



SHANE RATTENBURY MLA

Minister for Education
Minister for Corrections
Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs
Minister for Road Safety

Member for Molonglo

Mr Bob Buckley
Speaking Out for Autism Spectrum Disorder
chair@sofasd.org.au

Bob
Dear Mr Buckley

Thank you for your email of 2 February 2016 to the Chief Minister about psychologists in schools. The Chief Minister has asked that I respond on behalf of the Government as this matter falls under my portfolio responsibilities.

The Education Directorate's school psychologists have access to ongoing professional support and learning, which assists knowledge and skill development in many practice areas, including Autism and behaviour.

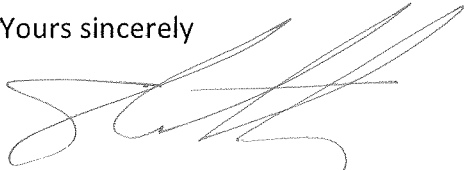
Senior psychologists are highly experienced in behaviour management and support school psychologists through regular supervision, case conferencing and assistance to develop professional learning plans which ensure skill and knowledge development corresponds with the needs of their role.

As you note in your email, simply increasing the number of school psychologists will not meet the needs of students with complex needs. School psychologists work in multidisciplinary teams to ensure students with challenging behaviour are considered holistically. Each school network has a Network Student Engagement Team (NSET), a multidisciplinary team consisting of specialist teachers, social workers and engagement officers. NSETs work in schools to support the engagement of students in education.

A project team within the Directorate is working to implement the recommendations committed to by the ACT Government, in response to the Expert Panel Report (2015). I am also working with the Directorate on a budget bid to resource that implementation. I am confident these initiatives will help to achieve the important imperative of improving outcomes for students who have Autism.

Thank you for continuing to advocate for the wellbeing of students with Autism. I appreciate you contacting me about this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shane Rattenbury', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the name.

Shane Rattenbury MLA
Minister for Education