

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Students with Disability Strategy

Collaborative Partnership with Mission Australia

Purpose

To assist students and their families to gain access to and engage with relevant supports and services, including the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), in response to the challenges faced by students, families and schools in this domain, as identified in the CESA Students with Disability Review.

Mission Australia

Mission Australia is a national Christian charity combatting homelessness, addressing mental health issues and substance dependencies, supporting people with disability, and much more. Mission Australia is also the NDIS Partner in the Community delivering Local Area Coordination (LAC) services in several areas of South Australia. In their LAC role, Mission Australia supports people with disability and their advocates:

- to understand and access the NDIS
- to develop, review and implement NDIS plans
- to access and engage with NDIS and non-NDIS related supports and services available in the community.

Collaborative Partnership

The collaborative partnership involves CESA and Mission Australia staff working together to facilitate Staff Information Sessions, Family Information Sessions and Place-based LAC Sessions, in schools whose communities are serviced by Mission Australia, through a geographically phased rollout.

- **Staff Information Sessions** consist of a 1-1.5 hour gathering for whole school staff during staff meeting time. The session is jointly facilitated by Mission Australia and CESA staff to provide information and resources regarding the partnership, Mission Australia services and the NDIS, as well as to respond to questions from attendees.
- **Family Information Sessions** are aimed at the families of those with disability. These sessions mirror the Staff Information Session format, provide an opportunity for families to build support networks, are attended by key school staff and are facilitated at a time of day selected to support accessibility for families.
- **Place-based LAC Sessions** are the next and ongoing step for Mission Australia and schools to engage with and support families of students with disability. Mission Australia staff are regularly based onsite in schools at an agreed time, rotating between groups of schools. These sessions provide the opportunity for families to access individualised support from Mission Australia within a familiar school context. School staff are also able to ask questions of Mission Australia staff to build their capacity to support families of students with disability.

Flyers and leaflets are used by schools to promote the sessions within their school communities. Information Session participants are asked to provide feedback at the end of the session, which is entered into an online platform, to support responding to need, assessing impact and enhancing future sessions.

Pilot Phase

A pilot phase of the collaborative partnership, involving three south metropolitan primary schools and two regional colleges, completed in 2021 and evaluated, determined the benefits, viability and enhancements for further rollout.

Phased Rollout

CESA Education Advisors from the Learning Diversity & Equity team contact school Principals and Inclusive Education Coordinators, in advance of the phased rollout reaching the area where the school is located. The Education Advisors provide guidance to schools on requirements, processes and logistics of involvement. Information Sessions are converted to a live online format, where required due to COVID-19 restrictions.