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AT A GLANCE · ADVOCACY DOCUMENT FOR MPS & DECISION-MAKERS

NSW AUDITOR-GENERAL · SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (SEPT 2024)

Where are we at?

Five promises made. A deadline passed.

In September 2024 an independent audit told the NSW Department of Education to do five things — by **January 2026** — to better support students with disability. The Department agreed to all five. This is a plain-language check on where they stand, six months past that deadline. We offer it constructively: the final disability plan is the chance to finish the job.

🕒 **Deadline was January 2026 · this scorecard reflects the public evidence at July 2026**

THE STORY IN THREE DATES

How we got here

SEPTEMBER 2024

The audit lands

The NSW Auditor-General publishes *Supporting students with disability* and makes five recommendations. The Department supports or partially supports every one.

JANUARY 2026

The deadline

The date the Auditor-General set for the recommendations to be delivered. We have not seen the Department publish its own progress report against this date.

JUNE–JULY 2026

Six months on

The Department's new draft plan — the Interim Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026–2029 — is out. On the public evidence, the two most student-facing promises are not yet delivered.

Source: Audit Office of NSW, *Supporting students with disability* (26 Sept 2024), recommendations and January 2026 timeframe (p.7).

The five recommendations, and where they stand

The Department agreed with the direction of all five. The question now is delivery. Based only on public documents, here is where each appears to be.



✓ On track /
underway



○ Committed, not yet
delivered



✗ Key elements not yet
evident

1

Monitor how students with disability are actually faring — at least once a year

Department: Support. A commitment to monitor is in place, but the audit found the outcomes framework "still not fully operational" in 2024, and the June 2026 plan still has no student-with-disability breakdown or target. A working, public measure is not yet evident.



Not yet delivered

2

Use NCCD data to steer funding to student need

Department: Support in principle. Genuine, continuing work — funding reform to match resourcing to a student's functional need has been underway since 2020. The audit's concern was that it has not been timely.



In progress

3

Work with the Commonwealth so schools are adequately funded

Department: Partially support. Ongoing, and largely shared with the Australian Government through national reviews of the disability loading — so progress here is not the Department's alone.



Ongoing, shared

4

Give schools and families clearer guidance on reasonable adjustments — and a way to resolve disputes

Department: Support. The June 2026 plan includes an action to enhance guidance — but its timeframe is listed as "TBC." The "resolve conflicting views" element points straight to the independent complaints pathway families still don't have.

**Committed, undated**

5

Match support to demand — and stop making families wait blind

Department: Partially support. This is where the gap is clearest. The audit found the Department "cannot tell how long students with identified needs are waiting." The new plan improves the application form but commits to no tracking of supply versus demand, or wait times — the heart of the recommendation.

**Not yet evident**

2

**Underway — genuine,
continuing work**

2

**Committed, but not yet
delivered for students**

1

**Key elements not yet
evident in the public plan**

Sources: Audit Office of NSW, *Supporting students with disability* (Sept 2024) — outcomes-framework and targeted-support findings (p.5), recommendations (p.7), Department response (Appendix 1). NSW Dept of Education, *Interim Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026–2029* (June 2026) — student measures (p.23), reasonable-adjustments guidance (Action 2.2, p.32), access-request process (Action 4.2, p.40).

WHY THESE TWO MATTER MOST

The gaps families feel

Two recommendations go to the heart of what families actually experience. Both were due by January 2026. Both, on the public evidence, remain open.

Is anyone watching how students are doing?

Recommendation 1 asked for at least annual monitoring of the experiences and outcomes of students with disability. Without it, the system can't see where students are being let down — or spot what's working and spread it.

The audit found the Department's disability outcomes framework was "still not fully operational in September 2024" (p.5).

Is there enough support — and how long is the wait?

Recommendation 5 asked the Department to get a clear picture of supply versus demand and to monitor wait times. Families currently wait without knowing how long, or whether the support even exists.

The audit found the Department "cannot tell how long students with identified needs are waiting" for targeted supports (p.5).

WHAT WE'RE ASKING

How the final plan can finish the job

The final Disability Inclusion Action Plan is due September 2026. It is the natural place to turn an independent audit's findings into changes families can see. We would welcome working with the Department to get there.

1 **Pick up the audit's recommendations for students explicitly** in the final plan — and attach dates to each, replacing "TBC."

2 **Publish a genuine measure of how students with disability are faring** — reported at least annually, broken down for students with disability.

3 **Track supply, demand and wait times for targeted supports** — so no family waits blind, and constraints can be found and fixed.

4 **Deliver the independent way to resolve disputes** that Recommendation 4 points to — the complaints pathway at arm's length from schools (see Helen's Way Priority 4).

An audit is only as good as what happens next.

The Department agreed with all five recommendations. That's the easy part — and it's genuinely welcome. The final plan, due September 2026, is where agreement becomes delivery for students with disability. Let's finish the job, together.

[See the reform agenda](#)

[Read the full status check & sources](#)

SOURCES

1. Audit Office of NSW (NSW Auditor-General), *Supporting students with disability* — performance audit, 26 September 2024. Recommendations and January 2026 timeframe (p.7); outcomes-framework and targeted-support findings (p.5); Department of Education response (Appendix 1).
2. NSW Department of Education, *Interim Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026–2029*, June 2026. Student measures (p.23); reasonable-adjustments guidance (Action 2.2, p.32); Access Request process (Action 4.2, p.40).
3. Status assessments are Helen's Way's, based on the two documents above, verified July 2026. Where the public position is unclear, we say "not yet evident" rather than "not done."

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