

Department advice on disability data collection during COVID



Dianne Byers
Officer

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The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) provides information about the number of students with disability in schools and the adjustments they receive.

The Australian Education Regulation 2013 requires all schools to report the data collected for the NCCD to the Australian Government on an annual basis. From 2018, the student with disability loading provided by the Australian Government is based on the NCCD.

In term 2, Federation members raised a concern describing the unique circumstances in which they found themselves, unlike any previous year, when attempting to meet the expectations of the NCCD.

This included the impact and significant disruption to teaching and learning and school routine as a result of the bushfires, floods and COVID-19.

In describing what is required at a school level, a member of the Special Education Restricted Committee stated:

“Annually, schools enter data via ERN if students receive Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice (QDTP), Supplementary, Substantial or Extensive adjustments to their learning program.

Teachers examine every student that receives 10 weeks of intervention throughout the previous 12-month period.

“There is no quick and easy way to do this. Details must be entered for every individual student (previous years data is rolled over, but still needs to go into the entry individually if they had adjustments for the year).

“This is a time-consuming data entry requirement, however, the main concern this year is evidence must be provided for 10 weeks of interventions (50 days throughout the year). With the impact of the bushfires and now COVID- 19, it has caused a lot of interruptions to student learning.

“As schools are having to enter this data for every student, they have to answer all the questions relating to QDTP, but if they have not received adjustments prior to this year, teachers are required to



search for the student and load them into the disability adjustments part of the website.”

Federation wrote to the Department and requested it consider additional systemic support and time for teachers to comply with the expectations of the NCCD. In response, the Department gave an assurance that it will continue to provide a range of supports to schools to facilitate the completion of the NCCD.

For example, they will pre-populate the data collection for students who receive a targeted provision and will ensure supports are available through their School Services teams. The NCCD guidelines have also been revised for this year and the evidence rule has been reduced from 10 weeks to 6 weeks.

For kindergarten students, new enrolments (including year 7 students) and students with a newly diagnosed or an imputed disability, the evidence requirements have also been relaxed and schools are not required to demonstrate ongoing monitoring and review of the adjustments.