

## Symposium plans joint efforts to improve opportunities of students with disability

November 20, 2018

Plans are afoot to establish an alliance of Federation, professional and community groups to advocate for improved educational opportunities for students with disabilities, a result of Federation's Equity Matters Disability Symposium at the weekend.

And teacher participants committed to organising an event at their local teachers association, to raise the profile of disability education in their area.

Parents and community members joined with teachers in the union's conference centre to hear from speakers working with Aboriginal, early childhood, refugee or incarcerated students with disability.

Professor Peter Norden AO said a majority of people in youth detention have mental health issues and or learning difficulties.

Teachers on the leader activists panel concurred with the research and experiences reported by the speakers.



With the present situation in the disability education sector outlined — including the dire need for improved funding — teachers, parents and community members workshopped ideas to advance the educational experiences of students with disability in their local areas.

Presenters were:

- Cátia Malaquias, inclusion and human rights advocate
- Scott Avery, First Peoples Disability Network (Australia)
- John Frew, retired secondary and SSP principal
- Linda Graham, Queensland University of Technology
- Shaun Nemorin, NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Torture Survivors
- Peter Norden, Deakin University.

The leader activists panel consisted of Steve Almond, Barry O'Toole, Ted Kenny, Cheryl McBride and Anne Flint.

— Maureen Davis-Catterall, relieving Communications Officer