

Change afoot as NSW Government responds to Disability Inquiry recommendations

March 30, 2018

The Berejiklian Government has tabled its [response](#) to the recommendations of the *Parliamentary Inquiry into the Education of Students with a Disability or Special Needs in NSW*.

The Government has accepted the 39 recommendations with three of those accepted in principle.

The Department of Education has signalled a shift to a holistic approach to improving the educational experiences and outcomes of students with disability.

In communicating the response to principals, Department Secretary Mark Scott said: "No matter how complex each situation may be, our responsibility is to deliver a quality education in a safe and welcoming environment for all students in our public schools."

This commitment was echoed in the briefing provided to Federation by Department officers after the release of the Government's response.



Disability has been identified as one of three priority areas for the Department, as they work toward their Strategic Plan to ensure every student is known, valued and cared for in our schools.

The work will be cross-directorate and coordinated by the Department's new Delivery Unit.

Federation welcomes the Department's commitment to work beyond the Committee's recommendations, commencing with what outcome-focused education for students with disability could, and should, be.

The union looks forward to informing this work through consultation and collaborative planning.

The Department's short-term goals of improving provision of specialist support, including the Access Request process, professional learning for staff and access to specialist allied health and therapy services, are important areas requiring urgent attention.

Federation will seek to ensure any changes are informed by the profession, fostering shared responsibility, and supported by additional resources such as improvements in permanent staffing entitlements, funding mechanisms, accessible expertise for schools and school infrastructure.

Achieving and sustaining this equity for our students will continue to drive Federation's fight for a Federal Government investment through fair funding.

Improved education for students with disability is well overdue and we look forward to working with the Department in enabling equity and excellence for every child.