29 October 2026

The Hon. Gabrielle Williams MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Education

Open Letter to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education

Disability, education and community sector organisations are calling on the Victorian Government to reverse cuts to the Disability Inclusion program due to take effect from the beginning of 2027.

These cuts will reduce vital support for thousands of students with disability.

Disability Inclusion is an integral part of Victoria's education system, and something we can be proud of. More than 90% of Disability Inclusion Profile meetings have included student voice, giving students with disability a say in the support they need at school.

We acknowledge the Government is delivering on commitments made in the 2026 Budget to support students with disability, but the funding does not meet the level of need.

Currently around 45,000 students with disability receive individual support through Disability Inclusion. This funds the critical education support staff, specialist staff and professional development that enables students with disability to access and participate in education.

The cuts include:

- An estimated 6000+ students losing all their individual funding over the next two years.
- Funding cuts of $850 per term for around 23,000 students in mainstream schools.
- A 2.5 per cent reduction in student-level funding rates, impacting all schools.

These changes mean tens of millions of dollars being cut from Victorian schools.

Students with disability already face significant barriers to accessing and participating in education. Cutting funding that is already inadequate will only deepen those barriers.

The consequences will be felt across the education system:

- **Students with disability losing critical support**, putting their learning, inclusion and ability to attend school at risk.
- **More pressure on teachers and schools**, increasing workloads and the risk of staff leaving an already stretched workforce.
- **Thousands of education support staff jobs put at risk.**
- **Students and families having reduced choice.**
- **Families left to fill the gaps**, with parents and carers, particularly mothers, forced to cut back work or leave the workforce entirely if schools cannot support children.

These cuts will be felt immediately in Victorian classrooms, but their impact will extend far beyond school, affecting the lifelong opportunities of children and young people with disability.

Students with disability need more support, not less. **We call on the Victorian Government to reverse these cuts and maintain the funding thresholds for Disability Inclusion.** At the very least, the Victorian Government should pause this decision and provide schools with full funding for the 2027 school year and undertake a review to ensure students with disability receive the support they need.

Media enquiries

Karen Dimmock, ACD, 0448 912 786

David Tonge, Amaze, 0406 462 506

Skye Kakoschke-Moore, Children and Young People with Disability Australia, 03 9417 1025

Chris Varney, I CAN Network, 0432 405 384

Mija Gwyn, Youth Disability Advocacy Service, 0456 678 639 (text/SMS only)

See signatories below.

Karen Dimmock
CEO, ACD

David Tonge
CEO, Amaze

Skye Kakoschke-Moore
CEO, Children and Young People with Disability Australia

Chris Varney
CEO, I CAN Network

Mandy Nayton
CEO, SPELD Victoria

Mija Gwyn
Head of Youth Disability Advocacy Service

Paul McDonald
CEO, Anglicare Victoria

Dr Simone Gindidis
Chairperson and Founding Director, Australian Educational and Developmental Psychology Association

Leslie Clements
General Manager, Autism Valued Inc.

Terry Symonds
CEO, Berry Street Yooralla

Danny Schwarz
CEO, Brainwave

Jamie Crosbie
CEO, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Madelene Rich
President, CHARGE Syndrome Australia

Marshall Roberts
Chairperson, Code REaD Dyslexia Network Australia

Lisa Ratcliffe
CEO, Deaf Children Australia

Phillip Waters
Executive General Manager, Deaf Victoria

Mel Spencer OAM
CEO, Different Journeys

Daniel Payne
CEO, Down Syndrome

Heidi Gregory
Founder, Dyslexia Victoria Support

Sally Moore
CEO, Early Childhood Intervention Australia

Nicole Coulthard
CEO, Epilepsy Foundation

Kate Heine
Managing Director, Heads Together

Samantha Glastonbury
CEO, HeartKids

Nicci Godsman
CEO, Learning for Life

Teresa Jayet
CEO, Mallee Family Care

Penny Callaghan
CEO, Noah's Ark

Gail McHardy
CEO, Parents Victoria

Renee Zilm
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of Victoria

Denise Luscombe
Chair, PRECI

Dr Sandy Ross
CEO, Rights Information and Advocacy Centre

Tiffany Westphal
Director, School Can't Australia

Emily Shepard
CEO, UsherKids

Juanita Pope
CEO, VCOSS

Harley Dalgleish
Acting General Manager, VMCH

Andrew Dalgleish
President, Victorian Principals Association

Julia Baron
CEO, VicSRC

Rebecca Kirk
Manager, Windermere

Katie Koulas
CEO, Yellow Ladybugs