

I have a ten year old daughter with Down syndrome attending a state school in North Queensland. For the most part, the experience has been positive. However I feel that it is up to me to put pressure in the school and keep them informed about what is acceptable and changes that should be made. It is disheartening to know and witness that other students with disabilities may have parents that don't or cannot provide the same level of influence as I do. They cannot advocate in the same way. It shouldn't be up to the parents to educate, direct and basically ensure schools are doing what they should under the standards for education. There seems to be a big disconnect between policy and the implementation of policy. And/or the school decision makers do not agree with or haven't accepted the fact that all children have the same right to an education with their peers and siblings, in their local school. It could be considered a form of gatekeeping. Not providing necessary and reasonable adjustments so the families remove the children with disabilities from the school.

I believe more has to be pushed down to the schools, and more accountability by the schools as well.

Parents aren't paid to be advocates for our children. Principals and teachers are paid to teach our children.

Thank you.
Nicole Fehr