Students with Disability Program for Non-State Schools

All Queensland schools are required to adhere to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. All schools therefore make reasonable adjustments to ensure students with disability are able to participate in education on the same basis as students without disability.

Eligible students with disability in non-state schools receive support from the State Government through the *Students with Disability Program for Non-State Schools* (the program).

Purpose and objectives

The purpose and objectives of the program are to:

- support the education of students with disability in non-state schools; and
- promote the educational outcomes of these students.

Target group – eligibility

Students with disability who are eligible for support under the program are those who meet the Queensland criteria used by all three education sectors, including students with:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder;
- Hearing Impairment;
- Intellectual Disability;
- Physical Impairment;
- Speech-Language Impairment; and
- Vision Impairment.

An additional category of disability is also eligible for support in non-state schools only:

- Social-Emotional Disorder.

Funding

A set percentage of the total recurrent funding provided for non-state schools in the State Budget is allocated to the program. The percentage may be adjusted from year to year as required to reflect any new funding that may be provided for students with disability.

Use of funds

The funds are to be used to support eligible students through:

- the improvement of in-school resourcing for students with disability. In-school support may include: teacher aide time, professional development for teachers working with students with disability, purchase of external support services (including therapists and other specialist support), the purchase of specialised equipment and resources for the student and/or their teachers; and/or
- the provision of centralised or regionalised services to support students with disability.

Administration of the program

The program is administered for each non-state sector by two approved authorities—Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ)—under a three-year service agreement.

Allocation of funds

The distribution of funds between the two approved authorities for any financial year will be based on the number of students with disability identified in the most recent enrolment census of non-state schools conducted annually in February by the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board. The total number of students with disability enrolled at schools affiliated with each authority forms the basis for the distribution of funds.

QCEC and ISQ must employ allocative methodologies to disburse the funds in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the Students with Disability Program.

Accountability overview

The State Government requires QCEC and ISQ to account for the allocation and use of the funds and therefore requires the collection of information from relevant authorities and/or schools to facilitate this requirement.

Schools are required to:

1. hold relevant documentation that verifies the impairment and educational adjustments in place for each eligible student;
2. develop, implement and review education plans for each eligible student which includes any adjustments required to achieve educational outcomes; and
3. provide audited statements to their respective authority verifying that the funds were expended to support the educational adjustments in place for the eligible student.

Policy authority

Sections 420, 420A and 422 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* provide the legislative basis for the policy and the payments made through the program.

The policy herein was developed in consultation with representatives of both the Catholic and Independent school sectors and was approved by the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations on 9 January 2018.

Review of the policy

To maintain relevance, the policy will be reviewed on an as-needs basis not later than December 2020.