



***"MEDIA RELEASE"***  
***11.03.2010***

## **"Launch Of SA ALP 2010 Education Disability Policy"**

The launch today of the SA ALP 2010 Education Disability Policy has been well received and positively acknowledged! [Click here to read a copy of it.](#)

The multi faceted ALP approach including:

- \$17 million dollars in additional education funding,
- Including the development of 6 additional special education units attached to mainstream schools (for 120 students). This will take the number of special units in SA to 26
- Two of these new units will be specialist ASD specific programs
- \$4 million additional funding for non government schools to cater for disabled students
- \$4.25 million for additional assessments and intervention programs for Autism students reducing current waiting lists

It appears to be a positive plan!

Focusing on giving students a choice of mainstream attachment with the integration benefits, likely geographical proximity and transport access aspects of this policy are likely to be very warmly received by families who do not see mainstream classes as appropriate but target transition over time.

Given the 50+ questions lodged for the recent Disability Speaks forum relating to education, the ALP plan will be seen by many as a positive and considered response to a very high priority area of need and undoubtedly will be praised by many!

Among the point of difference between the SA Liberal policy that was circulated recently by Disability Speaks, the ALP policy includes attached funding which appears realistic and increases the chances of successful implementation. The ALP policy commits less specialist education positions to clients with ASD (40) than the Liberal policy (200) but other aspects of the ALP policy will have significantly wider appeal.

Disability Speaks charter of driving an agenda of listening to consumers and providing consumer driven choices in services, likes the direction and the positive assessment the ALP policy will likely generate.

We are, as usual, disappointed that the funding is not significantly more!

By enabling families, however, to access government or private schools, and choose either the option of main stream, special unit or special school, the ALP is moving in the right direction and should be applauded.

The "Big Buddy" program highlighted in the ALP policy is another positive initiative and worthy of mention.

Choice by people with disability and families and carers is the only way forward in the disability sector.

Disability Speaks will continue to forward other policy information as it becomes available over the next 3 weeks.

PS we don't know if the ALP policy announcement was fast tracked by our E-Blast yesterday, 'A Policy Free Zone'. If so, could whoever is reading the Disability Speaks media releases in the ALP election war room please release the rest of the ALP 2010 Disability Policy, hopefully with significantly more funding attached!

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