Federal Government's disability standards in education must be backed with resources.



The AEU's submission to the Federal Government's Review of the Disability Standards in Education calls for more resources for schools and better training for teachers to ensure that students with disability can receive a quality education.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said the Standards were fatally compromised due to a lack of resources and were failing to ensure students with disability receive the education they need.

"We strongly support the goal of the Standards, which is to make sure students with disability get an education on the same basis as other students, and one which allows them to reach their potential.

"However schools are struggling to provide an inclusive, quality education for students with disability, because they do not have the resources to do so.

"The Australian Bureau of Statistics found in its 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, that 133,000 students with disability were receiving no support or special arrangements at school.

"However the number may be even bigger, as preliminary data from the 2014 National Consistent Collection of Data on disability in schools shows that 16.3 per cent of children have some form of disability, physical or mental health condition or learning difficulty.

"Too much responsibility is falling to schools and teachers, and too little is being taken by education systems across Australia.

"The AEU's State of Our Schools survey found that 84 per cent of principals say they shift funds from other parts of their budget to educate students with disability.

"Students with disability need in-class support, equipment and individual learning plans to achieve, but this requires funding. Teachers need more access to training and professional development.

"We are still waiting for the Abbott Government to keep its election promise and deliver an increase in funding for disability in schools.

“Education Minister Christopher Pyne repeatedly denies the systemic underfunding of disability in schools. He not only needs to admit that there is a problem, but he needs to tell us how he will work with the States and Territories to fix it.

“Our failure to properly educate students with disability is a national shame, and will have long-term consequences if it leads to students not being prepared for work and life after school.

Click here to view the submission.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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