

HANDS UP FOR LEARNING!

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NZEI · TE RIU ROA
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SCHOOLS NEED RESOURCING AND SUPPORT TO PROVIDE FOR HIGH NEEDS CHILDREN

Many schools feel their hands are tied when it comes to providing for children with high special educational needs, according to the education sector union NZEI Te Riu Roa.

An Education Review Office Report has found that half of the schools in its study were inclusive for students with high needs. A further 30 percent had some inclusive practices, while 20 percent could demonstrate very few.

NZEI says those children looked at in the ERO report are at the very top end of the high need scale.

NZEI President Frances Nelson says catering adequately for these students is complex as “there are funding issues, professional support issues and people on the ground issues. Schools want to give these children the educational opportunities they deserve but the reality is that the resourcing, funding and support needed just isn’t there.”

The ERO report itself points out that teacher aides as well as teachers, need appropriate professional development to provide the support that high needs children require. Some schools have been fundraising locally so they can pay for extra teacher aides.

“Rather than receiving more professional support and resourcing, schools have been facing large Government cuts to professional development programmes, which include specialist training to support special needs children,” says Ms Nelson.

“For those schools struggling to fully include high needs children, it not a matter of will, it’s a matter of not having the way. Schools need the means to provide the right environment for these children and teachers need the skills and support to cater to their specific educational requirements.”

NZEI hopes the current review of special education will address some of the complex and challenging funding and resourcing issues and result in meaningful change.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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