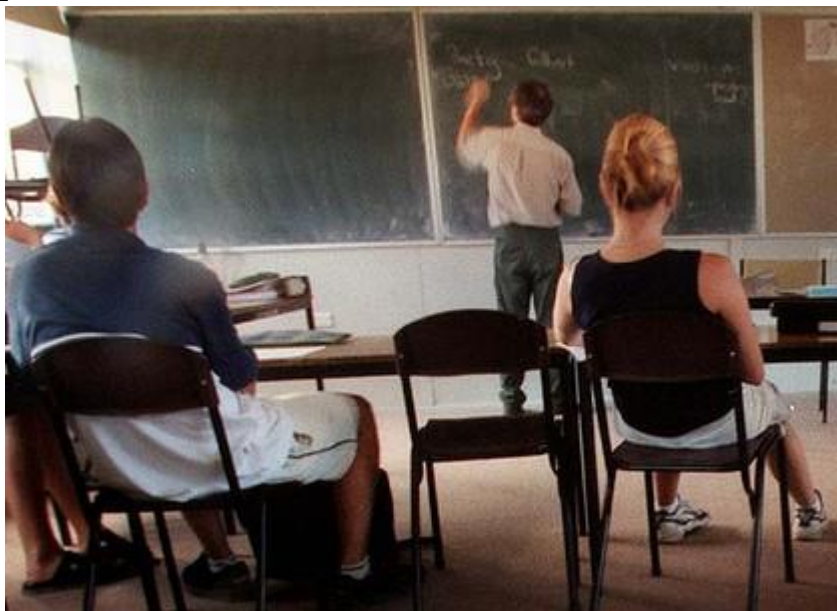


\$48m to train teachers of disabled students

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"This scheme is very cleverly designed to enable states to focus on their particular needs ... and certainly in NSW one of our key focus areas is on the teacher skills" ... Premier Barry O'Farrell. *Photo: Jason South*

ALMOST \$48 million of federal money to help children with disabilities in NSW schools will be spent on teacher training, the Premier, Barry O'Farrell, said.

The money is part of a \$200 million program to improve resources for disabled students announced in the federal budget last year, the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, said yesterday.

Under the agreement, which NSW is the first state to sign, the money can be spent on technical aids, teacher training or additional staff.

The funding will be provided over the next two school years.

Mr O'Farrell said the money would ensure NSW teachers had improved access to training so they were better equipped to help students with disabilities such as dyslexia and autism.

"This scheme is very cleverly designed to enable states to focus on their particular needs ... and certainly in NSW one of our key focus areas is on the teacher skills," Mr O'Farrell said.

"As more and more students with disabilities have entered the education system, and in particular mainstream schools, we need to ensure that teachers have those skills that are required to ensure that those students' abilities are developed.

"Every student has abilities. The task of education is to develop those abilities to the fullest."

Ms Gillard said that better-resourced schools would improve parents' choices.

"There are times when a parent's choice about where they'd like their child to go to school is limited because the school they'd most like to go to can't cater for their child, because of their child's disability," Ms Gillard said.

"I hope that this money will make a real difference and I am sure that it will."

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/48m-to-train-teachers-of-disabled-students-20120124-1qfst.html#ixzz1mS9haD1r>