

Disability Education Reference Group

27 February 2023

12:30 – 2:00pm

Communiqué

In attendance at the Disability Education Reference Group were representatives from the ACT Down Syndrome Association, ACT Community Services Directorate (Office for Disability), Advocacy for Inclusion, Imagine More, Carers ACT, ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Association, and the ACT Education Directorate.

Staff from the ACT Education Directorate's Service Design and Delivery branch spoke to members about career and vocational pathway initiatives that are currently underway for students with disability. Currently the key programs include:

- Head Start (formerly the Australian School-based Apprenticeship - ASbA) pilot program
- Understanding Building and Construction pilot project
- Vocational learning programs for ACT public schools
- Vocational options for students with disability project

The Office for Disability spoke to members about the upcoming report: *Towards a 10-year ACT Disability Strategy: a Listening Report*, which was written following consultation with the community between March and August 2022. The Office for Disability is also working with colleagues across government to identify the best ways to address the issues that were raised by the community. The Listening Report will provide the basis for the actions that will be included in the ACT Disability Strategy.

A representative from Education Directorate's Strategic Policy branch spoke about the *Inclusive Education Strategy* (currently being drafted) and provided an overview of what was heard during the Term 4 engagement based on the Inclusive Education Strategy Discussion Paper. The key themes that emerged during the engagement include:

- Accountability and transparency
- Teacher workload
- Occupational violence
- Student voice
- Resourcing

It is anticipated that the 10 year Inclusive Education Strategy will be released this year and will be followed by phased action plans.

Members also provided updates from their organisations.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 23 May 2023