

AISNT SPECIAL EDUCATION

2009

Information Booklet



Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory Inc.

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INTRODUCTION

The Special Education Policy of the Northern Territory Education Department supports the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools and classes. It is based on the principle that these students, to the fullest extent possible, should be educated with their age peers and be provided with curriculum and support that will enable their specific educational needs to be met.

The rights of people with disabilities are clearly grounded in legislation including;

*The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992),
The NT Anti-Discrimination Act (1994) and
The NT Disability Services Act (1993).*

This legislation has been enacted to protect students with disabilities and in terms of education resolves that;

- a student cannot be refused enrolment because of a disability,*
- students cannot be expelled or excluded because of a disability,*
- students with disabilities be protected from harassment,*
- schools make reasonable adjustments to enable enrolment of students with disabilities.*

Information regarding the Commonwealth Targeted Programs Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs and the Northern Territory Scheme – Severely Disabled Children’s Program can be obtained from:

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COMMONWEALTH TARGETED PROGRAMS
Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs
(LNSLN)
Special Education

The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory Administers the Commonwealth Targeted Programs including the Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs - Special Education element that is described below.

Eligibility

Students who fit the definition as stated below are eligible for funding under this program.

Definition

A child with a disability is a child who has been assessed by a person with relevant qualifications as having an intellectual, sensory, physical, social or emotional impairment or more than one of those impairments to a degree that:

if the child is of school age and satisfies the criteria for enrolment in special education programs or services provided by the government of the State in which the child resides.

A student or child whose only impairment is a specific learning difficulty or for whom remedial education or remedial support is appropriate is not eligible.

(See Attachment 1 for Eligibility Criteria)

Target Group

The target group for Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs – Special Education fixed grants is school students, from Transition to Year 12, who have severe to profound disabilities that disadvantage them in terms of their educational participation and learning outcomes.

The level of ascertained disability and consequent disadvantage is a major factor in the consideration of funding allocation. Students should meet the criteria for level 5 or 6 disability or greater to be considered for funding under this program. *(See Attachment 2)*

Ascertainment

To be considered for funding under the LNSLN – Special Education Program, students need to be ascertained at level 5, 6 or 6+ disability by the AISNT Ascertainment Committee or the equivalent with Student Services NTDEET.

Application

Applications for funding, for the following year, for students with disabilities should be made in October of each year as outlined in the 'AISNT Commonwealth Targeted Programs Guidelines' that are sent to schools each September.

Applications can also be made when a student with disabilities enrolls at any other time of the year. In the instance that a student with a disability commences part way through a school year funding for that student can only be considered where there are still uncommitted funds available.

An Individual Student Profile Form should be completed for each student with a disability for whom funding is requested. *(See Attachment 3)*

Verification of Attendance

Schools will be asked to verify the attendance of students with disabilities for whom they have been granted funding.

In the event that a student with disabilities who is receiving funding under this program leaves the school, the school is required to notify the AISNT of the date of withdrawal.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ASSISTANCE SCHEME SEVERELY DISABLED CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

The following Program is administered by the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training Financial Services using information provided by the Student Services Branch.

The purpose of this scheme is to provide students with severe disabilities, who are enrolled in Non-Government Schools, with the necessary support for them to obtain quality education outcomes commensurate with their abilities and potential. This additional support may involve special education teachers, Student Services personnel, provision of a Part Time Instructor, special negotiated educational programs, special resources etc.

Definitions

Students with disabilities are:

Those who have been identified as having an intellectual, sensory, physical, social/emotional, language/communication disability; a specific learning disability; or multiple disabilities.

A child with a disability is a child who has been assessed by a person with relevant qualifications as having an intellectual, sensory, physical, social or emotional impairment or more than one of those impairments to a degree that:

if the child is of school age, satisfies the criteria for enrolment in special education programs or services provided by the government of the State in which the child resides.

Provision

NTDEET is committed to support for severely disabled students enrolled in the Non-Government Sector through the provision of financial support through the Severely Disabled Children's Program.

Provision will be considered for a student where there is:

- An assessment from relevant Student Services Professionals.
- A severe to profound disability due to an identified impairment.
- An Individual Education Plan or Special Program.
- Provision of appropriate resources and materials.
- Provision of ongoing evaluation.

Criteria for Eligibility

Support will be considered for students in the Non-Government sector who:

- Have documented special needs that meet one or more of the criteria areas, (see Assistance Eligibility in this document).
- Are receiving support through school-based special education staff and/or visiting Education Department specialists.
- Require a significant level of support in addition to that provided by the school and specialist personnel.

On Going Funding

It is the school's responsibility to provide updated information regarding students eligible for funding under this program by October each year. Information on students funded under the LNSLN Special Education School Support program is sent to Student Services by the AISNT each October.

In the event of a funded student transferring to another school in the Northern Territory during the school year

- The school from which the student is leaving should have copies of all documentation and, with the parents'/guardians' permission, transfer this to the receiving school as soon as possible.
- The school receiving the student is responsible for notifying AISNT and Student Services of the transfer.

In the event of a funded student leaving the Northern Territory, it is the responsibility of the school from which the student is leaving to notify AISNT and Student Services in order that the student's name is removed from the list.

Assistance Eligibility

A student with a disability/impairment should meet one or more of the criteria listed below to be eligible for support through the NT Assistance Scheme Severely Disabled Children's Program.

Criteria: *Social/Emotional, Behavioural Disorder
Sensori-Neural Hearing Impairment
Intellectual Impairment
Communication Impairment
Physical Impairment
Vision Impairment*

See Attachment 1 for expanded descriptors.

Severe Emotional/Behavioural Disorder

CRITERIA	EVIDENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student displays inappropriate behaviour to a point where special support in the regular classroom is required, <i>or</i> • Student displays inappropriate behaviour in the classroom to a point where periods of withdrawal become necessary, <i>or</i> • Student displays threatening and/or actual violent behaviour towards peers, teachers, self, requiring significant levels of close supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School provides sequential diarised accounts of inappropriate behaviour, <i>and</i> • Behaviour Management officer draws up baseline data from four separate observational visits, <i>or</i> • Family provides a report from a Pediatrician or a registered Psychologist.

Hearing Impairment

CRITERIA	EVIDENCE
A bilateral sensori-neural hearing loss that is severe/profound and where the student requires intervention or assistance to communicate.	Assessment from Australian Hearing Services including both a written statement and audiogram.

Vision Impairment

CRITERIA	EVIDENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision acuity of less than 6/60 with corrected vision, <i>or</i> • That visual fields are reduced to a measured arc of less than 10 degrees. 	Assessment/report from the Vision Assessment Clinic, <i>or</i> Assessment/report from the student's ophthalmologist.

Intellectual Impairment

CRITERIA	EVIDENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An intellectual level of functioning in the lower extreme range, demonstrated by a score which is two or more standard deviations below the mean on a standardised individual test of general intelligence (<70), <i>and</i>• Highly significant deficits in adaptive behaviour reflected by a composite score which is two or more deviations below the mean on an approved standardized test of adaptive behaviour, <i>and</i>• A history and evidence of ongoing school difficulties and an expectation of their continuation for the duration of the student's schooling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where the primary disability is intellectual, a written report by a guidance officer or psychologist is required.• In the case where a student has multiple severe/profound disabilities (incl. an intellectual disability) a statement from a pediatrician or a psychologist may be provided as sufficient alternative evidence.

Attachment 2

Levels of Disability for Students with Impairments

LEVEL 1: Students for whom referral, data collection, assessment and parental contact remain the only intervention required. Interim support and referrals to other agencies might occur.

LEVEL 2: Students who require monitoring and regular reviewing of educational programs and student performance. These students may be considered 'at risk' or marginal learners.

LEVEL 3: Students who require support indirectly by specialist teacher consultation with class teacher for goal setting, teaching strategies, resources, classroom management and evaluation. Other support mechanisms may be appropriate e.g. peer tutoring, volunteer helpers. Disabilities of an intellectual, sensory, physical or social/emotional nature, diagnosed by a recognised professional are considered to be in the mild range.

LEVEL 4: Students for whom a modified educational program with shared development and implementation may be necessary. Teacher-aide support is not essential. Specialist teacher support on a minimal or non-regular basis occurs. Short intensive intervention programs of limited duration may be needed. Disabilities of an intellectual, sensory, physical or social/emotional nature, diagnosed by a recognised professional, is considered to be in the mild-moderate range.

LEVEL 5: Students for whom a major modification of the educational program is necessary, together with additional teacher-aide support. Specialist teacher support is required for input into program implementation and development. Disabilities of an intellectual, sensory, physical or social/emotional nature, diagnosed by a recognised professional, is considered to be in the moderate range.

LEVEL 6: Students for whom an individualised educational program, delivered through the IEP (Individual Education Plan) process, is essential for all the student's schooling. The student may be placed in an integrated or non-integrated setting. Substantial teacher-aide support is required to assist in program implementation. Specialist teacher support is required to assist in program implementation. Specialist teacher support is also required on a regular basis. Disabilities of an intellectual, sensory, physical or social/emotional nature, diagnosed by a recognised professional, is considered in the severe to profound range.

