

Review of the loading for students with disability 2019–public submission

Emmaus College

Stakeholder type: Principal

Jurisdiction: Victoria

Summary

Focus 1

- Extensive loading is basically full time one on one educational support/care/supervision. The funding does not really meet the financial obligations.
- QDTP is a contradiction considering the documentation/paperwork involved – while it could be argued that these adjustments are provided through usual school processes, they certainly do draw on additional resources due to the extensive record keeping involved.
- There needs to be greater detail regarding how the NCCD funds should be spent -currently we have been supplied with a half page guideline statement.
- What is the auditing process regarding how funds have been expended within a school – there appears to be a lack of clarity here?

Focus 2

- Teachers are not really trained or are ill equipped to make many of the judgements associated with NCCD. Training packages are regarding 'The Act' rather than about making appropriate professional judgements.
- There is way too much paperwork required from teachers and it is taking away precious time from preparation, correction, feedback etc. -it is a genuine workload issue. This is creating a very serious morale issue.
- Expectations of a typical primary teacher compared with secondary teacher (28 students a week to up to 180 students in a typical week) and the level of paperwork expected on those secondary teachers with 180 students (plus the variation in knowledge of their students).
- There appears to be a 'find your own way of doing things mentality' – surely there can be a nationally consistent approach with appropriate software developed for schools to document NCCD and make the task more 'streamlined' for overworked teachers.

Submission

Questions

1. Is the funding provided under the loadings for the top three NCCD levels of adjustment appropriate to support students with disability to access and participate in education on the same basis as other students?

- Extensive loading is basically full time one on one educational support/care/supervision. The funding does not really meet the financial obligations.
- QDTP is a contradiction considering the documentation/paperwork involved – while it could be argued that these adjustments are provided through usual school processes, they certainly do draw on additional resources due to the extensive record keeping involved.

- There needs to be greater detail regarding how the NCCD funds should be spent -currently we have been supplied with a half page guideline statement.
- Extra consideration should be given to flexibility with student teacher ratios etc. and other processes a school wishes to meet suit its particular needs.
- What is the auditing process regarding how funds have been expended within a school – there appears to be a lack of clarity here?

2. Are Australian Government assurance processes, undertaken to support the accuracy of information provided to calculate a school's Australian Government funding entitlement relating to students with disability, appropriate and sufficiently robust and how might they be effectively improved?

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- There is way too much paperwork required from teachers and it is taking away precious time from preparation, correction, feedback etc. -it is a genuine workload issue. This is creating a very serious morale issue.
- Expectations of a typical primary teacher compared with secondary teacher (28 students a week to up to 180 students in a typical week) and the level of paperwork expected on those secondary teachers with 180 students (plus the variation in knowledge of their students).
- Are too many resources going to the 'process', rather than actual improvements that should be taking place in classrooms.
- There appears to be a 'find your own way of doing things mentality' – surely there can be a nationally consistent approach with appropriate software developed for schools to document NCCD and make the task more 'streamlined' for overworked teachers.
- There appears, at least from a system level, to be year to year variation as to what is expected – the goal posts in terms of evidence appear to be very fluid, as does the classifications e.g. 2018 choose the highest level of adjustment, 2019 choose the lower level of adjustment.
- From a school moderation perspective, there can be significant discrepancies, even contradictions, between what different teachers will decide to adjust for the same student (and this is teachers using sound professional judgement and factoring in the particular nature of their subject). Moderating these discrepancies is then not always a clear, black-and-white decision.