



# Queensland Advocacy Incorporated

Our mission is to promote, protect and defend, through advocacy, the fundamental needs and rights and lives of the most vulnerable people with disability in Queensland.

*Systems and Individual Advocacy for vulnerable People with Disability*

11<sup>th</sup> November 2019

For Immediate release

On Remembrance Day this year QAI releases the submission to the Disability Royal Commission Inquiry into the education of students with disability. The right for students with disability to be educated as equal citizens alongside their peers in regular schools is neither in question nor up for debate.

There have been many misrepresentations that parents choose to have their children segregated, and educated in special schools – for most, this has not ever been a real choice. No parent chooses to have their children excluded and side-lined from a welcoming, inclusive, safe, nurturing school environment – it's just that for many parents this has never been attainable, and their children have been made unwelcome, rejected or harassed out of their preferred school.

As signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, Australia has obligations to implement those rights. The National Disability Strategy is our instrument for delivering and protecting those rights. People with disability live, love and work in our local communities as neighbours, friends, family, consumers, employers, and employees...as does everyone. It all begins in schools, together.

“Special education and segregated settings are the ‘group homes’ of education. Regular schools and classrooms reflect our communities – there is more scrutiny and transparency, better collaboration and cooperative opportunities, better outcomes for students, particularly if there is a determination to be inclusive in all approaches to teaching and learning,” said Michelle O’Flynn, Director of Queensland Advocacy Incorporated.

The resource issue has been used as an excuse for discrimination for decades. If the culture of a school or community is opposed to inclusive education, no amount of resourcing will ever be enough. This is untenable and inexcusable in a country rich in resources and classrooms full of them – the best resources are the people in the room. “The economic rationalists opposed to inclusive education have no basis for their argument. The costs associated with a separate schooling system far outweighs the cost of including students in their local regular schools, if it is actually done correctly.” said Ms. O’Flynn

Teaching to diversity is to teach to all students including students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children who are gifted and talented, and children with a paucity of enriched experiences in their home life. No more waiting.



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QAI endorses the objectives, and promotes the principles, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Patron: His Excellency The Honorable Paul de Jersey AC

The prerequisite for teachers must be that they can include and teach all – that is all.

We trust the Disability Royal Commission will make strong recommendations to this effect and end the discrimination, overt and covert abuses, violences and neglect against students with disability once and for all.

Together we are all better.

