



**Government  
of South Australia**

**Ministerial Advisory Committee:  
Students with Disabilities**

**Annual Report 2011**

*April 2012*

Further information about the Ministerial Advisory Committee:  
Students with Disabilities is available on the Website at:  
*<http://www.macswd.sa.gov.au>*

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Role and Purpose	1
Context Statement	1
Committee Membership	2
<b>2. Funding</b>	<b>5</b>
Overview of Funding Process	5
<b>3. Projects</b>	<b>9</b>
Support for Children and Students with a Disability Information Resource	9
Disability Services and Children's Centres for Early Childhood and Parenting	9
Equipment for Children and Students with a Disability	10
Child Protection Resource for Parents and Carers of Children with a Disability	11
KidsMatter Early Childhood for Children with a Disability	12
<b>4. Activities in 2011</b>	<b>13</b>
Committee Leadership and Secretariat Staffing	13
Presentations of Research at Conferences	13
<b>5. Future</b>	<b>14</b>
Projects for 2011	14



# 1. Introduction

## Role and Purpose

The Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities (MAC:SWD) was established by the South Australian Minister for Education in 1989. The role and purpose of the Committee is to:

- Ensure the equitable, transparent and accountable distribution of Commonwealth Government Non-Government Centres Support grants for supplementary funding to eligible organisations, which support the education and care of children and students with a disability in early intervention programs, preschools and schools across the three education sectors in South Australia.
- Ensure the equitable, transparent and accountable distribution of State Government supplementary funding to support the education and care of children and students with a disability across the three education sectors in South Australia.
- Support the capacity of non-government organisations to provide services to children and students with a disability in early intervention programs, preschools and schools across the three education sectors in South Australia.
- Undertake projects and provide support on matters concerning the education and care of children and students with a disability as requested by the Minister for Education and Child Development.

## Context Statement

### *Our Vision*

Children and students with a disability achieve in their learning communities acquiring skills and attitudes for life-long learning and citizenship.

### *Our Mission*

To ensure equitable and efficient allocation of Commonwealth and State Government grants for supplementary funding to eligible organisations providing education and education related therapy services to children and students with a disability across the three education sectors, and to support our stakeholders on matters concerning the education and care of children and students with a disability.

### *Our Values*

Respect	Our behaviour recognises the values, diversity and contribution of individuals.
Diligence	We are careful and persistent in our application and effort and strive for continuous improvement.
Integrity	We act honestly and ethically.
Fairness	We are unbiased and impartial in all our undertakings.
Transparency	Our systems and decision making processes are understandable and open to scrutiny.
Connectedness	Our work is relevant to and supportive of our stakeholders.
Accountability	We are accountable for our decisions and actions.

## Committee Membership

### *Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities*

#### Standing Committee

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Minister for Education and Child Development to serve a twelve-month term, although in some instances this term is extended. They are chosen for their knowledge and experience in relation to children and students with a disability. Committee members consist of educators representing the three education sectors, parents, health and disability professionals, a student, and nominees of the Minister for Education and Child Development, education unions and professional associations.

As a rule the Standing Committee meets once a month, with the exception of January and April. In 2011 the Standing Committee met nine times.

#### *Membership 2011*

Ms Margaret Hillace	Chairperson
Ms Gabby Hamberger	Association of Independent Schools of SA (replacing Libby Burns from May 2011)
Dr Mary Bambacas	Deputy Chairperson
Ms Erica Baker	Independent Education Union (SA)
Dr Kerry Bissaker	Minister's Nominee, tertiary institution
Mr Clive Budden	Australian Education Union (SA Branch)
Ms Libby Burns	Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (resigned April 2011)
Ms Vivian Cagliuso	Minister's Nominee, parent
Ms Pat Coidan	Office for Disability and Client Services
Ms Stephanie Grant	Catholic Education SA
Ms Cathie Home	Early Childhood Australia (SA Branch)
Ms Pam Jacobs	Australian Association of Special Education (AASE) SA Chapter, resigned June 2011, replaced by Dr Keren Wicks
Ms Fiona Kerberopoulos	Schooling Sector, Department of Education and Children's Services
Mr Glenn Kempensberg	National Disability Services, Sub Committee: Children, Young People and their Families
Mr Nick Schumi	Minister's Nominee, student
Ms Heather Ward	Early Years, Department of Education and Children's Services
Dr Keren Wicks	Australian Association of Special Education (AASE) SA Chapter
Ms Tanya Woodworth	Minister's Nominee, Aboriginal Students with Disabilities



## Funding Approval Group

The Funding Approval Group, a subgroup of MAC: SWD, oversees the annual funding process. Final decisions about funding recommendations are made by the Standing Committee.

Funding Approval Group members for 2011 were:

- Ms Margaret Wallace, MAC:SWD Chairperson
- Dr Mary Bambacas, MAC:SWD Deputy Chairperson
- Ms Gabby Aschberger, Representative for the Association of Independent Schools of SA (AISSA)
- Ms Stephanie Grant, Representative for Catholic Education SA (CESA)
- Ms Fiona Lymberopoulos, Representative for the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS)
- Dr Kerry Bissaker, Minister 's Nominee (tertiary institution)

Funding Approval Group non-members for 2011 were:

- Ms Christel Butcher, MAC:SWD Executive Officer
- Ms Jo Shearer, MAC:SWD Project Officer
- Ms Chris Williams, DECS Assistant Director Accounting and Financial Management Improvement.

Additionally, members of the Standing Committee may be asked to attend Funding Approval Group meetings when necessary. Funding Approval Group meetings usually precede the Standing Committee meetings. In 2011 the Funding Approval Group met nine times.

## Secretariat Staff

Ms Christel Butcher	Executive Officer
Ms Maria DeFazio	Executive Secretary
Ms Jo Shearer	Project Officer (Research)
Ms Miriam Parsons	Project Officer (Research) – on leave from March 2011
Mr Skye Yuill	Project Officer (Research) – from May 2011

## 2. Funding

### Overview of Funding Process

#### *Commonwealth/State Government Grants*

The Minister for Education and Child Development is responsible for the allocation of Commonwealth/State Government Special Education grants to eligible organisations providing education and therapy related services for children and students with a disability in South Australia. Eligible non-government organisations have in the past been able to apply for support grants under the Non-Government Centres Support element of the Commonwealth Government *Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Programme (Schools Assistance (Learning Together – Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity) Act 2004)*. Funding for this element is now part of Special Purpose Payments to South Australia under the National Education Agreement between the states and territories and the Commonwealth Government.

The Committee administers the allocation of Commonwealth Government support grants to non-government organisations on behalf of the agent for the Commonwealth Government; in South Australia this is the Minister for Education and Child Development. In addition to administering Commonwealth Government funds, the Committee administers State Recurrent Grants on behalf of the Minister, which are available to support children and students with a disability.

#### Allocative Mechanism

##### *Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants*

Each year, organisations applying for Commonwealth Government *Non-Government Centres Support* Recurrent Grants submit a written application to MAC: SWD, outlining child/student numbers and the levels of need and types of service provided to the relevant education sectors. The data submitted represent services provided in the preceding year, and are verified by education sector representatives who are members of the committee, before being applied to the committee's funding formula. Data for early intervention services are verified by officers of the MAC: SWD secretariat.

In 2009 MAC: SWD reviewed its funding model in response to a request from the three education sectors which sought more intense direct service for children and students with high needs at their preschools and schools. This review was conducted over a period of eighteen months in consultation with education sector representatives and non-government organisations providing services. The new funding model came into effect from 2011. Grants are still allocated retrospectively and depend on level and type of service provided by the organisations. Exceptions are made in three cases; base grants are allocated to three small early intervention programs.

The new funding model consists of three elements:

- General Support: measuring the number of children and students who have received any type of service. Thirty per cent of the total available funding is allocated to this component.
- Specific Service: measuring the amount of time a direct service has been provided to a child or student in minutes. Organisations must achieve a minimum of 120 minutes of Early Childhood Intervention service per child per semester, or 360 minutes of school support per student per semester, for their service minutes to be counted. This structure is designed to encourage a high level of intensive, direct support. Sixty per cent of the total available funding is allocated to this component.
- Outreach Service: measuring the number of children and students who live in rural and regional areas who have received direct service of any duration. Ten per cent of the total available funding is allocated to this component.

Grant allocations to non-government organisations fluctuate on an annual basis, as they depend on the finite total budget allocation to this program and the level of service provided to individual children and students in each of the organisations funded.

The funding provided to organisations has been and will continue to be targeted to provide learning and development opportunities for children with a disability who are below school age to prepare them for entry into preschools or schools, to assist school-aged children with a disability by improving their access to educational programs and to support children with a disability in residential care.

The allocation of funds for the Non-Government Centres Support Program for the 2011 calendar year was \$3,870,342.

#### *State Recurrent Grants*

Two programs were eligible for State Government Special Education funding in 2011, namely the Women's and Children's Health Network's (formerly Children, Youth and Women's Health Services) Access Assistant Program and the Joint Sector Intensive and Crisis Support Program.

The Access Assistant Program supports children with severe physical disability and/or complex health care needs in preschools and schools across the three education sectors in South Australia. Without this program many children would not be able to attend their school, but would need to stay in hospital. The South Australian Government wholly funds the program; in 2011 the program received \$2,577,000 of funding.

MAC: SWD administers the Joint Sector Intensive and Crisis Support funding, which is accessible to the three education sectors in South Australia. This funding provides school based support for children and students during a period of unexpected need, often due to complex health support requirements on return to school after hospitalisation. An amount of \$45,000 was allocated to support this program in 2011.

#### *Commonwealth/State Government Recurrent Grant Allocations*

The Commonwealth/State Government total amount allocated in 2011 was \$6,492,342.

The following table lists those organisations/programs that received recurrent grants in 2011:

- 10 non-government organisations offering early intervention and/or school support programs
- the Women's and Children's Health Network's (formerly Children, Youth and Women's Health Services) Access Assistant Program
- Department for Families and Communities' Families SA *Tutoring Program for Children in Residential Care* (CIRC)
- the Joint Sector Intensive and Crisis Support program.

**STATE & COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT SPECIAL EDUCATION GRANTS  
RECOMMENDED FOR 2011**

<b>State Government Recurrent Grant for January to December 2011</b>	<b>\$ (GST exclusive)</b>	
<b>Children, Youth &amp; Women's Health Service Access Assistant Program</b>	2,577,000	
<b>Joint Sector Intensive &amp; Crisis Support</b>	45,000	<b>\$2,622,000</b>

<b>Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants for January to December 2011</b>	<b>\$ (GST exclusive)</b>		
<b>Autism SA</b>	Early Intervention	540,487	
	School Support	787,775	1,328,262
<b>Novita Children's Services</b>	Early Intervention	808,812	
	School Support	402,045	1,210,858 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Down Syndrome Society</b>	Early Intervention	120,891	
	School Support	99,622	220,513
<b>Cora Barclay Centre</b>	Early Intervention	362,344	
	School Support	114,946	477,290
<b>Townsend House</b>	Early Intervention	144,722	
	School Support	36,213	180,935
<b>Guide Dogs Association</b>	Early Intervention	9,881	
	School Support	39,813	49,694
<b>Miriam High Special Needs Centre</b>	Early Intervention	70,000	
<b>Inclusive Directions</b>	Early Intervention	240,290	
<b>Poonindie Special Needs Playgroup</b>		15,000	
<b>Early Development Program (Seaton)</b>		27,500	
<b>Families SA Children in Residential Care Tutoring Program</b>		50,000	<b>\$3,870,342</b>

**\$6,492,342**

<sup>1</sup> Sum rounded to \$1,210,858.  
MAC:SWD Annual Report 2011

## Number of children and students supported during the 2010/2011 financial year

Funding to non-government organisations is allocated retrospectively, based on service provision to children and students in the preceding year. Data recording service provision were collected over four terms, i.e. Terms 3 and 4 2010 and Terms 1 and 2 2011. This has been the basis of funding for calendar year 2012. Averaged over the four terms and for all funded organisations, 1180 children were registered for early childhood intervention services and 5639 students for school support services. Of these, averaged over the four terms, 3619 children and students received a service, of which 1539 (82%) children received an early childhood intervention service, and 2033 (36%) students received a school support service.

The Women's and Children's Health Network's (formerly Children, Youth and Women's Health Service's) Access Assistant Program provided support to 244 children and students with complex health needs. Additionally between July 2010 and June 2011, 35 children and students were supported (for 1079 hours in total) through the crisis care program.

Administrators for the Children in Residential Care program reported that during 2010 a total of 47 students with a disability received services. This was an increase from the previous year, when 37 students were supported through this program.

<b>AVERAGE PROGRAM NUMBERS</b> based on service provision data provided by organisations from Term 3 2010 to Term 2 2011		
Autism SA Early Intervention	262	
Autism SA School Support	1092	1354
Novita Children's Services Early Intervention	324	
Novita Children's Services School Support	589	913
Down Syndrome Society Early Intervention	60	
Down Syndrome Society School Support	93	153
Cora Barclay Centre Early Intervention	70	
Cora Barclay Centre School Support	124	194
Townsend House Early Intervention	115	
Townsend House School Support	97	212
Guide Dogs Association Early Intervention	2	
Guide Dogs Association School Support	38	40
Children in Residential Care (CIRC)	47	
PLCHS Early Intervention and Support Program	15	
Early Development Program (Seaton)	12	
Miriam High Special Needs Centre Early Intervention	36	
Inclusive Directions Early Intervention	643	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3619</b>	

### 3. Projects

Each year, the Committee undertakes a number of statewide projects that have been approved by the Minister for Education and Child Development. The projects may be initiated by the Minister or suggested by the Committee.

All projects focus on children and students with a disability and are relevant to the three education sectors, i.e. State, Catholic and Independent preschools and schools. Project groups are convened for most projects and members are chosen for their experience and expertise in the particular topic. Five new projects were undertaken in 2011 and these will carry over to 2012. Summaries of the projects are provided below. Once approved by the Minister relevant reports will be available on the Committee's website.

Further to these, a review of services provided by non-government organisations based on data previously provided to MAC: SWD by the organisations began in 2010. The report of this project was submitted to the Minister in July 2011. The findings provide base-line information upon which to evaluate the effect of the new MAC: SWD Funding Model, which was implemented during 2011. The new funding model has been designed to encourage more direct service to children and students with high support needs in early years programs, preschools and schools and, in particular, to encourage outreach services to children and students in remote and rural communities. In addition, a data reporting template was developed during 2011 to improve consistency in service reporting by the non-government organisations. This template will be trialled on a voluntary basis by two non-government organisations in 2012 to evaluate its usefulness.

#### ***Support for Children and Students with a Disability Information Resource***

In 2006, the Committee published a resource for families, educators and care providers which gave an overview of support services for children and students with disabilities across the education, health and disability sectors. This resource was distributed to all care services, preschools and schools in South Australia. The Committee had received feedback that this resource was very helpful and widely used in the care and education communities and it was requested that the resource be updated with current information. This project is currently waiting on up-to-date information on a number of new developments in the field of education and children's services before it is completed in 2012. These include the *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*; the review of the *Disability Standards for Education; Universal Access* in preschools and changes to school intake in government schools.

#### ***Disability Services and Children's Centres for Early Childhood and Parenting***

The Committee undertook a project in 2011 to investigate how families of children with a disability and additional needs utilise Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting, and the level of services provided by Government agencies and non-government organisations in assisting these children and their families to participate at the centres.

The project group collected information on the 21 Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting that were operational when the project group first convened in April 2011. Information was collected through a checkbox survey of Directors, Heads of School: Early Years or Managers of all centres, focus group interviews with parents using the centres, focus group interviews with service providers from non-government organisations and Government agencies working in the centres and individual interviews with DECD Disability Coordinators working in the centres.

Data collection for the project is now complete. The quantitative analysis of the survey responses is nearly completed. The qualitative analysis of the checkbox responses has not yet been started.

A written report will be provided to the Minister in the first half of 2012.

## *Project Group Membership*

<i>Chairperson</i>	
<i>Heather Ward</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities, Department for Education and Child Development, <i>Early Years representative</i> Department for Education and Child Development, <i>Acting Manager Children's Centres Project</i>
<i>Members</i>	
<i>Kerry Bissaker</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities, <i>Minister's Nominee</i>
<i>Louise Davies</i>	Autism SA, <i>Executive Manager, Service Development</i>
<i>Cathie Home</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities, <i>Early Childhood Australia (SA Branch) representative</i> Inclusive Directions, <i>Regional and Programs Manger</i>
<i>Zarinah Jaafar</i> <i>(proxy Rochelle Hay)</i> <i>or</i> <i>Julie O'Leary</i>	Department for Community and Social Inclusion Community and Home Support: Disability Services <i>Program Manager Children's Services</i>  Department for Community and Social Inclusion Community and Home Support: Disability Services <i>Clinical Lead, Social Work</i>
<i>Helen Kowalenko</i>	Department for Education and Child Development, <i>Manager Preschool Support Programs</i>
<i>Lynette Rule</i>	Novita Children's Services, <i>Acting Service Area Manager Early Childhood Service</i>
<i>Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities</i>	
<i>Christel Butcher</i>	Executive Officer
<i>Jo Shearer</i>	Project Officer
<i>Skye Yuill</i>	Project Officer

## *Equipment for Children and Students with a Disability*

The Committee undertook a project in 2011 to investigate equipment provisions for children and students with a disability in South Australia. The Committee was aware that several agencies could and do provide equipment, but that the processes for acquiring equipment to support children's access to and participation in care and education services were not always clear for families. Access and waiting times for equipment to support children and students seemed to have improved since the Government allocated additional funding to clear waiting lists, but service difficulties remained. The aim of this project was to identify areas of improvement in processes.

The project group collected information through face to face interviews with personnel responsible for managing equipment schemes. They found a complex system existed, but efficiencies and collaboration between services had developed in recent years particularly in the areas of communication, mobility and personal care equipment provision for children with physical disability. The area most requiring development appeared to be equipment for children and students who are blind or visually impaired. The project also found that new technologies such as ipods and ipads were changing the equipment provision landscape rapidly and research activities to demonstrate the usefulness of these items in the education context was needed.

The project group planned to reconvene in 2012 to review the pool of data and complete the report for the Minister. If approved, the report will be published on the MAC: SWD website.

### ***Project Group Membership***

<i>Chairperson</i>	
<i>Margaret Wallace</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities
<i>Members</i>	
<i>Gabby Aschberger</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities Association of Independent Schools of SA
<i>Susan Bostock</i>	Novita Children's Services Service Area Manager Equipment Service and ABI
<i>Stephanie Grant</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities Catholic Education SA
<i>Jan Kenney</i>	Department for Education and Child Development Special Education Resource Unit (SERU)
<i>Lucy Szyndler</i>	Department for Education and Child Development Psychologist, Special Education
<i>Linda Turpin</i>	Inclusive Directions Regional Manager, North
<i>Kath Vannan</i>	Department for Community and Social Inclusion Community and Home Support: Disability Services Program Manager, Children's Services
<i>Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities</i>	
<i>Jo Shearer</i>	Project Officer
<i>Christel Butcher</i>	Executive Officer

### ***Child Protection Resource for Parents and Carers of Children with a Disability***

In October 2011, the Minister for Education and Childhood Development requested MAC: SWD work in consultation with parents and carers of children with a disability to develop a resource to assist in preventing and protecting children with a disability from abuse.

The project group drafted a detailed resource that will be developed as a companion document to the Families SA *Protecting children and young people with disabilities* booklet. The project group sought final consultation and received comment from a myriad of professionals who work in the area of child protection or related areas. Final consultation is complete and the resource is soon to be sent to the designer. The project group had received feedback that this resource was helpful and could be widely used in the community.

Further discussions are planned to develop a proposed budget, approach to marketing and methods for distribution. These final arrangements for publication will then be discussed with the Minister's office.

This project is currently waiting on these discussions to take place and will be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

### ***Project Group Membership***

<i>Chairperson</i>	
<i>Margaret Wallace</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities
<i>Members</i>	
<i>Four parents of children with disability</i>	
<i>Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities</i>	
<i>Christel Butcher</i>	Executive Officer
<i>Jo Shearer</i>	Project Officer
<i>Skye Yuill</i>	Project Officer

## *KidsMatter Early Childhood for Children with a Disability*

MAC: SWD has been keeping a watching brief on the topic of mental health of children and students with a disability since 2006. Two reports have been published since then; *Mental Health and Children and Students with a Disability* in 2007 and *KidsMatter for Students with a Disability: Evaluation Report* in 2010. The latter project was undertaken in partnership with the KidsMatter Primary Evaluation team, chaired by Prof Phillip Slee at Flinders University. The KidsMatter initiative received ongoing Australian Government funding to support the implementation of KidsMatter Primary in more schools across Australia and to develop KidsMatter Early Childhood. KidsMatter Early Childhood was piloted in childcare settings and preschools across Australia during 2011, and, like KidsMatter Primary, is also subject to evaluation by the Flinders University based team. The KidsMatter Early Childhood evaluation data has been collected at four intervals, the last of which was due at the end of December 2011. MAC: SWD will again work in partnership with Flinders University to evaluate the effectiveness of this initiative for South Australian children with a disability and their families. Analysis and report writing will begin in February 2012.

### *Project Group Membership*

<i>KidsMatter Early Childhood Evaluation Team</i>	
<i>Phillip Slee</i>	Flinders University: School of Education
<i>Katherine Dix</i>	Flinders University: Principals Australia
<i>Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities</i>	
<i>Cathie Home</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities: Early Childhood Australia representative
<i>Helen Kowalenko</i>	Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities: Department for Education and Child Development – Early Childhood representative
<i>Jo Shearer</i>	Executive Officer (from Feb 2012)
<i>Skye Yuill</i>	Project Officer

## 4. Activities in 2011

### *Committee Leadership and Secretariat Staffing*

There were no changes in the Committee's leadership during 2011. Ms Margaret Wallace continued as Chairperson, with Dr Mary Bambacas as Deputy Chairperson.

Ms Miriam Parsons (Project Officer, research) went on leave in May 2011 and was replaced by Mr Skye Yuill (0.6 FTE).

The 1 FTE Project Officer (funding) position remained vacant for 2011.

### *Presentations at Conferences*

In August 2011 the Executive Officer, Christel Butcher, gave a presentation at the statewide *Professional Learning Day* for Department of Education and Children's Services' Disability Coordinators about the Ministerial Advisory Committee: Students with Disabilities' funding processes and recent research.

## 5. Future

### *Projects for 2012*

The committee decided not to start any new projects in 2012, but to complete the projects that were commenced in 2011.