

“Inclusion and Equity”

A Submission to the Ministerial Working Party Public Education – The Next Generation

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1. Introduction and summary

MacKillop Family Services welcomes the Victorian Government's statewide review of Public Education: The Next Generation. We acknowledge the depth of commitment of all those who work in Public Education and the great contribution Public Education makes to the community. We also recognise that changing times have raised the community's expectations of Public Education and placed increasing burdens on the system.

MacKillop's teachers and educational support workers have been involved in a number of regional discussions established to respond to the Discussion Paper circulated by the Ministerial Working Party. This particular submission, however, reports on MacKillop's concerns for the educational needs of children and young people who are emotionally, behaviourally and socially disadvantaged. The observations and proposals made in this submission arise out of MacKillop's day-to-day experience in educating and caring for many of the most vulnerable and needy children and young people in Victoria.

Our key concern is that these children currently experience themselves as "excluded" from what is called "mainstream" education. One consequence of this experience is that these children, already disadvantaged, are further impeded from attaining a sense of dignity and human worth, and will have their life choices severely limited.

This submission begins with an account of MacKillop's work in education and an analysis of the basic principles of equity, inclusion, and the priority of the needs of the child. In the subsequent sections the experiences and observations of our educators have been gathered under a series of headings to illustrate our concerns and to outline some practical ways of developing our recommendations. The submission concludes with a set of these recommendations.

2. MacKillop Family Services involvement in education

MacKillop Family Services began on 1 July 1997 as a refounding of the work of seven Catholic child welfare organisations whose origins in Victoria can be traced back to the 1850s. The refounded organisation is committed to both direct service provision and broader social change through advocacy and social policy. MacKillop is one of the largest providers of child and family services in Victoria.

MacKillop aims to build community, to reconnect families as much as possible, and to empower them to take control of their decision-making. It provides innovative responses to the most difficult demands of children, young people and families, with a focus on alternative care, education, and family support programs that link families to communities.

MacKillop offers unique components of education and training and provides more than a hundred services in Barwon and Melbourne. A priority for MacKillop is the integration of a welfare and educational response to children and young people at risk. This involvement in educational issues and services arises in part from the historical involvement of the founding agencies in operating schools, and a more general interest through work with children and young people within their families or in out-of-home care.

Current work in the education area is across a continuum of preventative support, intervention and flexible settings. Programs include:

- Systemic support, through the School Focused Youth Service
- Support services to assist young people facing difficulties in mainstream schools, through the primary and secondary Educational Mobile Units in Geelong and the Behaviour Support Service in the Western Metropolitan Region
- A service to address the specific needs of young people in out of home care, through the Children in Residential Care program in the Western Metropolitan Region
- Schools with a long history of educating young people with special needs, including St Vincent's School in South Melbourne and St Helen's, New Street, and St Augustine's in Geelong
- Western Education Centre at St Anthony's in Footscray.

During 1998 MacKillop, in conjunction with the Department of Human Services and the Catholic Education Office, produced *Educating for Resilience*.¹ This report outlines a continuum of support for young people that integrates education and welfare. Education is considered from the perspective of addressing risk factors and strengthening the resilience of young people.

The model put forward in *Educating for Resilience* is a holistic approach to service provision, encompassing both prevention and intervention. The concept of "full service schools" is proposed, providing a continuum "ranging from prevention programs for all students, through to intervention when problem behaviours emerge, to crisis intervention when the need arises. It can build on strengths and enhance the resilience of all young people" (p.7). A full service school would provide high quality education, co-located with a range of support services. Consequently the educational, physical, psychological and social needs of students and families would be met through a comprehensive and collaborative approach. The research and discussion presented in *Educating for Resilience* forms the background to this current submission.

We acknowledge that MacKillop Family Services works with only a very small percentage of the children to be catered for by Public Education, and with a very particular category of children at that. We argue, however, that just as the margins define the text, so also attention to the extremes is for the good of the whole. If Public Education is enhanced so as to include children with extreme needs, it will be more likely to be inclusive of all children. If equity can be established where there is great inequity, then it is also more likely to be achieved in less extreme cases.

¹ Graeme Withers and Jean Russell, *Educating for Resilience: Prevention and Intervention Strategies for Young People at Risk*, Catholic Education Office/MacKillop Family Services/Victorian Department of Human Services, 1998.

3. Basic principles

Education plays a critical role in integrating individuals into society.² Education is critical not only for a child's intellectual development and vocational training, but also for giving a child an identity, a feeling of worth, a set of values, a sense of meaning and a network of belonging. Schools are the primary locus for the socialization of children. They are also, regrettably, the places where some children experience marginalization and exclusion.

Because of a lack of resources, or a failure of justice, mainstream schools are at present unable or unwilling to meet the educational needs of children who are "different", who may exhibit challenging behaviours and/or special emotional needs. The good of the school, in other words, takes priority over the good of the individual child.³ As a result, a child may suffer the inequity of exclusion from "mainstream" education. Again, because schools and teachers are currently ill equipped to cope with more complex social issues, or because competition policy has forced their energies away from educating the child to meeting educational standards, a child who fails to meet such standards may be excluded. The basic principles outlined in the National Goals for Schooling tacitly acknowledge that this inequity is a reality in education today.⁴

The lack of equity can in part be attributed to the tendency to accept that the good of many justifies the exclusion of a few: "If the exclusion of one child will help the instruction of the other children," the utilitarian would argue, "then so be it." The problem with this principle, however, is that short-term gains can lead to long-term ills. If we lose the capacity to include those at the margins, we will also lose the sense of ourselves as belonging to a human community.

Children who are disadvantaged socially, emotionally and behaviourally are likely to find themselves excluded from the mainstream of education and society not only as children but also in later life. The consequences of social exclusion are serious not only for the child concerned, but also for society as a whole. The overall cost to Australia of one year's early school-leavers is an estimated \$2.6 billion.⁵ The price paid for a divided society, however, is further reduction of the common good and a reduction in our capacity to live and work together efficiently and harmoniously.⁶

We therefore strongly endorse the challenges to achieve equality and inclusiveness in education outlined in the Discussion Paper's "Challenge for Victoria": "In relation to a system of schooling, equality means that each student has the same basic freedoms and rights to learn as all others. This notion of fairness or equality cannot be divorced from a concern for quality."⁷

² See David Hogan and David Owen, "Social capital, active citizenship and political equality in Australia", in Ian Winter (ed.), *Social capital and public policy in Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies, 1999), p. 98. Several essays in this collection note the key role of education in enhancing the common good. See especially Hughes, Bellamy and Black, "Building social trust through education".

³ It is arguable that such practices contravene the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of the Child*, Principle 7: "The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance...."

⁴ National Goals for Schooling: "Schooling should be socially just, so that... the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students improve and, over time, match those of other students". "Public Education – The Next Generation: Discussion Paper", p. 21.

⁵ Dusseldorp Skills Forum, "The Cost to Australia of Early School Leaving" (Anthony King, National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, University of Canberra, 1999), p. 1.

⁶ See the UK Social Exclusion Unit's 1998 report, "Truancy and Social Exclusion", as at p. 1: "many of today's non-attenders are in danger of becoming tomorrow's criminals and unemployed".

⁷ "Public Education – The Next Generation: Discussion Paper", p. 7.

In practice, meeting this challenge will mean that *the Department must review its specialist services for children whose current school experience is difficult*. Special programs for the care and education of needy children should bring about their inclusion in society, rather than the exclusion that is currently experienced.⁸ Special services, as will be argued below, need to be shaped so as to be part of a broader continuum of mainstream services.

Any departmental review should be seen to flow directly from the rights of the child, the priority of the best interests of the child, and the special treatment due to children who are physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged.⁹ As well as endorsing the principle that schooling should be socially just, we therefore also endorse in particular the need for *inclusiveness* in education and the third of the Minister for Education’s seven Principles of Public Education, on “Ensuring inclusiveness and equity”:

All students are entitled to be provided with experiences which engage them in their learning and offer opportunities to succeed throughout their schooling years. This includes the provision of the highest quality of education appropriate to their needs within a safe environment, regardless of their gender, racial background, socio-economic status, physical or intellectual ability.¹⁰

MacKillop Family Services proposes that Public Education be shaped as a continuum of schools that allows for the inclusion young people with behavioural and emotional difficulties. Because these children have been not only excluded from but also often “lost” to education, policies and practices should be established that

- track the attendance and non-attendance of these children
- understand, accept and attend to their family context
- and meet their education needs.

Children who have fallen out of mainstream education at present inevitably come under the care of the Department of Human Services. When this happens, the Department of Education and Training appears to show little acknowledgment of its responsibility to provide education for these children. *There is a need for a “joined up” or “whole of government” response, integrating health, education and welfare in local geographic communities, and cutting across departmental divisions and boundaries.*

In sections 4-10, below, the experiences and observations of our educators have been gathered under a series of headings to illustrate our concerns and to outline some practical ways of developing responses. The recommendations embedded in these sections have been italicized, and are gathered together again in section 11 at the conclusion of this submission.

⁸ For evidence of the impact of exclusion from education and impediments to school attendance, see: Lee Haas and Anne Tuohey, *The Road to Nowhere: Insights into School Exclusion* (Melbourne: VCOSS, 2000); Mary Stainsby, *Education Project: Impediments to School Attendance* (Melbourne: Catholic Social Services, 1999); and People Together Project, *Voices From Our Schools* (Melbourne: 1999), especially chapters 2 and 3.

⁹ United Nations, *Declaration on the Rights of the Child*, Principle 5. See also United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Article 28 (b) “States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular.... encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child....”

¹⁰ “Public Education – The Next Generation: Discussion Paper”, p. 22.

4. Inclusiveness

Inclusiveness means respecting the dignity and rights of all. It means anticipating and catering for difference. It means addressing the differences that have in the past excluded some students, for example, differences in the home situation or in socio-economic status or in ethnicity. Education in recent years has suffered from an emphasis on curriculum development and competition at the expense of a spirit of inclusion. For all the structural changes in education, children at the edge will remain severely disadvantaged unless there is also an *attitudinal* change. This attitudinal change is a challenge to teachers, administrators, parents, and society as a whole. Even children themselves need to learn about inclusiveness, and to accept why some children are different.

We recommend that DEET establishes policies and provides resources so that schools are better able to cope with difference and hence lessen the likelihood of exclusion. Too much is asked at present of those teachers who attempt to maintain a spirit of inclusion. They find themselves functioning as welfare and family support workers, but without resources or endorsement. If greater inclusiveness is to be shown in education, then new positions must be established in schools, in addition to welfare coordinators, to link the school with the family. And where schools are resourced with youth workers and family workers, it is important that school and community cultures change attitudinally, acknowledging that such staff are not “extras” but integral to inclusive education. The school needs to be an access point for integrated services.¹¹

In particular, and even with such staff in place, there is the likelihood that some students will fall out of the education process. These are not the “difficult” children so much as the “high risk” children. We ask, however, that schools try to include these children and that, in a sense, they “target” these children so that they receive support and attention. It is regrettable if some teachers, schools and parents would prefer to have such children taken away. This may seem to solve the school’s problem, but it adds to the already considerable burdens of the child, the family, the local community and, ultimately, the wider community.

Schools are more likely to be able to include an at-risk young person if they have the resources to meet the young person’s emotional and social needs and if they accept that these needs have to be met before any education can be done, rather than the reverse. Further, young people with special needs often have to deal with a number of workers involved in their lives. *A young person is more likely to feel cared for and included if the school can assist in a model of education case-management that integrates teachers with family support workers and case workers*

5. Mainstream options

At present there are children in Victoria who are excluded from mainstream education. There are a very limited number of options for such children, particularly in the west of Melbourne. Some children who are excluded from the mainstream find themselves in special settings that offer them little help, because the schools are chiefly designed to meet the needs of a different group of young people. This inevitably leads to another young person failing in education. For example, one child who was moved from a mainstream school setting, because of behavioural difficulties, to an inappropriate special setting, developed much more serious patterns of behaviour in the

¹¹ See Don Edgar, *Promoting the Positive: Family-Community Resourcing as a Model for Family Services* (Deakin University: 1999), especially pp. 62-82.

hope of being moved on to yet another setting. *Instead of giving priority to “alternative education” or “special settings”, we recommend that Public Education be seen as including a spectrum of options, including some with more flexible and more practical approaches.* Flexible options are needed both in schools and within clusters of schools. This way of imagining mainstream education gives students a healthy choice. It is far more preferable than the current experience of many, who see themselves as a mainstream failure and as excluded from an education system to which they will never in all likelihood return.

Rather than creating two educational systems – mainstream and alternative – there must be interchange and dialogue through a continuum of education options. Part of this dialogue should include listening to students as they move into young adulthood, and asking about their curriculum interests and patterns of learning. Where special placements are still operating, there should always be strong linkages between such placements and other mainstream schools.¹²

6. Education, families and early intervention

The number of children being excluded from primary schools for challenging behaviour is increasing. Emotional and behavioural issues begin even prior to schooling, and funding for early intervention is increasingly being recognized as a wise investment in education.¹³ Programs like FAST (Families and Schools Together) and HIPPY (Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters) have been excellent in linking schools and families, but they are the exception rather than the rule. Both these programs are funded by non-government agencies and are limited by lack of funds, yet both FAST and HIPPY have been well evaluated and have had enormous success. Schools will be well-served by practical programs like these, which have people on the ground and give direct response and service to families and children. Similarly, high quality youth workers in Pathways programs and case-management have already proved successful where deployed.

MacKillop’s experience in its residential services for high-risk adolescents makes it abundantly clear that short-sighted policies do little to help young people with special emotional and behavioural needs. Long-term plans for early intervention/prevention, beginning at primary or even pre-primary levels, are essential. Schools are currently being asked to address problems that are related to family issues, but schools at present lack sufficient resources to deal with such issues. *The best way to prevent children being separated from their education is to assist families in providing for their children’s various needs.*¹⁴ *Partnerships between teachers and skilled family workers are essential here, and teachers cannot carry these tasks alone. Strong overall education case-management is required. This also calls for a “joined up” or “whole of government” approach.*

¹² These linkages require sensitivity: for example, a young person in residential care who was attending a mainstream private school found the constant attention of teachers, concerned about his welfare, invasive and upsetting, because school was a time when he felt he could be like any other child.

¹³ See, for example, discussion related to the Ministerial Review of Post-Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria.

¹⁴ See Don Edgar, *Promoting the Positive: Family-Community Resourcing as a Model for Family Services* (Deakin University: 1999), and Moira Rayner and Meg Montague, *Resilient Children and Young People* (Deakin University, 1999).

7. Resourcing teachers

This does not mean that teachers should cease to be concerned about families. *We recommend that greater attention be given to the initial and continuing formation of teachers, with a welfare component in due proportion to the academic component.* The pressure of the focus on curriculum has meant that many teachers have lost confidence or skills in behaviour management and helping students. This is a problem particularly for secondary teachers. *DEET should ensure that teachers are equipped to meet special learning needs in the classroom.* Our support workers have noted that some teachers lack strategies for handling everyday behavioural issues in schools. Training in such skills will lessen the likelihood of the exclusion of children with challenging behaviour. Teachers will be unable to cope with children's emotional and learning difficulties, however, unless the school and the Department supports them.

Consistency of practices and discipline is of great importance for young people. Both students and teachers need to know that there is a consistency of practice and follow up. Where pressures on staff are partly the consequences of policies implemented by the previous government, formulas for school staffing need to pick up on these needs. New teachers and existing teachers may benefit from being mentored into school discipline policies. Perhaps the three yearly school review development plan could include the involvement of staff in establishing consistency on welfare/discipline procedures. There also needs to be a process of accountability for funding allocated for welfare to ensure that it is allocated for extra staff in that area and not just to cover previous staff allocations (as has happened with special funding in 2000).¹⁵

Students are not the only ones who need to experience success: so also do teachers. The pressure to retain students through to year 12, within an often inappropriate curriculum, has meant that only 30% of students achieve encouraging results, while another 30% present very difficult behaviour. A more open curriculum might well lead to greater perseverance among teachers. Many teachers say they have retired because they found themselves teaching curriculum rather than children. Further, schools have become places where teachers cannot afford to take risks with camps and excursions because of the burdens of administrative and legal responsibility they now have to carry, with minimal resourcing. A vicious circle of failure can then set in for both teachers and students. *Models like the Teacher Learning Network show the value of acknowledging good practice and encouraging teachers. Similar models need to be developed.*

8. School sizes, curriculum and local community

The current policy on school population size may be necessary for economic reasons, but it is self-evident that some children do not cope in a large school. While children do better in a small environment, on the other hand, smaller schools are less likely to have the resources to meet all children's needs. To overcome the risks that larger schools entail, therefore, *it is essential that policies be in place which allow for teacher continuity, for flexible options, and for appropriate support structures.* Consistency of approach and attention to stability and life-skills are also highly desirable. Large schools nonetheless run the risk of neglecting children with special needs, for whom a feeling of *belonging* is crucial. *Models of a range of good practices in tackling this issue – for example, those with a subschool or minischool approach, or with vertical groupings – should be well-publicised and developed.*

¹⁵ See also the *Education Age* lead story on welfare coordinators: supplement to *The Age*, 14 June 2000.

One of the main risk factors for children and young people is lack of connection with school, which typically includes lack of achievement at school. Without taking away from the importance of literacy and numeracy, we point out that children who are likely to develop high risk behaviours cope better when their experience of school includes quality relationships, a sense of being a *success*, and a sense of belonging. They usually need a variety of more practical subjects in which they are more likely to be able to achieve well. *Career counselling and a life-skills directed curriculum will also help retain young people at risk of falling out of education.*

In some schools VET programs have tried to meld secondary and TAFE concerns in years 11 and 12. At the upper secondary level, however, the more difficult children will have already dropped out of education. Schools which have taken the trouble to establish special year 9 projects, or dedicated year 9 campuses, appear to have met with greater success in maintaining young people in education through this difficult transition phase of their lives. There are also some schools with a strong technical education focus which attempt to include children more suited to practical education. They provide young people with a valuable educational choice and strengthen their resilience.¹⁶ Unfortunately, these schools are often discriminated against, being perceived by the community to be “less good” for a variety of reasons – for example, for not wearing uniforms – rather than being seen as part of a mainstream continuum. Once again, an *attitudinal* change on the part of society as whole is necessary.

We are also concerned that the gap between rich and the poor students is widening, particularly with respect to Information Technology. This has an inevitably negative effect on children of already fragile identity. Local partnerships that make IT resources widely available are to be encouraged. For example, one school in a poorer socio-economic area was reported to keep its doors open until 8.00 pm in order to make its IT resources available to the wider community. *There is a real benefit in local schools, community centres and agencies entering into mutually beneficial partnerships. Because of the well-documented pressures on teachers and schools, however, this is not a universal practice.*

Our workers have also noted that schools with a greater emphasis on community values and on mutual care are more likely to show greater inclusion of students. Students find another helpful and important option in life when they have this opportunity to reflect on self development and life issues in the context of the deeper values of the school and community. *We recommend that schools explore processes of naming, owning and developing deep human and community values.*¹⁷

9. Non-attendance issues

The School Focused Youth Service (SFYS) has promoted a statewide network with a range of groups to examine issues around school attendance. In the Western Region, the Footscray/Sunshine cluster has completed a local pilot project with a report and recommendations for future local directions. In recent years DEET has been reluctant to comment on statistics for non-attendance or to establish policies for tracking students who have fallen out of education. *We encourage DEET to accept primary responsibility for establishing protocols that will ensure that*

¹⁶ See Graeme Withers and Jean Russell, *Educating for Resilience: Prevention and Intervention Strategies for Young People at Risk*, Catholic Education Office/MacKillop Family Services/Victorian Department of Human Services, 1998.

¹⁷ See Hughes, Bellamy and Black, “Building social trust through education”, in Ian Winter (ed.), *Social capital and public policy in Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies, 1999).

children who fall out of education are not only identified, but also helped. Such help will include appropriate education resources and attention to the background issues, such as family context, that contribute to the student's non-attendance. These structural changes will be greatly assisted if accompanied by the attitudinal changes noted above in section 4.

We also have a special concern for primary age children who are inappropriately kept at home to support a fragile domestic situation. The names of many of these children may never have been recorded in schools, or may have been lost from records. After two or three years absence from school, these children rarely are able to enter the education system again. Family support workers can play a key role in identifying these children and assisting in their integration back into education.

It is essential that DEET puts in place a structure that

- *tracks children so that non-attendance can readily be identified*
- *follows up those children who are not having their educational needs met*
- *identifies impediments to attendance*
- *establishes remedies to enable attendance.*

This responsibility, however, should not be placed solely on the teacher or the year co-ordinator, but carried by some separate office. At present some schools do these tasks well. Many schools neglect them, however, because the issues seem too difficult, particularly if there are related family problems, differences in language and culture, and transient groups. The period of transition from primary to secondary education is a particular time when students can be lost. Little follow up is ever given to those who leave school at the age of 15 and are never seen again. Part of the protocol to be established should include an incentive (not a disincentive) for families to have their children attending school. Reviews of literacy might be expanded to include reviews of family support in literacy programs.

10. Budgets and funding

Clearly, greater funding is needed for our public education system, particularly in areas of great socio-economic need, and particularly in family interventions and the funding of skilled social workers and youth workers who are integrated into the school culture. The budgetary cuts of recent years must be reversed. We also note that some schools receive global funding in such a way that resources that might have been spent on welfare support have ended up in other areas. *Portions of a school budget should be designated for learning outcomes, teacher formation, intervention, and welfare needs.*

Funding for the education of disadvantaged children must be made more equitable. Two of MacKillop's education services – St Vincent's and St Helen's – receive no DEET funding, yet 95% of the students they educate come from the Public Education system. St Helen's is the only school operating in the Barwon region as an option for primary children, yet it faces such financial difficulties that its viability is threatened.

We regret that children with social, emotional and educational difficulties do not attract "integration" funding and do not have their needs met. This group of children needs specified support. If the child has an intellectual disability, then some support funding can be obtained. In other cases, however, many of these children have a normal range of IQ and thus receive no

specific support. *The criteria for accessing integration support thus need to be made more flexible.*

11. Recommendations

11.1 Review specialist services for children who experience difficulties in their schooling:

This review needs to ensure that such services meet stated goals of equity and inclusion. There is a need for a “joined up” or “whole of government” response, integrating health, education and welfare in local geographic communities, and cutting across departmental divisions and boundaries.

11.2 Deploy resources to allow for the inclusion of all:

We recommend that DEET establishes policies and provides resources so that schools are better able to cope with difference and hence lessen the likelihood of exclusion. We recommend that schools explore processes of naming, owning and developing deep human and community values.

11.3 Provide for the integration of teachers and family workers and youth workers:

The best way to prevent children being separated from their education is to assist families in providing for their children’s various needs. Partnerships between teachers and skilled family workers are essential here, and teachers cannot carry these tasks alone. Strong overall education case-management is required. A young person is more likely to feel cared for and included if the school can assist in a model of education case-management that integrates teachers with family support workers and case workers.

11.4 Provide a continuum of systems to enable inclusion:

Instead of giving priority to “alternative education” or “special settings”, we recommend that Public Education be seen as including a spectrum of options, including some with more flexible and more practical approaches.

11.5 Equip and support teachers:

We recommend that greater attention be given to the initial and continuing formation of teachers, with a welfare component in due proportion to the academic component. DEET should ensure that teachers are equipped to meet special learning needs in the classroom. Perhaps the three yearly school review development plan could include the involvement of staff in establishing consistency on welfare/discipline procedures. Models like the Teacher Learning Network show the value of acknowledging good practice and encouraging teachers. Similar models need to be developed.

11.6 Reduce the negative impact of large school numbers:

It is essential that policies be in place which allow for teacher continuity, for flexible options, and for appropriate support structures. Models of a range of good practices in tackling this issue – for example, those with a subschool or minischool approach, or with vertical groupings – should be well-publicized and developed.

11.7 Track and support children who experience impediments to education:

It is essential that DEET puts in place a structure that tracks children so that non-attendance can readily be identified, follows up those children who are not having their educational needs met, identifies impediments to attendance, and establishes remedies to enable attendance.

- 11.8 Ensure that budget items earmarked to support inclusion are spent that way:**
Portions of a school budget should be designated for learning outcomes, teacher formation, intervention, and welfare needs. Funding for the education of disadvantaged children must be made more equitable.
- 11.9 Make access to integration support more flexible:**
The criteria for accessing integration support need to be made more flexible, so as to make such support available to emotionally and behaviourally disadvantaged children.
- 11.10 Make curriculum more flexible:**
Practical subjects and the development of community values will assist inclusion. Counselling and a life-skills directed curriculum will help retain young people at risk of falling out of education.
- 11.12 Integrate school and community resources**
There is a real benefit in local schools, community centres and agencies entering into mutually beneficial partnerships, especially with respect to adult education, sporting, recreational, and IT resources

12. Acknowledgements

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