

Recommendations

Chapter 1

Recommendation 1- page 8

The committee recommends that, within a reasonable period, all teacher aides working with students with disabilities should be qualified in special education from an accredited teacher aide training course, and that this should be a condition of additional Commonwealth funding for disability education.

Chapter 2

Recommendation 2 – page 26

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth commission a study to develop a best practice funding model to support the needs of students with disabilities in schools.

Recommendation 3 – page 28

The committee recommends that MCEETYA develop nationally agreed definitions of disabilities.

Chapter 3

Recommendation 4 – page 40

The committee recommends that MCEETYA investigate the development of teacher exchange programs for staff of ‘lighthouse’ special schools and mainstream schools.

Recommendation 5 – page 45

The Committee recommends that MCEETYA commission an assessment of the outcomes of inclusive policies for students with disabilities; and devise implementation and professional development strategies for teachers and school administrators to improve these outcomes.

Recommendation 6 – page 46

The committee recommends that MCEETYA develop a policy on inclusive education that recognises the importance of having a range of schooling options for students with disabilities.

Chapter 4

Recommendation 7 – page 52

The committee recommends that, subject to assessment under Australian trials currently being conducted, routine screening of the hearing of all Australian newborn children should be adopted.

Recommendation 8 – page 53

The committee recommends that MCEETYA should examine options to re-introduce some form of regular screening for sensory impairment for school and pre-school age children, either within schools or as part of community health and immunisation programs.

Recommendation 9 – page 74

The committee recommends that the transition of students with disabilities from school to further study, employment and lifelong learning should be the subject of further inquiry.

Chapter 5

Recommendation 10 – page 80

The committee recommends that all university teacher training courses include a mandatory unit on the education of atypical students (including students with a disability and gifted students), to familiarise trainee teachers with classroom methods appropriate for students across the spectrum of ability.

Recommendation 11 – page 86

The committee recommends that the *Teachers for the 21st Century—Making the Difference* program should be extended as a national professional development scheme, with funding augmented to target improved performance outcomes for teaching and learning especially for atypical children in all education settings.

Recommendation 12 – page 86

The committee also recommends that the Commonwealth, through MCEETYA, should set out broad guidelines on the duration and structure of courses to be implemented through this national professional development scheme, and establish an appropriate evaluation process.

Recommendation 13 – page 93

The committee recommends that MCEETYA undertake a study to identify deficiencies in service provision for students with disabilities in rural, regional and remote areas, as part of a project aimed at addressing the overall shortage of specialist educators.

Recommendation 14 – page 94

The committee recommends to MCEETYA that research be undertaken to evaluate the effects of changes in the role and employment conditions of special education teachers, and to assess the adequacy and appropriateness of current specialist consultation models.

Chapter 6**Recommendation 15 – page 105**

The committee recommends that the Department of Education, Science and Training explore options for the establishment of a scheme designed to assist students with disabilities to purchase assistive equipment.

Recommendation 16 – page 108

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth fund universities to develop long-term strategies to improve the physical environment and pedagogy of universities to ensure equality of access for students with disabilities.

Chapter 7**Recommendation 17 – page 118**

The committee recommends that the Attorney-General formulate the Disability Standards for Education 2002, under paragraph 31 (1) (b) of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*; it also recommends that the Commonwealth take the necessary legislative action to put the education standards beyond legal challenge.

Recommendation 18 – page 122

The committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory governments share the cost of implementing the education standards. MCEETYA is the appropriate forum to determine the extent that these costs should be shared.

Recommendation 19 – page 126

The committee recommends that the conditions on which financial assistance is paid to state and territory education authorities, and the supporting guidelines for quadrennial funding, should be strengthened to include reporting processes that ensure that Commonwealth funds for students with disabilities are spent on students with disabilities.

