

NSW Push to Privatise Sports and Recreation Centres

Outdoor adventures at school camps would be out of reach of disadvantaged students if the NSW government privatises Sport and Recreation Centres, parents said today.

NSW P&C Federation president Susie Boyd said the centres have introduced thousands of students to outdoor activities such as bushwalking, rock climbing and canoeing for close to 70 years.

“Sport and Rec Centres are educational facilities - one that many students have benefited from at some point in their school years,” Ms Boyd said in a statement.

“Students develop important team work and problem solving skills through the outdoor challenges they face at these camps.

“However, private operators wanting to make a profit would raise costs to parents, so the most disadvantaged schools and students would miss out.

“The NSW government should not be setting up Sport and Rec Centres as cash cows.”

The NSW Office of Sport has confirmed it is investigating outsourcing operations of the 11 Sport and Recreation Centres to private entities including NGOs, and intends to present plans to Cabinet in October.

Ms Boyd said the cost to the NSW Budget of running the camps was small and has decreased year on year.

The centres cost \$3.3 million in 2013-14, which declined to \$2.6 million in 2014-15 and \$1.7 million in 2015-16.

“Sport and Rec Centres are far from a burden to taxpayers,” Ms Boyd said.

“We call on the government to scrap plans to privatise their operations to ensure they continue to play their important role in NSW education, remaining accessible to all kids.”

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