what level they are functioning. FON needs to be really overhauled and more placements need to be made available, as in, opening up more support unit classes or SSPs in regional areas. Re-assessment of domain level is a thorn in our side - we have seen the students, we work with the student & our professional knowledge should be respected. Specialist equipment & personnel are urgently required in schools with support units. More funds need to be allocated to allow students with special needs to be safe on the playground, for example, having male staff or employees to work with the students on the playground - social skills etc - as this is an area that the students find extremely difficult to cope with.

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.

ESES has not enhanced access to specialist support for students with a disability. Students with high or complex additional learning & support needs are not having their needs met. Where do we get the expert help from in regional areas?

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.

Demand for increased special education places in NSW Govt schools has not been addressed. This is an area that truly needs to be looked into - the cases of students with disabilities, particularly mental health issues continue to rise & their schooling is not being addressed by having correct placements for these students.

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

There is always a need to improve relationships with parents/carers particularly those of students with a disability. For our students in the support unit, this is addressed quite well at present. For students in the mainstream with a disability it can be harder to address these issues with parents/caregivers due to larger numbers in the classroom & lack of assistance in the classroom, also it is extremely difficult when parents/caregivers fail to recognise the significance of the impact of their child's disability has on them in the classroom

E) Any other related matters.

We need more teachers trained in working with students with a disability -we need extra staff to teach & deal with students.