

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**30 July 2010**

### **Extra choice and assistance for children with disability**

National Disability Services welcomes the Federal Coalition's promise to expand the assistance and choice available to school children with disability.

Liberal leader Tony Abbot has announced that, if elected to office, a Coalition Government would provide portable funding to an estimated 6000 school children at a cost of \$314 million over 4 years. The money, which is new, could be used to fund specialist assistance including a teacher's aide, equipment or extra tuition.

"This initiative would boost the educational opportunities available to children with disability, which are currently lacking. It would expand the choices and assistance available to families. Although the money would be paid directly to a school, if the child transferred to a different school the money would transfer with them," said Ken Baker, Chief Executive of National Disability Services.

The voucher, called an Education Card, would come into effect from 1 January 2012. The funding allocation would up to \$20,000 per family per year, based on the child's needs and indexed.

The first stage would be to achieve an agreed national definition of disability, which a Coalition Government would aim to achieve by mid 2011.

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### **About NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES**

National Disability Services (NDS) is the peak industry association for disability services, representing 700 non-government organisations around Australia.