

# Queensland Implementation Plan for the More Support for Students with Disabilities Initiative

## NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FOR MORE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

### PART 1 - PRELIMINARIES

1. This Implementation Plan is created subject to the provisions of the **National Partnership Agreement for More Support for Students with Disabilities** and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement. The objective of the **National Partnership Agreement for More Support for Students with Disabilities** is 'Australian schools and teachers are better able to support students with disabilities, contributing to improved student learning experiences, educational outcomes and transitions to further education or work.'
2. Building workforce capacity, better teaching support, customised curriculum resources and focused training are among the strategies set to support students with disabilities in Queensland state schools through this National Partnership. The new initiatives include:
  - a) Providing training for teachers to strengthen their skills in the use of assistive technology in the classroom. We will help staff including support teachers and teacher aides learn how to use assistive technology (Output 2).
  - b) Developing a Centre of Expertise in the Educational Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The centre will engage leading experts to develop evidence based resources and professional development materials and deliver training based on research evidence and best practice for the growing number of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and for students with challenging behaviours arising from their disabilities. The centre will be established in consultation with staff involved in the implementation of the *Positive Partnerships Helping Children with Autism*. The centre will serve as a centre of expertise in the educational needs of students with disabilities and provide expert support to a group of other schools that may not have this expertise (Output 3).
  - c) Building workforce capacity by supporting school principals and/or school leadership teams to strengthen teachers' ability to assist students with disabilities. Based on the results of teaching and learning audits, leaders in schools will receive online training to help their staff better understand relevant issues and trends including complex case management strategies across multiple agencies and the national *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Output 7).
  - d) Supporting school staff to assess the current learning level of students with disabilities, adapt the teaching curriculum to suit their current level

of ability and report on student progress against adapted curriculum. The implementation of a centralised student focused planning tool to help coordinate individual support plans for students with disabilities. These plans will better support school staff including teachers to make reasonable adjustments to address the significant educational support needs to meet the requirements of the Australian Curriculum. Resources to support this process will include exemplar curriculum planning resources for the Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics and Science P-10. This will provide school staff with models for differentiating curriculum materials and teaching styles to meet the needs of students with significant educational support needs arising from a disability. The materials can be adjusted to suit school contexts and personalise student learning. The materials strengthen awareness of and compliance with the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. Staff scholarships Graduate studies in ASD will also be offered (Outputs 8).

- e) Engaging paraprofessionals (aka teacher's aides) to strengthen their skills in supporting students with disabilities. We will strengthen the capacity of our workforce through a range of professional development initiatives including scholarships for the Certificate III Education Support and Certificate IV Education Support (Output 11).
3. Understanding the obligations and responsibilities of staff under the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* will be included in all training and professional learning activities and materials.
4. The development of this Implementation Plan for the *National Partnership Agreement for More Support for Students with Disabilities* complements existing investments for students with disabilities in Queensland. The total budgeted allocation for 2011-12 for students with disabilities in Queensland is \$722.536m. The Queensland state schooling allocation from the *National Partnership Agreement for More Support for Students with Disabilities* between 2011-12 and 2013-14 is \$32.939 million.

## PART 2 - TERMS OF THIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

5. This Implementation Plan will commence as soon as it is agreed between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the, Minister for Human Services and Minister Assisting for School Education and the State of Queensland, represented by the Minister for Education and Industrial Relations.
6. The purpose of this Implementation Plan is to provide information on bilateral commitments under the National Partnership agreement and to provide the public with information about how the underlying project will be delivered at a jurisdictional level.
7. This Implementation Plan will cease on completion of the project as specified in this Implementation Plan, including the Commonwealth's acceptance of the final progress report (Progress Report 3) and processing of related final payments.

8. This Implementation Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Ministers.
9. The Parties to this Implementation Plan do not intend any of the provisions to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to this Implementation Plan.

## PART 3 - STRATEGY FOR QUEENSLAND STATE SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION

### Environmental Scan, Needs Analysis and Consultation

#### (a) *Environmental Scan and Needs Analysis*

10. The Department of Education and Training (DET) is committed to preparing every child and young person with the fundamentals for success, to develop Queenslanders' skills and to help drive economic prosperity. Our schools help strengthen social cohesion and build a prosperous economy for all Queenslanders, and have a strong focus on closing the gap in education outcomes for all students.

#### Population Trends

11. Four million Australians (18.3 per cent of the population) have a disability, according to research from the *Survey of Disability, Australia, (2009)*<sup>1</sup> and the *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, (2009)*<sup>2</sup>. Just under one in every five Queenslanders has a disability,<sup>3</sup> with more than 150,000 having a severe disability that requires help or assistance with self-care, mobility or communication needs.

#### Definitions and Policy Context

12. DET recognises people with disabilities as defined by the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*. This definition of disability is broad and includes temporary and permanent impairments that a person has had, has now, may have in the future or is believed to have. The DDA definition encompasses a broad range of impairments but does not define the impact an impairment has on a person's life functioning.
13. The DDA policy definition of disability encompasses a broader group of students than those identified for targeted resources through Education Queensland's Education Adjustment Program six disability categories of Autism Spectrum Disorder, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Impairment, Physical Impairment, Speech-Language Impairment, and Vision Impairment. Students who do not access additional resources through the Education Adjustment Program (EAP), but who have a disability as defined by the DDA, are supported through the array of student support services allocated to regions and schools. This may include guidance support, speech-language therapy support, behaviour support and learning support.

#### Trends in Queensland State Schooling

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4446.0>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4430.0Main%20Features12009?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4430.0&issue=2009&num=&view=>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.qld.gov.au/disability/community/terms/>

14. The number and proportion of students with disabilities in Queensland state schools is increasing — a trend which places more pressure on schools to meet the diverse needs of students.
15. In 2011, there were 23,286 students between Year One and Year 12 identified with a verified disability under the EAP in Queensland state primary, secondary and special school settings.<sup>4</sup> Services were also provided to more than 954 students with disabilities verified with hearing, physical and vision impairments in the non-state sector. In Prep, 1592 students with disabilities are supported through a range of programs and services.
16. The identification rate of children with a disability in schools has risen markedly across the globe — particularly in the areas of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, with one of the largest increases being the number of students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (The Royal Australasian College of Physicians, 2008<sup>5</sup>; Fombonne, 2005<sup>6</sup>).
17. Current research reveals that more students are currently identified with ASD than in previous years internationally, nationally and within Queensland. However, while its prevalence is higher than in the past, it is unclear whether there has been an actual increase in incidences without a universally-agreed definition or prevalence rate. Recognising that ASD can co-occur with severe intellectual impairment, higher intellectual functioning and other disorders could explain higher rates of diagnoses (Yeargin-Allsopp, 2008)<sup>7</sup>.
18. The increase in students with disability is likely to persist due to improvements in diagnosis and data collection, greater awareness and acceptance (Australian Government's Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2008)<sup>8</sup> and also as a result of enrolments overall in Queensland state schools continuing to grow.
19. There is also significant environmental risk factors e.g: the continuation of low socio-economic circumstances, iodine deficiency, which is the greatest cause of intellectual disability in the developing world (Fujiura, 2004), excessive alcohol consumption during pregnancy which can lower a child's IQ and increase hyperactivity. (Hepper, P. G., Dornan, J. C. & Little, J. F., 2005<sup>9</sup>). Prenatal exposure to cigarette smoke, drugs and alcohol can also present as an increase in autism, hyperactivity-inattention, neuro-cognitive impairments, sensory impairments, lifelong medical conditions and influence on language acquisition and development (Carpenter 2010).<sup>10</sup>
20. Key trends from DET data (including Education Adjustment Program data) between 2007-11 indicates:

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<sup>4</sup> As at day 8 in 2011

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.racp.edu.au/page/health-policy-and-advocacy/paediatrics-and-child-health>

<sup>6</sup> Fombonne, E. (2005). Epidemiology of Autistic Disorder and Other Pervasive Developmental Disorders. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 66, 3-10.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ucsfcmecme.com/2008/MOC08001/YearginAllsopAutismSpectrumDisorders.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=6442468143>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1472723/>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.cheri.com.au/PDF\\_Files/1.%20The%20Changing%20Pattern%20of%20Childhood%20Disability-web.pdf](http://www.cheri.com.au/PDF_Files/1.%20The%20Changing%20Pattern%20of%20Childhood%20Disability-web.pdf)

- 20.1. The growth in proportionate numbers of students with disability has been significantly higher than growth in total state school enrolments from year-to-year.
- 20.2. There has been a substantial increase in the number of special education programs in primary and secondary state schools, due to responsibility for strategic support programs being coordinated at a regional level. One of the main changes is that there is no longer a requirement for a minimum number of students with disabilities to be enrolled at a school before a special education program can be proposed — which gives regions greater flexibility to meet local needs.
- 20.3. For Years One to 12, the number of students verified in the category of Autism Spectrum Disorder has steadily grown from 1.4 per cent to two per cent, while intellectual impairment has increased from 1.7 per cent to 2 per cent across the total student population.
- 20.4. There has been a small growth of 0.2 per cent in the total student enrolments for the low incidence disability of hearing impairment.
21. The Queensland Government conducts teaching and learning audits in all state schools, including special schools, to assess how schools align practices and processes with Education Queensland's expectations and identify the needs of each student. These audits report on eight areas including 'differentiated classroom learning', which addresses changes to curriculum that teachers are required to make for students including those with a disability.
22. There is also increasing worldwide recognition among educators that assistive technologies can significantly enhance independence, participation and access to learning environments for all students including those with disability — particularly students with ASD and in rural and remote areas.

*(b) Consultation*

23. This agreement has been informed by DET's consultation with key stakeholders including reports, students with disabilities, Queensland Parents for People with a Disability, principals' associations, the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) and the Association of Special Education Administrators Queensland Inc.
24. Recent consultation includes a roundtable attended by key education stakeholders from the disability sector including unions, principals' associations and parent groups, identifying the following issues which helped shape this implementation plan:
  - a) There is an increasing need to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and learning disabilities;
  - b) Strong leadership is critical in developing an inclusive schooling ethos;
  - c) Students with disabilities want better accessibility and adjustments to both work activities and assignments in classrooms;<sup>11</sup>
  - d) There should be recognition of the value of foundation levels proposed by ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority) for

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<sup>11</sup>Internal consultations undertaken by Education Queensland in 2011.

the national curriculum, as well as specialist help to adjust the existing curriculum;

- e) The importance of differentiated instruction (QPPD, 2010<sup>12</sup>), enhanced resources and support for teachers to make adjustments so that students with disabilities access education and the mainstream curriculum on the same basis as other students — particularly in relation to the implementation of the Australian Curriculum from 2012;
- f) There is a need for more effective support for, and use of, teacher aides in supporting students with disabilities; and
- g) The ICPA has raised the importance of using assistive technology for students with a disability in rural and remote areas.

*(c) Collaboration*

- 25. Extensive collaboration will occur between regions, school staff and central office in implementing this agreement. In addition, the establishment of the centre of expertise will enable focussed collaboration with university and non-government sectors with expertise in ASD.

*(d) List of schools*

- 26. A list of schools will be provided at a later date subject to further consultation with regions and schools.

## Project information

- 27. A description of each of the outputs to be implemented under the project including the strategy for delivering each output is outlined below (see Table 2). The strategies selected focus on improving educational achievements for all students, including students with disability and /or who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, from a language background other than English or in rural and remote locations.

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<sup>12</sup> Queensland Parents of People with a Disability (2011) Diving for Pearls. [http://www.qppd.org/images/docs/diving\\_for\\_pearls\\_march2011.pdf](http://www.qppd.org/images/docs/diving_for_pearls_march2011.pdf)

Table 2: Implementation timelines

Tasks	Date
1 <u>Output 2: Building Skills with Assistive Technology</u> 1.1 Provide training to teachers on the development of digital literacy for students with intellectual impairment – build on the pre-Foundation levels of the Australian Curriculum.	March 2012 – December 2013
1.2 Provide training to support teachers literacy and numeracy, Advisory Visiting Teacher (AVT's) and specialist teachers in the use of assistive technology to support students with learning disabilities i.e. dyslexia	December 2012 – December 2013
2 <u>Output 3: Centre of Expertise in the Educational Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</u> (also relates to 5b and 6b below) 2.1 Consult and formalise business case for the Centre of Expertise	June 2012
2.2 Engage an expert in the field of autism to provide advice and support the development of professional development packages (links to 5 b)	June 2012
2.3 Establish the centre and scope participatory research projects with participating schools	September 2012
2.4 Produce online packages to assist staff identify universal, targeted and intensive adjustments for students with ASD (links to 6 b)	December 2012
2.5 Deliver reports on two participatory research reports	December 2013
3 <u>Output 7: Professional Development Package for principals, school leadership teams and Assistant Regional Directors</u> 3.1 Professional development package developed with principals from schools that scored an 'outstanding' in the Queensland Teaching and Learning Audit on Domain 7 (differentiated classroom learning) to share the experiences and strategies that contributed to their rating.	March 2012 - December 2013
3.2 Train representatives identified by the region in the use of the package to support all schools but in particular those schools that have scored a 'Low' in this domain.	December 2013
3.3 Funding provided to regions to facilitate training.	Dec 2013- Dec 2014
4 <u>Output 7: Complex Case Management – Training Package</u> 4.1 Develop a training package for regions to ensure that the specific requirements for students with disability are met. Focus on the importance of schools providing reasonable adjustments and on wrap-around services and multiple agency case management.	December 2012
4.2 Regional roll out of training including training of regional facilitators	Dec 2012-Dec 2013



<p>5 <u>Output 8: ASD Curriculum Adjustment Project</u>  5.1 Specific project on provision of adjustments to ensure that students with disability are engaged in the curriculum and achieve appropriate educational outcomes – in particular for students with a diagnosis of ASD.  5.2 Engage an expert in the field of autism to provide advice and support the development of professional development packages.  5.3 Development of a series of online packages to identify universal, targeted and intensive adjustments for students with ASD.</p>	<p>March 2012 – Dec 2013   June 2012 – Dec 2013   December 2012</p>
<p>6 <u>Output 8: Leading Differentiated Instruction</u>  6.1 Targeted training project for Advisory Visiting Teachers, Heads of Special Education Services (HOSES) and Heads of Curriculum (HOC) in each region to support the embedding of differentiated instruction into curriculum in schools  6.2 Develop the capacity for centralised individual planning, tracking and reporting for student with disabilities aligned to the Australian Curriculum</p>	<p>December 2013   December 2013</p>
<p>7 <u>Output 8: Curriculum in the Classroom - Learning Disability Resources</u>  7.1 Development of <i>Curriculum into the Classroom</i> resources which are customised for students with a learning disability.  7.2 Development of a consolidated view of a student's needs, resourcing requirements and their alignment to the Australian Curriculum.</p>	<p>December 2013  December 2013</p>
<p>8 <u>Output 8: Centralised Student Planning Tool</u>  8.1 Develop a centralised student focused planning tool to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to individual support planning for students with disabilities.</p>	<p>December 2013</p>
<p>9 <u>Output 8: Staff Scholarships for Graduate studies in ASD Education</u>  9.1 Scholarships for school staff to undertake Graduate studies in ASD education</p>	<p>December 2013</p>
<p>10 <u>Output 11: Teacher Aide Training</u>  10.1 Development of an online package on the best use of school resources for Teacher Aides (TAs) in collaboration with identified school admin representatives (e.g. Deputy Principals, HOSES)</p>	<p>December 2012</p>
<p>10.2 Regions provided with funds to manage and deliver professional development for Teacher Aides. This can include the provision of scholarships to complete Certificate 111 Or 1V Education Support.</p>	<p>December 2012 –  December 2013</p>



Table 3: Project logic

Objective: All Strategies relate to the overall National Partnership Agreement objective of: Australian schools and teachers are better able to support students with disabilities, contributing to improved student learning experiences, educational outcomes and transitions to further education or work.		
Strategies for Delivering Outputs	Outputs	Outcomes
1. Establish a Centre of Expertise in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Developing a support centre which serves as a centre of expertise in the educational needs of students with disabilities and provide expert support to a group of other schools that may not have this expertise. (NPA Output 3)	Schools are better able to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities, in collaboration with parents, carers and students. (NPA Outcome 18 (b))
2. Professional Development Package for principals, school leadership teams and Assistant Regional Directors. 3. Disability Standards for Education – Professional Support Materials 4. Complex Case Management – Training Package	Supporting school principals and/or school leadership teams to strengthen teachers’ ability to assist students with disabilities. (NPA Output 7)	Principals and school leaders are better able to support teachers and teachers are more capable of identifying and addressing the educational support needs of students with disabilities. (NPA Outcome 18 (d)). Schools become more inclusive environments, in accordance with the <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i> , recognising the diversity students with disabilities bring to the school (NPA Outcome 18 (c))
5. ASD Curriculum Adjustment Project 6. Leading Differentiated Instruction 7. Curriculum in the Classroom - Learning Disability Resources 8. Centralised Student Planning Tool 9. Staff Scholarships for Graduate studies in ASD Education	Supporting school staffs to assess the current learning level of students with disabilities, adapt the teaching curriculum to suit their current level of ability and report on student progress against adapted curriculum. (NPA Output 8)	Teachers of students with disabilities have better access to expert support. (NPA Outcome 18 (e)) Schools become more inclusive environments, in accordance with the <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i> , recognising the diversity students with disabilities bring to the school (NPA Outcome 18 (c))
10. Teacher Aide Training	Engaging paraprofessionals (aka teacher’s aides) to strengthen their skills in supporting students with disabilities. (NPA Output 11)	Teachers of students with disabilities have better access to expert support. (Outcome 18 (e)) Schools become more inclusive environments, in accordance with the <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i> , recognising the diversity students with disabilities bring to the school (NPA Outcome 18 (c))

<p>11. Building Teacher Skills with Assistive Technology</p>	<p>Providing training for teachers to strengthen their skills in the use of assistive technology in the classroom.(NPA Output 2)</p>	<p>Teachers of students with disabilities have better access to expert support. (Outcome 18 (e))  Schools become more inclusive environments, in accordance with the <i>Disability Standards for Education 2005</i>, recognising the diversity students with disabilities bring to the school (NPA Outcome 18 (c))</p>
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### Links with existing reforms or projects

28. The Centre of Expertise in the Educational Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders will build on the *Positive Partnerships Helping Children with Autism* initiative by linking with existing resources and building upon the professional development of staff providing intensive intervention to support students with ASD.

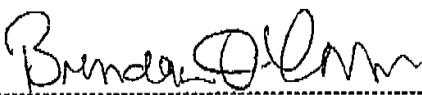
### Performance indicators and benchmarks.

29. Performance indicators and benchmarks for this project are listed at Attachment A.

### Sign off

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signature  Date 16-2-12  
Hon Cameron Dick MP, Queensland Minister for Education and Industrial Relations

 16-2-12  
Signature Date  
Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, Minister for Human Services, Minister Assisting for School Education

# Queensland Outputs, Payment Weightings, Performance Indicators and Performance Benchmarks

Outputs, payment weightings, performance indicators and performance benchmarks

1. The outputs to be implemented in Queensland state schools under the **National Partnership Agreement for More Support for Students with Disabilities** and related payment weightings are listed in Table 1. The performance indicators, baseline data and performance benchmarks are listed in Table 2. The payment percentages allocated to outputs in Table 1 will be paid to the States on the Commonwealth's acceptance of the related progress report, demonstrating progress in meeting performance benchmarks outlined in Table 2. This is the case for all payments except those against reporting period 1 which are paid in advance in recognition of the requirement for working capital to assist with the implementation of outputs.

Table 1: Outputs and payment weightings<sup>13</sup>

Outputs	Reporting Period 1 (1 October 2011 – 30 June 2012)	Reporting Period 2 (1 July 2012 – 1 March 2013)	Reporting Period 3 (2 March 2013 – 31 December 2013)	Total
1. Providing training for teachers to strengthen their skills in the use of assistive technology in the classroom. (NPA Output 2)	6%	6%	3%	15%
2. Developing a support centre which serves as a centre of expertise in the educational needs of students with disabilities and provide expert support to a group of other schools that may not have this expertise <sup>14</sup> . (NPA Output 3)	2%	2%	1%	5%
3. Supporting school principals and/or school leadership teams to strengthen teachers' ability to assist students with disabilities. (NPA Output 7)	6%	6%	3%	15%
4. Supporting school staff to assess the current learning level of students with disabilities, adapt the teaching curriculum to suit their current level of ability and report on student progress against adapted curriculum. (NPA Outputs 8)	16%	16%	8%	40%
5. Engaging paraprofessionals (aka teacher's aides) to strengthen their skills in supporting students with disabilities. (NPA Output 11)	10%	10%	5%	25%
Total	40%	40%	20%	100%

<sup>13</sup> Percentages have been rounded for presentation purposes. Actual percentages of total allocation received on acceptance of related progress report will differ slightly acknowledging that the total amount received in a financial year cannot exceed the amounts in Table 3 of the [National Partnership Agreement for More Support for Students with Disabilities](#).

<sup>14</sup> This will be known as the Centre of Expertise in the Educational Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Table 2: Performance indicators, baseline data and performance benchmarks<sup>15</sup>

Outputs	Performance Indicators	Performance Benchmark as at 30 June 2012	Performance Benchmark as at 1 March 2013	Performance Benchmark as at 31 December 2013
1. Providing training for teachers to strengthen their skills in the use of assistive technology in the classroom. (NPA Output 2)	Number of teachers that attended training in the use of assistive technology.	10-20 school staff	100-150 school staff	200-300 school staff
2. Developing a support centre which serves as a centre of expertise in the educational needs of students with disabilities and provide expert support to a group of other schools that may not have this expertise. (NPA Output 3)	Number of schools supported by support centres.		20-30 schools	50-75 schools
	Number and/or numerical range of support centres providing support to the school system.		1 centre	1 centre
3. Supporting school principals and/or school leadership teams to strengthen teachers' ability to assist students with disabilities. (NPA Output 7)	Number of principals and/or school leadership team staff supported to strengthen teachers' ability to assist students with disability.	2-5 principals and/or school leadership team staff	50-75 principals and/or school leadership team staff	100-150 principals and/or school leadership team staff
4. Supporting school staff to assess the current learning level of students with disabilities, adapt the teaching curriculum to suit their current level of ability and report on student progress against adapted curriculum. (NPA Output 8)	Number of school staff supported in assessing students with disability, differentiate planning, teaching and learning to support student's individual needs and report on student progress against the standards of the Australian Curriculum.	14 -20 school staff	200-250 school staff	600-700 school staff
5. Engaging paraprofessionals particularly teacher's aides to strengthen their skills in supporting students with disability (NPA Output 11).	Number of paraprofessionals particularly teacher's aides better placed to support students with disability through training.		150-200 paraprofessionals	300-350 paraprofessionals

<sup>15</sup> These benchmarks are cumulative to December 2013 so that totals as at 31 December 2013 represent to total across the whole agreement. As this is a new agreement the performance benchmark at the beginning of the agreement is zero for each output.