



THE AEU-ACT COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN

FACT SHEET: MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

PUBLIC EDUCATION HAS AS ITS FUNDAMENTAL PRECEPT THE BELIEF THAT ALL STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO A HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION AND THAT ALL STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO LEARN AND SUCCEED.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS AIM TO PROVIDE ALL STUDENTS WITH A HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION THAT DEVELOPS THEIR SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND VALUES, ENABLING THEM TO CONTRIBUTE MEANINGFULLY TO SOCIETY THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES.

IT IS THE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS TO PLAN AND IMPLEMENT A RANGE OF INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EVERY STUDENT IN THEIR CARE.

HOWEVER, TO DO SO EFFECTIVELY REQUIRES FAIR LEVELS OF FUNDING AND THE RIGHT PEOPLE TARGETED TOWARDS HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMS. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE MUCH MORE THAN JUST BRICKS AND MORTAR.

TO ENSURE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES FOR ALL STUDENTS, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS, ESPECIALLY IN SOME SECONDARY SUBJECTS, AS WELL AS THE LACK OF ENOUGH HIGH QUALITY RELIEF TEACHERS BE ADDRESSED. WE'RE ALSO CALLING FOR AN INCREASED NUMBER OF SPECIALIST TEACHERS TO BE PLACED IN ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS, SUCH AS SCHOOL COUNSELLORS, STUDENT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS AND QUALIFIED ESL TEACHERS. THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE PROFESSIONALS REQUIRED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO GIVE THE EXPERT SUPPORT TO TODAY'S STUDENTS, WHO HAVE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX NEEDS.

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL. MOST STUDENTS ACCESS THE CURRICULUM IN A REGULAR SCHOOL SETTING. FOR A FEW STUDENTS, SPECIALISED SUPPORT AND TARGETED RESOURCES IN AN ALTERNATIVE SETTING (EITHER ON A SHORT-TERM OR CONTINUING BASIS) ARE REQUIRED IN ORDER TO ENSURE EQUITY OF OUTCOMES. SUCH STUDENTS MAY INCLUDE THOSE WITH MODERATE TO SEVERE DISABILITIES; EXPERIENCING A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE; EXHIBITING VIOLENT BEHAVIOURS; OR THOSE AT RISK OF DISENGAGING FROM SCHOOL OR ALREADY DISENGAGED.

TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS, THE PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE ACT REQUIRES A BROADER RANGE OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

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Fact Sheet: Meeting the Needs of Students

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PROGRAMS AND SETTINGS (WHICH RETAIN CLOSE LINKS TO MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS) IN ORDER TO MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF STUDENTS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY THE CASE NOW WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE 'EARN OR LEARN' REQUIREMENTS – STUDENTS MUST PARTICIPATE IN FULL-TIME EDUCATION, TRAINING OR WORK UNTIL COMPLETING YEAR 12 OR EQUIVALENT OR UNTIL THEY REACH AGE 17, WHICHEVER OCCURS FIRST.

WHAT IS NEEDED:

1. A FUNDING MODEL THAT TARGETS FUNDS TO ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ON A NEEDS-BASIS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH IDENTIFIED NEEDS SUCH AS BEHAVIOURAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTURBANCE, MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, SPEECH THERAPY, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY.
2. A RESIDENTIAL OR DAY MENTAL HEALTH CARE FACILITY WITH ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND/OR TRAINING FOR SECONDARY AND PRIMARY STUDENTS, INCLUDING THOSE WHO EXHIBIT VIOLENT BEHAVIOURS.
3. ADEQUATE FUNDING TO SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS INCLUDING THE INTENSIVE ENGLISH CENTRES AND FUNDS TO TRAIN ALL ESL TEACHERS WHO DO NOT HAVE A SPECIALIST ESL QUALIFICATION.
4. INCREASE THE RANGE OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SETTINGS EG. A VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS SCHOOL; EXPAND THE CCCARES PROGRAM FOR YOUNG PARENTS TO COMPLETE YEAR 10 AND 12; EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH ACUTE BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS – SEE MORE SUGGESTIONS AT *ATTACHMENT A – ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS AND SETTINGS*.
5. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL COUNSELLORS AND STUDENT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS TO PROPERLY SUPPORT SCHOOLS TO IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE PREVENTATIVE PROGRAMS.
6. THE ACT GOVERNMENT SHOULD FULLY FUND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE *CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES COURSE* FOR ALL ELIGIBLE TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF.