



School Spectacular Page 10

Federation Awards & Finalists Page 5

P&C Federation Elections 2020 Page 8

Career Advisers Page 18

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CONTENTS

President's Message	4
P&C Federation Awards and Finalists 2019	5
Secretary NSW Department of Education – Mark Scott	6
CEO NSW Education Standards Authority – Paul Martin	7
Election Notice	8
Information Sessions	9
School Spectacular	10
Inner Sydney High School	12
Walcha Central School	13
Kensington Talks	14
Student Injury Insurance	15
School Mag	16
State Library App	16
Career Advisers	18
Today's Technology and Learning Outcomes	20
Aboriginal Language App	23

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Tim Spencer

2020 has arrived, and the start of a new year is an opportune moment to reflect on our achievements to date and on our goals for the year ahead. Before that, I must also acknowledge the schools and their communities that have suffered in the devastating bushfires late last year, as well as those rural schools which have struggled under the drought. We are supporting our P&C Association members in these areas wherever we can.

One notable event last year from P&C Federation's standpoint was the appointment of a new NSW Education Minister, Ms Sarah Mitchell MLC, with whom we are working closely. In particular, we are monitoring the State Government's implementation of its pre-election commitments, specifically its commitment to provide a full-time counsellor or psychologist to every public high school, to provide before and after school care services to all public primary schools, and to increase school crossing supervisors. While the details of the plans in these areas do not meet all our expectations, they are steps in a positive direction, and I am optimistic that we will see improvements in these areas in the near future.

Unfortunately, the single biggest problem we see in education is the chronic underfunding of public schools by all levels of government. Although many consider school funding to be complicated, P&C Federation's views are driven by a simple guiding philosophy: that funding should flow to schools that have the greatest need, and by almost any measure, public education is the sector that most needs government funding. Equitable funding should not be controversial, and it is with great disappointment that we see successive governments at all levels giving public school students short shrift compared to students in other sectors. We are currently analysing data showing exactly how governments distribute their education funds, and we intend to use this knowledge in the coming year to direct our advocacy.

The NSW Department of Education last year also implemented a review into its processes for investigating underperformance and misconduct. We considered this an opportunity to improve the Department's complaints process, which unless it is serious misconduct often prioritises protecting Departmental staff over the wellbeing of students, and we were disappointed that the recommendations fell short of our expectations. We were alarmed that the review recommended that allegations of serious criminal misconduct against students be investigated internally rather than be referred immediately to law enforcement, and that majority of complaints will be handled by colleagues rather than be investigated independently. We are working hard to ensure the Department's complaints processes are reformed in a way that prioritises student wellbeing.

P&c federation's views are driven by a simple guiding philosophy: that most education funds should flow to schools that most need them, and by almost any measure, public education is the sector that most needs government funding.

We also noted in the last year that many new schools have either opened or are being prepared to open. Most are in the Greater Sydney area, reflecting the patterns of population growth. While we certainly welcome new school communities, student enrolment numbers are projected to surge rapidly, and how to cater for this influx of new students is one of the fundamental challenges facing schools, especially in urban areas. The NSW Department of Planning is due to review the regulations around school



P&C Federation President,
Tim Spencer

development, and P&C Federation has proposed amendments to these regulations that would allow schools to more easily meet growth in student numbers.

In news more specific to P&C Associations, we are reviewing both the Constitution of P&C Federation and the Constitutions of our member P&C Associations, to make them more fit for purpose. This is particularly exciting for P&C Associations, whose constitutions have not been amended since 2004, and I am hopeful that these revamped constitutions will be fully in force by this time next year.

Finally, 2020 is an election year for P&C Federation, and the Councillor and Delegate positions for all sixteen P&C Federation electorates will be declared open. The election process begins in February and will be finalised in July. If you have a child enrolled in a NSW public school, are a member of the school's P&C Association, and are keen to contribute to the improvement of public education in NSW, then I strongly encourage you to run for a Councillor or Delegate position. We will be sending out more information on the election process to our P&C Association members, and if you have any questions, you are more than welcome to contact the P&C Federation office on 1300 885 982.

ACKNOWLEDGING P&C ASSOCIATIONS

Each year P&C Federation calls for nominations from P&C Associations across NSW to nominate someone they feel is worthy of the title NSW P&C Volunteer of the Year, and 2019 was no different.

A large number of nominations were received, representing 14 of the 16 electorates and giving the independent judges a difficult time sorting through the submissions before eventually selecting a finalist in each of the 14 electorates.

Each year, volunteers in P&C Associations are busy working hard to provide resources and support to their school community, parents and students and without these volunteers P&C Associations wouldn't function.



On Friday 28 February 2020, P&C Federation will host an Awards Dinner in Sydney to acknowledge and celebrate the finalists chosen for 2019.

NSW P&C VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2019 FINALISTS ANNOUNCED



Central Coast Electorate	Debbie Ritchie
Hunter Electorate	Carmen Shoemark
Macarthur Electorate	Lisa Dickson
Mid North Coast Electorate	Leanne Cross
New England Electorate	Nicole Husband
North Coast Electorate	Estelle Crabb
North Sydney Electorate	Belinda Gethin
North West Sydney Electorate	Ingrid Waite
South Coast Electorate	Karyn Denaro
South West Sydney Electorate	Marti Parolin
Southern and Central Tablelands Electorate	Tracey Platt
Southern Sydney Electorate	Bill Lewis
Sydney Electorate	Jennifer Moore
West Sydney Electorate	Debbie Gosling
Far West Electorate	No Nominations
Riverina Electorate	No Nominations

WELCOME TO A NEW SCHOOL YEAR

By Mark Scott

As we settle back into our daily routines after the summer break, I wanted to take this opportunity to welcome all our families and students back to school for the 2020 school year.

I share the aspirations you have for your children, and our teachers have for their students – to achieve their potential and become lifelong learners. We all want our students to develop positive relationships with their peers and feel a deep sense of belonging to their school community. We want students to be confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens.

It may sound simple but to be part of that community – for students to feel like they belong and to be part of their learning journey – the first thing we need to do is make sure our young people are attending school.

Students who attend school regularly have greater opportunities to develop social-emotional skills and positive relationships. Friendships, meaningful connections with teachers and ongoing engagement in school activities help foster a sense of belonging that attracts continued attendance. In other words, attending today makes it easier for a student to attend tomorrow, next month and next year.

Regular attendance promotes positive cycles of engagement that reinforce and accelerate learning and continuity of learning, friendships, wellbeing and belonging.

Even relatively few absences on a regular basis add up over time. A student who is

absent from school one day a fortnight – or four weeks per year – misses out on more than one year of education over the course of their schooling.

In 2018 an average of 91.4% of students attended our public schools on any given school day. I want to see that figure increase and I ask all parents to be part of achieving that ambition with us.

Nearly 30% of students have close to perfect attendance, going to school more than 98% of the time. In primary schools, nearly four out of every five students attend more than 90% of the time – on average they are absent less than one day per fortnight.



Anna Warr Photography

High school attendance tends to be lower – closer to three out of every five students attends more than 90% of the time.

Absences from school disrupt a student's learning, friendships, wellbeing and belonging,



Mark Scott, Secretary
NSW Department of Education

which can begin a downward cycle towards compounding disengagement. Gaps in knowledge and skills can be difficult to catch up. These gaps can easily grow and students who miss out on a preceding building block of knowledge often find it difficult to keep up later.

Similarly, absences disrupt the social connections that are so crucial for education, from the classroom to the playground, the music room to the sporting field. When students miss out on sharing experiences of school activities, their connections to the school community can fray.

When school staff and students, families and the community work together we can cultivate a positive learning environment with high expectations for all our students to achieve their potential.



Students who attend school regularly have greater opportunities to develop social-emotional skills and positive relationships.

NESA NEWS

By Paul Martin

WELCOME BACK

I write this at the end of Term 4, 2019, knowing it will be read in Term 1 2020. As a parent with one child in high school and another in primary I am currently in the middle of school presentations, picnic days, Year Six disco preparations (“Dad, I want to wear shorts”), student reports and much-loved-teacher farewells and looking forward to not having to worry about school lunches and homework and uniforms and tired end-of-year kids. One minute we are looking forward to the long anticipated break and then back-to-school advertisements appear and all of the trepidation of a new school year is upon us.

When you read this, summer will be in the rear view mirror. There are some groans and plenty of excitement. There are new uniforms, new bags, lunchboxes and books, the nerves about new teachers and new schools. And our own nerves for our children. We trust schools with our precious cargo, and we rely on organisations like NESA to deliver on its role and responsibilities in curriculum, assessment, teacher quality and school registration. NESA is a part of the architecture of NSW education but it doesn't exist for itself, it exists for you and for the students of NSW. So firstly, good luck to you and your families in the 2020 school year. It will be NESA's role to deliver its part of the great education promise we owe to the young people of NSW.

I extend a warm welcome to parents and students returning for Term 1 of the school year and wish each of the 75,000 students who completed HSC exams at the end of 2019 well. Thank you for the support you provided them during the exams and as they embark on the next chapter of their life, whether that is university, vocational training, entering the workforce or continuing their HSC studies.

Prioritising literacy and numeracy learning

Literacy and numeracy skills are essential for our children and young people to succeed in life after school. Without even knowing it we

are required to draw on these skills, whether that's writing a resume, reading safety instructions, understanding a mobile phone plan, managing a personal budget or studying to become a software developer.

NESA is involved in a number of NSW Government initiatives designed to strengthen literacy and numeracy outcomes for students, including:

- making maths compulsory from Kindergarten to Year 12
- piloting a Year 11 and 12 numeracy course for students who need further opportunities to develop functional numeracy skills, including those yet to meet the HSC minimum standard in numeracy
- supporting students to meet a minimum standard of literacy and numeracy to receive the HSC from this year.

If you have a child in the senior years of high school they will need to show they meet the HSC minimum standard. Your child needs to achieve Level 3 or 4 in short online reading, writing and numeracy tests of skills for everyday life.

Students get multiple chances to sit each of the tests from Year 10 and up to five years after starting their first HSC course. Schools will help students to decide when they are ready to take each test.

If your child is currently in Year 12, they do not need to sit the reading, writing or numeracy test(s) if they achieved Band 8 or above in the respective 2017 Year 9 NAPLAN test(s).

I encourage you to visit educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/HSCminimumstandard for more information.

NSW Curriculum Review

Following extensive community consultation in 2019, the final report of the first major review of the NSW Curriculum Review in 30 years is due to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood early this year.



Paul Martin, CEO
NSW Education Standards Authority

Thank you to the parents and carers who contributed valuable feedback about updating the curriculum to ensure we are preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Looking ahead

I thank you for your continued support and the selfless work you do representing government school parents in New South Wales. I wish the many members of the Federation of Parents and Citizen Associations and their children all the best this school year.

Paul Martin

Chief Executive Officer
NSW Education Standards Authority



P&C Federation welcomes the appointment of Paul Martin as the CEO of NSW Education Standards Authority

P&C FEDERATION ELECTIONS 2020

2020 is an election year for Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales (P&C Federation).

Positions for election are One Councillor and two Delegates to be elected from each of the 16 P&C Federation electorates. The elected Councillors form the Board. The thirty-two Delegates elected will attend and participate in the P&C Federation Annual General Meeting.

The election process will be conducted by NSW Electoral Commission and is an opportunity for P&C Associations to choose their representatives at P&C Federation.

P&C Associations need to ensure they are financial members of P&C Federation.

Financial Member P&C Associations will also need to provide details of the voting delegate to P&C Federation. Details needed is their name, telephone number and email address, this person would be your P&C Association President (or the Secretary or another member nominated by the P&C Association if the President will be a candidate in the election). For more information, please visit: <https://www.pandc.org.au/pc-federation-elections>

2020 Election of Councillors and Delegates

KEY DATE	TIME	SCHEDULE
Fri 21 February		Close of roll of affiliated P&C Associations
Wed 11 March	12:00 noon	Close of voting delegates roll
Thu 12 March		Open nominations
Tue 28 April	12:00 noon	Close nominations
Thu 7 May		Post voting material
Thu 2 July	12:00 noon	Close of poll

THE ELECTION PROCESS WHERE A VOTE IS REQUIRED

BALLOT PAPERS

Voting material, including ballot papers for the P&C Federation election, will be mailed to the schools of eligible P&C Associations. Note that the voting material will be addressed to your P&C President by name (or the Secretary or another member nominated by the P&C Association if the President will be a candidate in the election), at the school address.

HOW THE BALLOT WORKS – FIRST-PAST-THE-POST

The method of voting for the election of Councillor (one person to be elected in each electorate) and Delegates (two to be elected in each electorate) to participate in P&C Federation AGM is first-past-the-post, i.e. the candidate(s) with the most votes is elected.

For electing a Councillor, the process is straightforward: on the Councillor ballot paper you write a '1' against the candidate your P&C Association wants to vote for. As preferential voting is not being used, do not write '2' and '3' against the other candidates for Councillor.

For electing the two Delegates, on the Delegate ballot write the numbers '1' and '2' your P&C Association most wants to vote for. However, in some cases, while only two Delegates are being elected, on a first-past-the-post basis, it is possible that one of the candidates you vote for will have been eliminated from the ballot for Delegates because they have already been elected as Councillor. On those ballot papers, the instructions will be to place a number 3 next to a 3rd candidate.

HOW DOES YOUR P&C DETERMINE ITS VOTE – BY HOLDING A VOTE AT ONE OF YOUR P&C MEETINGS

The P&C Federation has specified that your P&C Association determines how it votes by holding a vote at a meeting of your P&C Association. Exactly how you conduct a vote is up to your P&C Association, except that:

- The voting should follow any applicable rules of your P&C Association's by-laws or past practices; and
- The vote is to be conducted by your school's Principal, or their delegate; and
- The only people who can vote are those who are "up-to-date paid Parent/Carer or Community Members" of your P&C Association.

Suggested Motion:

That the [school] P&C Association's vote in the 2020 P&C Federation election be for:

(a) the Councillor position: '1' for [name of candidate]

(b) the Delegate positions: '1' for [name of candidate], '2' for [name of candidate] and '3' for [name of candidate]

PLAN WHICH P&C MEETING WILL CONSIDER YOUR P&C'S VOTING INTENTIONS

Most P&C Associations meetings are held monthly. The completed ballot papers are to be posted back to the NSW Electoral Commission so that they are received by the NSW Electoral Commission, taking into account that voting closes 12pm, Thursday 02 July 2020.

BRIEF YOUR PRINCIPAL – THEY HAVE TO CERTIFY YOUR P&C ASSOCIATION'S VOTE

Instruction on the ballot paper requires your Principal to certify the vote of your P&C Association "has been conducted in accordance with the rules and constitution of [your] P&C Association and the P&C Federation Constitution" by printing and signing their name on one of the ballot envelopes provided. We suggest you ensure your Principal is aware of this requirement before the vote.

INFORMATION SESSIONS



P&C Federation presents information sessions face to face and via video conferencing to member P&C Associations in NSW.

When requested by a P&C Association to present a face to face information session, P&C Federation invites the neighbouring P&C Associations to attend, and requests that the host P&C Association provides a light lunch or dinner depending when the session is being held as well as refreshments.

A large area is not required to present an information session as long as there is enough room for attendees to sit and a space to set up the food and refreshments, this could be a staff room, classroom, library or hall.

Once a day and time has been decided for the information session, invitations are sent out from P&C Federation's office to neighbouring

P&C Associations and everyone wishing to attend, including the hosting P&C Association must register by going to our website at www.pandc.org.au and clicking on the P&C Information sessions tile. You can also go to this tile to check if there are any upcoming information sessions near you.

Video conferencing is also an option when, due to time and/or distance, a face to face session isn't possible. Once a day and time is arranged, your P&C Association would then ask the principal for access to use the video conferencing technology at the school at the agreed day and time.

P&C Federation wants to make sure when delivering these sessions, that we are addressing the topics or questions that are of most interest as well as more generic information. To assist with this, we ask P&C

Associations to provide us with the questions or topics they would like covered.

If you think your P&C Association would be interested or benefit from an information session, take it to your next meeting and put a motion forward to have an information session either face to face or by video conferencing along with a couple of dates for the session, which delivery format and whether it is to be day or evening.

If the motion is carried, go to our website www.pandc.org.au to "contact us" and send an email to: mail@pandc.org.au or complete the enquiry form and submit.

Don't delay contacting P&C Federation if your P&C Association is interested in either a face to face or video conferencing session in 2020 as places are filling fast.

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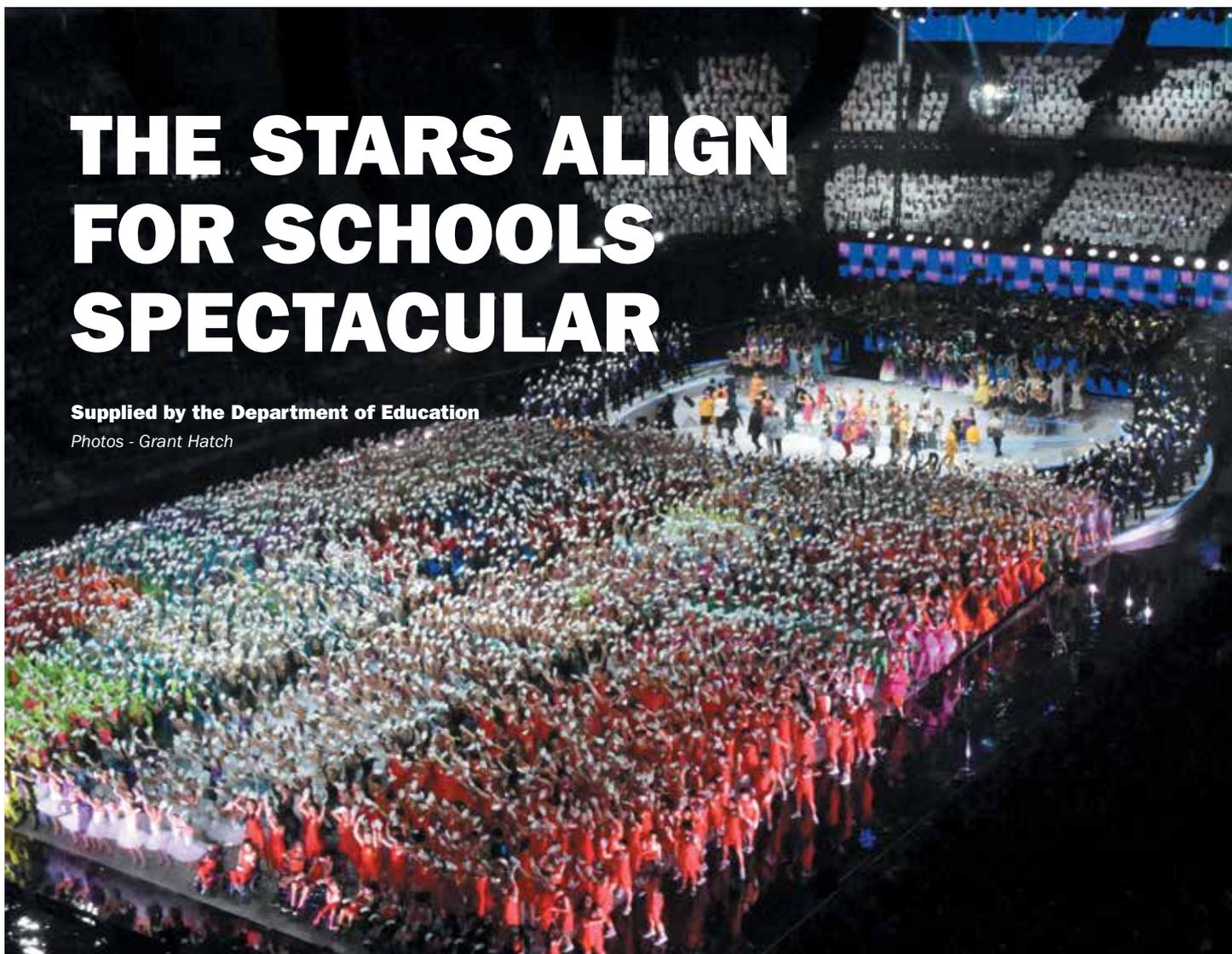
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THE STARS ALIGN FOR SCHOOLS SPECTACULAR

Supplied by the Department of Education

Photos - Grant Hatch



Schools Spectacular has again built on its tradition of creating magic in the lives of the audiences who flock to see the phenomenal showcase of student talent.

Each year the Schools Spectacular has a theme and in 2019 it was STARS.

“Everyone truly lived up to their star billing,” Schools Spectacular Creative Director, Sonja Sjolander, said.

“They really shone and together our galaxy of stars made the 2019 Schools Spectacular a show to remember.”

Ms Sjolander said the 2019 Schools Spectacular brought together 5,500 stars from public schools across the state including 40 featured performers, an

incredible 100-piece symphony orchestra, 20-piece stage band, 2,800-voice choir, 2,300 amazing dancers, the D’Arts Ensemble disability program, an Aboriginal dance troupe, African dance troupe, puppets, aerialists and an indispensable behind-the-scenes team.

Audiences of almost 30,000 people across the four performances were thrilled with the trademark colour, outstanding talent and variety on which the Schools Spectacular has built its reputation.

They were entertained by a kaleidoscope of music ranging from time-honoured classics through a nostalgic 90s mash-up to the latest hits that had the kids in the audience singing along.





While the audiences could not help but be captured by the joyous spirit of the Schools Spectacular stars, for 150 youngsters from drought-impacted communities the show had a special magic.

They were special guests of Wish Upon a Star, a joint initiative of the Department of Education, Office of Sport and Transport for NSW and generously supported by RØDE Microphones and REX Airlines.

As well as meeting Education Minister Sarah Mitchell and enjoying the Saturday matinee, the students from as far away as Tibooburra, Gulargambone, Hay, Boree Creek, Moree, Glen Innes and Burren Junction appreciated a seaside stay and luxuriated in unfamiliar rain and thunderstorms.



THE FORMING OF INNER SYDNEY HIGH SCHOOL P&C ASSOCIATION

By Cheryl Wood



In 2020 a new era will commence with the opening of Inner Sydney High School (ISHS), to embrace and support a close co-operation between the school, parents and the wider community. A foundation meeting was held to establish the new Inner Sydney High School P&C Association on 15 October 2019 at Redfern Town Hall.

Prior to the foundation meeting, a community meeting was held in early September for parents and community members to vote on whether a P&C Association should be established or not. The vote was carried to establish a P&C Association.

Following this decision, a diverse group of enthusiastic and engaged parents and community members formed a small working party. The working party then met on a couple of occasions in order to establish all key working documents which will support the P&C Association and Executive School staff.

The team spirit from its inception was conducive and well-integrated with a holistic philosophy considering an array of challenges. The working party acknowledged the change in current local and broader areas to ensure diversity in approach.

Without such a strong working party, we would not have been in a position to move forward

so smoothly to hold the foundation meeting and establish the Inner Sydney High School P&C Association.

The new P&C Association will pride itself on maintaining professionalism and ensure it works within the Code of Conduct.

A Social Media Policy and Grievance, Complaints and Disputes Procedures have been further developed into the P&C Association's structure to ensure all persons are protected and become a part of strong proactive committee.

The P&C Association is planning to operate a number of sub-committees associated with sporting and cultural extra-curricular activities. They will report to the P&C Association and consist of parents, citizens and teachers who are involved in the organisation and fundraising for those activities.

All parents and citizens will be encouraged to attend sub-committee meetings relevant to the activities in which their child may choose to participate. Not only will parents get to meet the teachers involved, but they also find out what is happening first-hand.

As a P&C Association, we will foster an interest amongst the parents and wider community in educational matters as well as fundraising

to provide financial resources for the school and our students. We look forward to working together and meeting you all.

At the foundation meeting held 15 October 2019, history was made with the establishment of the Inner Sydney High School P&C Association and the election of its first ever office bearers.

I welcome on board our new elected Inner Sydney High School P&C Association office bearers and am excited about working with them:

Vice-President, Jamielle Knight
Treasurer, Mark Poolman
Secretary, Stephen Rutter

The office bearers acknowledge this process will further evolve over time; however, they look forward to the challenges ahead.

We as office bearers of the P&C Association will be welcoming all parents and citizens to be a part of our team. All input will be respected and valued.

Regards,
Cheryl Wood
Inner Sydney High School (ISHS),
P&C Association President

AUNTY SUE PROJECT- WALCHA CENTRAL SCHOOL 2018/19

By Karen Bloomfield

Walcha Central School's Aboriginal Education Team is always looking for ways to improve opportunities for students to develop knowledge, understanding and respect for the history and culture of our country's Indigenous people. We seek to ensure that there are quality learning experiences that embed higher order learning outcomes for students in relation to their learning of the contemporary lives, histories and cultures of Aboriginal people. We share a belief that for all people to know where they are going, they need to know where they have come from.

It is our belief, also, that this learning should not just be celebrated during NAIDOC week, but all year round. Hence, we committed to, and developed, the yearlong project known as 'Aunty Sue's Project'. This idea, originally floated by our Principal, Mr Mark Hall, focused on the NAIDOC theme 'Because of her, we can' and celebrates the stories and life of



Our meeting place

Walcha's respected Elder, Valma (Sue) Green. Aunty Sue worked with the students and told stories of her life as a child attending Walcha Central School. She shared her version of a story told to her as a child; the story of the Rainbow Serpent.

Students were invited to select from a range of media including art, a picture book, dance,

sculpture and gardens, to recreate their vision of the story Aunty Sue shared.

A project like this required commitment from staff and students. Each week the teams met to bring their visions to life.

During the 12 month project, students took different aspects of the story Aunty Sue told about her life growing up and stories passed down from her parents and grandparents.

Students established the 'sculpture team' that decided they would construct a life size model of an Aboriginal meeting place which depicted the story of Aunty Sue's childhood where she went to school and had the opportunity to meet with her friends. Students met once a week for two hours to design and build their sculpture. They learned to weld, recycle, and to work as a team. During this project, the students decided that garden beds and seating would accompany the sculpture. The sculpture and gardens were designed and built within the 12 month period.

A group of girls ranging from Years 5 through to Year 12 formed the Aunty Sue's dance crew. While working on the choreography for their dances, the girls also contributed to other aspects of the project

as a whole and worked tirelessly to create a contemporary, and a traditional dance.

A picture book was created using the dreamtime story about the rainbow serpent that Aunty Sue was told as a child. Community members and staff worked with students to create the picture book that suits children from 0-8 years of age.



Mrs Aunty Valma "Sue" Green

Throughout the course of the book project, students wrote the dreamtime story specifically for children in the above age bracket. The next phase was the illustrations; students were guided by the Aboriginal Education Officer and Aunty Sue to design each individual page, using canvases and acrylic paints. The canvases were then professionally photographed and added to the book, which was designed by Mrs Yvette Stanton.

This is the first picture book that Walcha Central School has published. It will have a copy placed in the National Library at Canberra.

Our dream for the next phase is to celebrate the 2019 NAIDOC theme of 'Voice.Treaty.Truth' by building a learning space in the special area outlined by the sculpture and gardens that the students have created through the eyes of Aunty Sue's story. Students have already been dreaming of how they would like to develop the learning space. Elders and community will come together to plan and construct our dream, which will reflect Aboriginal history, culture and technologies.

Aboriginal Education Officer- Karen Bloomfield
Walcha Central School

KENSINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

By Jock Marmotta

Kensington Public School (KPS) P&C Association introduced a series of public talks for parents, teachers and the community by hosting prominent national and international experts in the field of education. The goal of the *Education Matters* talk is to help parents better understand the education processes and most importantly, to enhance trust towards teachers as professionals. The conversations were led by Dr. Tony Loughland, Academic Director of Professional Experience in the School of Education at the University of New South Wales.

The first Education Matters event was hosted by Prof. Pasi Sahlberg as a pre-launch exclusive talk on his latest book *Let the Children Play: How More Play Will Save Our Schools and Help Children Thrive*. Prof. Pasi Sahlberg is a Finnish education guru currently working as a professor of education policy at the Gonski Institute for Education, University of New South Wales in Sydney. This conversation opened questions on *“Why more play will save our schools and help children thrive”*. The purpose of event was to discuss play as the most effective and efficient way of deep learning. In citing Plato, Sahlberg said that you *“learn more about a person in one hour of play than in a lifetime of conversation”*. The conversation compared and contrasted observations and lessons from the Finnish education system that has consistently ranked as one of the best in the world. The focus of discussion was on how leading schools around the world are preparing children for lifelong success through creativity and imagination while developing physical, cognitive, and emotional strengths through play as a means for deep learning. Play is, as Sahlberg said, a fundamental element of the human condition and a key to giving schoolchildren skills they need to succeed in life including creativity, innovation, focus, teamwork, empathy, resilience, expressiveness, and concentration.



Prof. Adrian Piccoli and KPS Parents. KPS P&C Education Matters event 30 Oct, 2019

Based on Sahlberg’s research, play is the essence through which children discover, explore, succeed, fail, socialise and flourish and we need to explore ways on how we can get our children to play more, in and out of the school. American Academy of Pediatrics also strongly emphasise the importance of play saying *“lifelong success of children is based on their ability to be creative and to apply lessons they learned from playing.”* This model is already being evidenced at KPS; as a result of Sahlberg’s P&C event, parent reaction has been positive where more children are starting to experience the benefits of unstructured outdoor play for at least 1.5 hours a day as recommended. Play has become an increasingly important focus at KPS, evidenced via a short film created by students *“Operation Play”*; the KPS leadership team took this on the board and organised a outdoor school for a day.

The second talk was hosted by Prof. Adrian Piccoli, former NSW Education Minister and current Director of UNSW’s Gonski Education Institute. This was a very rare

opportunity to have one of Australia’s leading education experts, advisor, and father of two young children, available to answer parent questions about their child’s education. The frank discussion was structured around his book *“12 Ways Your Child Can Get the Best Out of School”*, that helps demystify the Australian education system and provide practical advice to parents on their children’s education. The conversation unpacked questions such as: What to look for when choosing a school, What is NAPLAN and does it matter? Homework – why, why not, and how much? How do we best support children with special needs? What does ATAR really mean? How to manage screen time?, plus more.” Prof. Piccoli concluded that children do better at school when their parents are actively involved in their education starting from the day they’re born. He reinforces the value of education, going to school events, attending parent-teacher interviews, and being a constructive partner in their child’s education; these all make a positive difference to a child’s school and their education experience.



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Did you know that the NSW Department of Education (DoE) does not provide accident or medical cover for students enrolled in government schools?

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Accidents can happen when you least expect them especially with active, adventurous children.

We encourage your P&C Association to discuss and consider purchasing Student Injury Insurance for your school.

This product provides peace of mind for the families of children enrolled in your school. Your child can be covered on the way to school, at school and at home on the weekends – round the clock cover for your little learner.

The cost of this cover equates to less than \$5.00 per child, but the policy must be taken out on a whole of school basis, not individually.

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A STEP BACK IN TIME WITH THE SCHOOL MAGAZINE

Supplied by the Department of Education

Since the very first issue in 1916, *The School Magazine* has been a much-loved part of students', parents' and teachers' lives. There would be very few households that haven't, at some stage, had a copy of the Magazine brought home to enjoy.

Starting with lots of text and minimal, simple illustrations, the magazine has evolved over the intervening years. The inclusion of artwork increased in the 1950s, moving to two-colour in 1985, and then to full-colour in 1999.

The School Magazine draws on the skills of the finest writers and illustrators in Australia and worldwide. It's been a springboard for many successful careers in publishing, and has no doubt inspired many young readers to create their own poetry, stories, plays, puzzles and illustrations.

The Silverton Schoolhouse Museum recently shared a veritable treasure-trove of historical covers with current Magazine team, and it's been fascinating to compare these covers with those of today. So much has changed, and yet so much has remained the same.

After more than 100 years of excellence in publishing, the four Magazine titles—*Countdown*, *Blast Off*, *Orbit* and *Touchdown*—continue to delight more than 140,000 readers, from ages 7– 11+, across the state, and around Australia, every month.

Why not visit *The School Magazine* website for more information and to subscribe <http://bit.ly/TSMPandC?>



GALLERY GUIDE PAINTS A PICTURE IN WORDS

Supplied by the Department of Education

Student collaboration with the State Library of NSW has created an audio guide of its artworks 'for kids, by kids'.

The voices of Summer Hill Public School children are echoing through the rooms of the State Library of NSW thanks to an innovative project targeting young visitors to the Library's Paintings Gallery.

State Library Senior Education Officer Learning, Pauline Fitzgerald, said the students were involved in developing an audio tour of the works on display in the gallery.

"This guide was designed 'with kids, for kids' and we could not be more pleased with the result," Ms. Fitzgerald said.

The 10 students involved in the project were first taken on a tour of the Paintings Gallery and selected a painting that interested them to research.

The students held discussions with library experts about the paintings before developing

their response to their chosen work and its artist in a three-to four-minute script. They then read and recorded their script, which has been uploaded to the State Library's existing audio tour.

"We were very surprised by their selections and impressed with the depth and thoughtfulness of their responses," Ms. Fitzgerald said.

"We are certain that visitors to the gallery, both adults and children, will enjoy seeing the artworks through their eyes."

The audio guide is available from the library website and sits alongside an existing audio guide by State Library curators.

Summer Hill student, Atticus Lee, who took part in the Student Voice project, said it was a "great experience".



Students who developed the audio tour with State Library Senior Education Officer Learning Pauline Fitzgerald.

He wrote a script to accompany the painting 'Stoneleigh', an 1866 work by Austrian Eugene von Guerard, who Atticus tells us came to Australia seeking his fortune in the gold rushes but had to resort to painting to make a living.

"The reason behind my choice of the painting, 'Stoneleigh', was it really caught my eye and it made me remember my old home in Orange," he said.

"I am pleased with the final result and I had a blast."

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CAREERS ADVISERS ASSOCIATION

By Alison Muscat

The Careers Advisers Association of NSW & ACT represents over 900 Careers Advisers in NSW & ACT schools from the Government, Catholic and Independent sectors. We support the profession of Career Development Practitioners to deliver quality Career Education in High Schools.

Why do we have Careers Advisers?

In the early 1970s, a group of teachers recognised that their students needed help in making choices for their future and even more help in finding information and preparing to make their choices become reality. They honed their vision and approached the NSW Education Department with a plan to provide careers assistance in secondary schools.

Today, every public secondary school in NSW is funded to provide a full time Careers Adviser in addition to other teaching staff.

Invite your Careers Adviser to a P&C meeting to explain the careers program to parents and carers.

Who are Careers Advisers?

Careers Advisers in public schools are a normal and integral part of the teaching staff of the school. They are all university graduates. They all have a degree in their original subject specialty. They all have teacher training. Most have considerable prior experience as teachers in schools. Many have already undertaken post-graduate training in careers education before appointment to the role. Otherwise, they undertake their training once they are appointed so you can be assured that your school Careers Adviser is university trained specifically for the role and in educational pedagogy.

Your Careers Adviser maintains a connection with major employers in the area. They receive information from tertiary institutions and industry groups and spends considerable time collating and disseminating this so



that students can access it easily. As there is usually only one Careers Adviser in each school, groups of school Careers Advisers from neighbouring schools often meet regularly to share information, hear guest speakers and plan joint activities for their students.

Careers Advisers are expected to be up to date with post school options: TAFE, university, tertiary colleges, employment opportunities and more. Careers programs may possibly include timetabled lessons for Years 9 and 10. They will include opportunities for students to hone (or sometimes expand) their future options after considering their talents and shortcomings, likes and dislikes, and how to combine these.

In their school plan, schools usually include Careers Advisers in their support team and as an integral part of their School to Work team.

What are the Benefits for Students and Parents/Carers in accessing the Careers Adviser at their school?

The Careers Adviser has a unique role in the school:

- a teacher with specific knowledge of curricula in at least 2 areas;
- a specialist with detailed knowledge of industry trends, TAFE and university options;
- a support person for students who

need help with post-school options, subject choice, including VET subjects, preparation for job search and scholarships;

- a provider of knowledge and advice for Senior Executive and staff in their dealings with students;
- a resource for parents and carers.

Many parents/carers access careers advice from their school Careers Adviser as they endeavour to assist their student with realistic subject or career choices. It is common practice for parents/carers to contact Careers Advisers by phone, in person or by email, as considered appropriate in your school. Interviews are available at school and usually at parent teacher nights.

Parents/carers may be just as confused as students when it comes to approaching Year 10 or the HSC and what happens afterwards, especially if this is the eldest child and they have not “endured” it all before. Careers Advisers often include parents in student email communication and newsletters.

Ask your school to tell you how they use Careers Advisers in these roles or read the school plan and ask the Principal to explain anything you don't understand.



Often in Year 12, Careers Advisers recognise that students are already overwhelmed and parents/carers have a clearer vision of what needs to be done, so it is important to check out these communications on behalf of your child. You will probably find “how to” guides for university applications, for example, or an explanation of the difference between an apprenticeship and a cadetship, as well as current job offers. Skim through and follow up on relevant items.

If you want to have a confidential conversation about how things are going, but don't want to escalate it to a counsellor e.g. an issue with a particular subject, the Careers Adviser is a good place to seek help as someone separate from faculty. They may liaise with year advisers too, when appropriate.

A gentle word of advice for parents: while you are the greatest support your child has through their schooling journey, please be careful to put your child's wants, needs, abilities, likes and dislikes first. Research shows influencers sometimes give well-intentioned but misguided information. While future earning capacity may be a relevant consideration for students/parents/carers, job satisfaction is also very important.

Many Careers Advisers run evening sessions for parents/carers on TAFE and university entry. Check with your Careers Adviser about sessions they hold throughout the year and ask your Careers Adviser to attend a meeting organised by the P&C to answer questions parents/carers may have.

How may Careers Advisers assist Students?

The first contact students generally have with their Careers Adviser is probably in Year 9 and 10, with dedicated classes, visits to TAFE and exercises to identify likes, dislikes, talents and identify areas of vocational interest. For example: Do you like working in a group or individually? Do you prefer sedentary or active work? Do you enjoy interpreting written instructions? Are you intuitive in dealing with people?

Careers Advisers often interview students about their subject choices, how they see their progress and what help they expect to need in their transition from school to work or further study.

Careers Advisers organise guest speakers from industry, educational institutions and community. They organise information and handbooks from these in ways accessible to students, whom they keep up to date with

current opportunities and offers. They also contact relevant authorities with specific inquiries for individual students and spend a lot of time getting students accepted for work experience, TAFE “taster” programs and other related opportunities.

Year 12 students need to apply early for some offers. They usually find out about these from the Careers Adviser – early university entry, engineering and accounting cadetships, scholarships, job recruitment, offers for students with a disability or specific disadvantage and many more.

Encourage your Years 9-12 students to make the Careers Adviser a regular point of contact: find out where the careers office is, introduce themselves, outline their interests and what help they may need to fulfil their dream. Beat the rush at the end of schooling!

Alison Muscat - Executive Officer
Careers Advisers Association of NSW & ACT Inc.



TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

By Stephen Loquet

I believe we currently have the most exciting opportunity to take advantage of technology and give the best experience to teachers and students in the classroom. Apart from the breathtaking innovations that provide more opportunities in both learning and teaching and student administration, there's been a significant change for the better in the way we approach providing technology to schools.

In the last decade or so, our focus has been on large technology ICT programs that were

consider the question "What do schools need to deliver teaching and learning programs, and how do we and our partners across the Department provide them?" We use our combined skills and experience to create the best possible learning environment. These days, the classroom is the first piece of the puzzle and the technology is built around it. Trying to assemble a classroom around a piece of technology is outdated thinking that no longer serves our environment.



designed to deliver all in one technical solutions to business issues. We've learnt lessons from that approach and realised that our teaching and learning evolution needs to occur separately from business reforms. When we think about reliably using technology to support educational outcomes, we now

We put children at the centre of decision making and teachers at the centre of delivery plans, rather than making plans according to our own best efforts of understanding the best use of technology. ICT is no longer merely a service provider, it is one of many business partners in the Schools and elsewhere



Stephen Loquet,
Chief Information Officer

using cloud applications, learning tools, and other modern innovation to create the best educational experience we possibly can.

In the last couple of years, we've delivered a tool called ICT PLUS+ to schools, which allows Principals to assess their technology environments according to the Schools Excellence Framework, and make the best possible investment decisions about how to improve them. When a Principal makes decisions about their own teaching and learning environments, with our local service staff giving them the best possible advice, you have the best-informed method of using technology to service teaching and learning aims in a school.

A big priority for us is to close the gap as much as possible between rural and regional schools and their metropolitan counterparts. What we're always striving for is the day when the technology performance in one is indistinguishable from the other. And although technology can't quite help us deliver this yet, we're getting there as much as we feasibly can. With the Connecting Country Schools initiative, we're rolling out high quality internet and wireless services to over 13,000 learning areas in over 900 schools, so they can access the possibilities of cloud and internet-based teaching applications as similarly as possible to students in metropolitan schools. Equity is another key to reliably using technology to support learning across all cohorts.



Our Schools Digital Strategy is about talking to everybody we could think of to understand their thinking on the classroom of the future

The amount of learning tools now available in the cloud, offered by the Department and third parties, continue to proliferate and become more complex, driving an ongoing need to increase the amount of bandwidth available per student. We've calculated that we have to provide 1Mbps per student by the end of 2020, and continue to grow it over time. Because this requires an enormous increase in capacity, we've had to consider new ways to provide a safe, reliable internet experience

for our students, and we found this through the Internet at the Edge project, one that I was particularly impressed with due to its innovation. We have made it possible for 730 schools to connect directly to the internet, while still in a safe browsing environment, without having to contend with each other's traffic and corporate traffic through our Data Centres. A few years ago, this was inconceivable; now we have increased internet performance significantly in the schools where it has been rolled out.

As you are no doubt aware, the increasing population in New South Wales means that school construction has accelerated significantly, and modern designs like Arthur Phillip High School mean that we can no longer provide a specification and hope that everything works well. We now work hand in glove with School Infrastructure NSW for new constructions to ensure that the technology is as future proof as the schools themselves. Flexible learning spaces, innovative design, and integrated technology have become the new normal – and digital capability is now

as much an integral part of the design as the bricks and mortar are.

Our Schools Digital Strategy is about talking to everybody we could think of to understand their thinking on the classroom of the future – principals, teaching staff, corporate staff, educational specialists – and fine tuning their ideas until we have a compelling case of what the digital classroom looks like, and how we could give teachers and students what they need to support their needs. This new approach is the best way we have to reliably incorporate technology into educational outcomes.

Every decision we make about technology is in the context of how we can provide the best teaching and learning environment for our students. If you have any questions or would like any more information, you are most welcome to contact me directly, Stephen Loquet, Chief Information Officer by email officecio@det.nsw.edu.au

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NEW APP TO REVIVE ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Supplied by the Department of Education

An app developed by the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) will help bring to life the sound of indigenous languages across the state.

The app, developed by the NSW AECG, allows users to explore four NSW languages – Bundjalung, Gamilaraay, Gumbaynggirr and Wiradjuri. Paakantji and Murrawarri languages will soon be added within the app.

Cindy Berwick, president of the NSW AECG, said she hoped the app would “contribute to Aboriginal students’ identity, sense of belonging and connection to Country”.

“This app is for our community so that we can ensure survival of our languages as First Nation peoples,” Ms Berwick said.

“But we also want non-Aboriginal people to use the app to support an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal histories and cultures and the unique place Aboriginal people hold as the oldest living culture of humanity.”

Department of Education Secretary, Mark Scott, said he looked forward to hearing students practising language using the app.

“One of my most memorable days as Secretary was sitting in a classroom up the North Coast, and unlike when I went to school those students in Year 7 weren’t learning French or German, but they were learning the local Aboriginal language,” Mr Scott said.

“I could see how engaging that was; not just for the Aboriginal students at the school but for all the students in the school, and how seamlessly the conversation around culture accompanied the work of studying the language and how wonderful it was to see that respect for local Elders who were in the classroom helping to teach these languages.”



Students from Weilmoringle Public School and Department of Education Secretary Mark Scott test out the new languages app.

Murrawarri language educator, Tom Barker, was hopeful for the future while reflecting on his journey to revive the language that he’d been forbidden to speak as a child.

“Our language is awakening. We want our young children here to start knowing words and speaking and singing the songs,” Mr Barker said. “It’s very important that all our languages are going to be strong again.”

Weilmoringle Public School principal, Lisa Wright, said the school community was “excited and honoured” to work with the NSW AECG on a language revival program. Tom Barker visits the school in the far north-west of the state almost weekly to work with the students.

“For a sleeping language, that really hadn’t been spoken – there are no fluent speakers around really at all – we’ve been really lucky to have these kids now pointing out things and naming them in language on a regular basis,” Mrs Wright said.

The NSW AECG languages app can be downloaded from the App Store and Google Play.

The NSW AECG is the peak voice for Aboriginal communities on education and training and works in partnership with the Department of Education to improve outcomes for Aboriginal learners by ensuring they have access to an education and training system that values their cultural heritage and identity and supports their learning and career development through quality teaching practices, relevant policies and strategies and inclusive curriculum and training programs.



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