

Submission
No 47

**INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITY IN NEW SOUTH WALES EDUCATIONAL
SETTINGS**

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

Hello, I am a parent of a profoundly disabled child. My son is intellectually disabled and also has profound autism (level 3). He is non verbal and uses an iPad with Proloquo2Go (AAC) to communicate, as well as a couple of basic signs.

I am very concerned about the commission's recommendation to phase out and end special education schools. We took the steps to try having our son in a mainstream preschool, and he was lucky to be provided with a teaching assistant who worked with him one on one. Even with this support, and all due effort from the school (which was wonderful), our son struggled to attend two full days. The noisy and busy environment of a mainstream setting was distressing for my son, and unfortunately he acted out by scratching and throwing furniture. After this experience we decided he need to be a in a more specialist setting.

Luckily, we have found Warrah Specialist School, where my son is in a small class of six and fully supported by a ratio of two students per one adult. He is doing well and is now attending full days, five days a week. They support Alex to communicate with his AAC device and are able to provide the specialist support he needs.

Specialists schools need to be an option for people with disabilities like my son. Not only would he be disruptive to other students in a mainstream environment, he requires specialist support and a specialist environment with small classes, which is not possible in mainstream.

I implore the commission to consider people like my son. Having the choice of a specialist school like Warrah has been vital for my son's wellbeing and education. I would be happy to provide evidence at a hearing if this helps the commission to strongly reconsider its recommendation to phase out and end special education schools.